

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 November 23, 2015

ATTENDING: Kern, Best, Beyaert, Godfrey, Ho, Mercurio, Palacios, Pellegrini, Rickard, Robinson, Sanwong, Simmons, Texeira, Thompson, Volin, Yee, Wilkins
 NOT ATTENDING: Coffey, Coomber, Gregory, Madsen
 STAFF ATTENDING: Aufer, Burnor, Fox, Kassebaum, O'Connor, Pfuehler, Clay, Bletz, Gonzales
 GUESTS: Director Beverly Lane
 PUBLIC:

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of October 26, 2015 Minutes:** The October minutes were approved. PAC members Thompson, Yee and Wilkins abstained due to being absent from the October meeting.
2. **Introductions:** PAC Chair Kern asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Director Beverly Lane discussed a variety of issues related to the Ward she represents. Staff is making a variety of improvements to the Iron Horse Trail using funds from Measure J.

Director Lane reported there was a Board field trip to see the Las Trampas / Borel property. Lane expressed this new access will allow people from the Moraga / Lafayette area to enter the Northwest side of Las Trampas. Approximately 1,000 acres at the end of Las Trampas has been land banked for approximately ten years. It will now be accessible to the public.

Lane stated land use planning is moving forward for the new Concord Hills Park. One of the concerns for the City of Concord is the land would remain banked for a decade. Staff has moved ahead in planning for the 2,500 acre park, although the Park District doesn't hold title yet. Lane stated this will be a very significant park for the District in Central Contra Costa County.

Lane distributed the latest Master Plan brochure. Lane stated this brochure is very useful. There is an excellent map inside that shows where current and prospective parks and trails will be located.

Lane thanked the PAC members for serving on the Committee, and opened the floor for questions.

PAC member Beyaert asked Director Lane why the Concord Naval Weapons Station property is coming to the District via the National Parks Service rather than directly from the Navy. Lane replied the Navy deeds land only to another Federal agency or city. The District reached out to the National Park Service to inquire if they would receive the land for park purpose, and then deed it to the District.

PAC member Volin asked for a brief update about the status of the Chabot Gun Range. Lane replied at the November Board meeting there were about 60 people in attendance to speak

regarding the Chabot Gun Range. Lane explained about two-thirds of the public in attendance were in favor of keeping the Chabot Gun Range open and about one-third were in favor of closing it. This issue is currently in staffs' hands, and will come before the Board at the December 15 meeting for a recommendation for a short-term lease extension.

4. Public Comments:

None.

5. Presentations:

(R) a. Proposed Budget – Debra Auker, Acting AGM of Finance and Management Services, and Pam Burnor, Budget Manager Finance

PAC Member Best opened the presentation with a brief outline of the 2016 budget. She stated the budget is a phenomenal document with not only numbers, but goals, outcomes and polices. It does an excellent job of explaining the funds and all the terms used. Best thanked Debra Auker, Acting AGM of Finance and Management Services and Pam Burnor, Finance Budget Manager for all their work on the budget.

Auker explained to the Committee the budget policy starts with five Board workshops, where staff receives direction and priorities from the Board for the next year. The majority of the budget is property tax, so Finance works with Contra Costa and Alameda Counties on the property tax projections. The District also gathers information from Beacon Economics about long-term trends.

Auker explained the base budget is created using employee labor agreements. All cost increases are included which determines net change or growth. The practice has been to allocate 50% of the growth to ongoing base budget increases, such as staffing or other things that occur year after year, and 50% toward one-time costs. All the Divisions put together their capital and operating related requests. Finance reviews the budget requests, and then the draft budget is created. The proposed budget is presented to the Board Finance Committee for review, then to the PAC and finally before the full Board twice in December. The *Board Operating Guidelines* state the first meeting in December is an introduction, and the second meeting before the Board is for its adoption. Once approved, it will be the budget for the calendar year.

Auker continued the revenue stream is currently stable. Last year, there was a very significant growth of 9% in property tax. This year the property tax growth is 4.6% for a total Revenue of \$171.2 million.

On the expenditure side, the budget is balanced. Total appropriations are about \$206 million; \$154 million is operating expenses and \$51.5 million is dedicated to projects and debt service payments.

Personnel costs are 52%, of the total District-wide budget. Supplies and Services are 17%; Intra District charges 3%; Grants/Inter Agency Agreements 9%.

2016 Initiatives:

- Vegetation/Fuels Management - base is \$500,000 increasing this year by \$100,000 to a total of \$600,000

- Environmental Mitigation Program - \$500,000
- Stewardship & Grazing - \$110,000
- Legislative / Communications - \$100,000
- Information systems - \$80,000 (software license increases) 2016

One-Time Initiatives included in the budget:

- Pavement Maintenance Program - \$1 million
- Convenience Camping Program - \$500,000
- Mine Safety Improvements - \$310,000
- Fleet Replacement Program - \$300,000
- Del Valle Water System - \$150,000
- Quagga Mussel Program - \$129,000
- Redwood Canyon Golf Course Facility Design - \$125,000
- Major Infrastructure Renovation / Replacement Funding - \$100,000 for existing facilities improvements
- Land Acquisition - \$6.5 million

2016 Staffing is also included in the budget.

- 19.536 additional Full Time Employees (FTE's)
- Including 5.1 "Pipeline" Positions
- 2016 Authorized FTE's = 781.5

Positions will include 10.29 AFSCME, three Confidentials for Management and 3.92 positions for Public Safety.

Making up the 5.1 "Pipeline" FTE positions will be for new properties in Las Trampas, Pleasanton Ridge, Point Pinole, Sibley, Vargas, Miller Knox and North Richmond.

Auker explained the General Fund is in good shape, balanced and showing growth of 4.6%. Expenditures have increased 5% to \$127.6 million dollars. Overall, the budget is currently meeting the needs of the District, and is growing at a very good pace to keep District policies in line.

Yee asked for details regarding planned expenses for Mission Peak. He inquired about the \$25,000 set aside for a gate and \$30,000 set aside for a toilet. AGM of Operations O'Connor replied this expense is for a portable restroom at Ohlone College and Stanford.

Yee inquired about the goal of 80% for payment of invoices within 30 days. He wondered if such a high goal was realistic. Auker replied the District has a fairly automated system for Accounts Payable. Invoices are scanned immediately and are routed through an electronic workflow. This system is efficient. It can be easily assessed and tracked by the Accounts Supervisor. Auker commented this year was a little tough because the account software was upgraded, and time was needed to learn the system.

Yee also asked for a description about the 100 training sessions performed. Auker answered the budget target of 100 training classes were mainly hosted by the District's Human Resources Department. Auker explained there are several levels of training programs, some contracted out, and some hosted by individual Departments and Divisions for trainings specific to their staff needs. The District also uses outside contract experts for management related classes, project managements, labor related and computer training. The District also belongs to a training

consortium which allows access to classes. Auker observed the District recognizes they are going through a huge transition and there is more of a need for training.

Volin asked questions regarding the Chabot Gun Range. He cited the District staff report which stated it will cost \$2.5 to \$3.5 million to keep the Chabot Gun Range open for another two years. The other possibility, closing the gun range, will cost between \$2.5 and \$20 million. Volin questioned why only \$500,000 has been allotted in the budget. Auker stated the District recognizes there are long-term costs to this range. She explained \$500,000 is allocated as the first step in setting aside money for this. The Board has not made a decision about the gun range yet. When the decision is made, final assessments will be done, and then mid-year will set additional money aside if necessary. Volin indicated the 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) didn't list these numbers as a liability, and questioned if the plans are to list this in the 2015 CAFR report. Auker stated the CAFR has requirements with which the District must comply. At the end of December, Finance will review the numbers and present the report to the auditors in the spring. Auker continued the CAFR is subject to requirements set by both the generally accepted accounting principles and the GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board). According to these guidelines, only known liabilities are reported. Last year, there was no known dollar number for what, if any, liability obligation the District had with regard to the gun range, so it wasn't appropriate to report it in the CAFR. This year there is more information, but while the Chabot Gun Range remains open there may not be a requirement to report liability. The District is looking into what the requirements are and will report what is required.

Kern put forward a suggestion that the Finance Committee recommend support and adoption of the 2016 Proposed Budget and Capital Expenditure Plan. Kern continued there are also some technical additions the PAC would like to capture in the motion: chart formatting, years missing, issue of correct projects in the correct section of the report, the important issue of having resources for training and staff development because of all the changes happening within the District, etc. Best made a motion for the PAC to recommend the Board adopt the budget. Wilkins seconded the motion. The PAC approved the motion unanimously.

Kern commended Auker for the excellent work Finance did to generate this report.

(I) b. Volunteer Program Review – Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation, and Kevin Fox, Recreation Supervisor

Chief of Interpretive and Recreation Kassebaum introduced Recreation Supervisor Kevin Fox. Kassebaum shared a short bio about Fox's career with the District.

Fox complimented PAC members for their volunteer work. He said it was bittersweet that he began as a volunteer and is ending his career by talking to the PAC members who are also volunteers.

One of the newest volunteer programs is with the Mobile Fish Exhibit. Fox stated James Frank has been instrumental in getting this program started.

Fox outlined the work done in his department. Part of his job responsibilities are based around 12 special events. Data collection is a way to communicate to the Board and staff about the volunteer hours devoted to District projects. His department conducts training for internal staff, provides outreach programs and branding to promote volunteerism in the parks. A bandana that shows all the programs was created for branding purposes.

Fox stated volunteer hours have steadily increased since 2012 to 126,000 hours which equals several million dollars in work done by volunteers. The number of volunteers have grown as well.

The volunteer program has grown due to several factors.

- Partnership with groups or companies
- Ease of getting information and applying for volunteer interest through the District's website
- Online availability to fill out volunteer forms
- Overseeing projects for park maintenance
- Increased interest from the public for volunteer opportunities
- Consistency among the volunteer programs: "We do what we say we will do"
- Providing support for District volunteers programs by recognizing volunteers, giving out gift items and, most importantly, having trainings for both volunteers and coordinators
- Successful grant funding for both volunteer programs and Parks Express bus transportation (REI, State Parks)

Fox explained the Park District works with many non-profits, who provide resources and invaluable support.

- Save the Bay
- Golden Gate Audubon Society
- Watershed Project
- Green at Works
- Friends of 5 Creeks
- City of Fremont (Patterson House)
- Society for Preservation of Carter Railroad Resources

Fox stated the volunteer program is going green. All volunteers are asked to bring their own refillable water bottle and gloves. Items bought by the District for events are chosen with less wrapping.

Fox touched on the electronic forms for volunteers. Online forms were instituted in 2014 and their use has steadily increased which has improved the work flow. Fox explained he reviews the form, checks the park location the applicant has chosen, and then forwards the form to the corresponding park supervisor or naturalist.

Fox discussed the annual training conducted for volunteer coordinators. There is now leadership training offered by Volunteer California's Executive Director Cathy Moyer. Moyer trains District staff on leadership and supervision of volunteers. It has been effective. The training has helped create a great volunteer experience and volunteers who return. Integrated Pest Management Resource Analyst Pamela Beitz offers a volunteer leadership training for Invasive Species plant removal which has been well received by staff. Fox touched on the bi-yearly volunteer coordinator training offered to District staff. Recent habitat restoration trainings were held at Angel Island and Point Reyes.

Fox outlined some of the special events he coordinates:

- MLK Day of Service – held annually in January with between 300 and 400 people attending
- Earth Day held in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties
- Coastal Clean-up – 4,000 people across the District throughout the year
- Volunteer Recognition Dinner – Annual recognition of volunteers
- Cajun/Zydeco Festival – annual event for the last 19 years

Fox discussed trends in volunteering. He noted more large groups and companies such as Apple, Comcast and Chevron are adopting shorelines. Fox commented one reason there has been a spike in the numbers is the baby boomers retiring who want to give back to the community. Fox mentioned the District holds at least one “alternative spring break” for college students from Ohio to New York.

Fox gave an overview of the future plans for his department. In 2016, there will be three permanent stations set up at Crown Beach for volunteers to do clean ups at the park.

Fox mentioned they will be collaborating with the Regional Parks Foundation to reach out to companies, such as Apple, and propose future projects with them. Fox said this is a more organized approach and more companies will be willing to work with the District.

Fox said they are moving toward a new online software program that will keep data more current. Volunteers will be able to log on and the information will go directly to the database. The goal is to have less staff time spent entering data and more time spent working with volunteers.

Yee thanked Kevin for all his work and help with the “Change” volunteer program at Irvington High School.

Kern asked about staff capacity to help with volunteers. Fox replied District staff basically can’t facilitate enough volunteer projects to meet the demand. Fox suggested, in the future, additional staff will be needed to specifically facilitate volunteer projects.

PAC member Pellegrini thanked Fox for his work at the Martinez Regional Shoreline. Fox thanked Pellegrini for the barbecue he puts on for the Martinez Shoreline Coastal Cleanup.

(R) c. 2016 PAC Goals – Bruce Kern, Chair and Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager

Kern discussed the proposed 2016 Goals. Beyaert suggested a few edits. Under Item 1, Capital Projects Review, add Convenience Camping. Under Safety in Parks, add Crime before Safety to become Crime and Safety in the Parks. Under Item 5, add the Miller Knox Land Use Plan Amendment.

PAC member Rickard suggested “Trails” be added as part of the Safety in the Parks discussion. He proposed it read, Crime and Safety in Parks and Trails, for trails such as Delta de Anza, Iron Horse, etc.

PAC member Ho asked about the Dogs in Parks. Ho commented there is an existing policy and suggested this item is low priority. PAC member Sanwong answered she has been approached about issues of dogs’ health and equestrian interactions with dogs in the parks. Sanwong suggested perhaps it could be a sub-bullet under Safety in Parks.

Ho asked for clarification about ADA accessibility. She wondered if ADA accessibility is always considered when park improvements are made. Kern replied PAC member Coomber is interested in accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Kern stated Coomber would like to keep this subject in the forefront. O’Connor said there is an annual Transition Plan Update for ADA upgrades to existing facilities. Ho commented that it might be good for the PAC to see the Transition Plan and proposed updates.

Sanwong suggested Social Media could be another sub-bullet under Participating Community Outreach. Sanwong said photos on social media of garbage in the parks could have a strong visual impact and get

people to be more mindful about of their park usage. This could fall under Item 6, Community Outreach and Education.

Thompson suggested the Plan Bay Area topic should be a priority because the plan is currently being updated, and it would be great for the District to weigh in. Kern asked if PAC member Simmons would be willing to continue this discussion as part of a subcommittee. Simmons replied yes, the time is appropriate. Kern said it would be good to have a subcommittee that could meet with the outside agencies involved, and report back to the full PAC. PAC member Teixeira suggested a special presentation to the PAC Committee about Plan Bay Area would be very useful.

Beyaert brought up the subject of drones. Yee said it is already covered by Ordinance 38. O'Connor replied that Ordinance 38 covers *Flying Remote Aircraft*. Remote aircraft are banned unless in a specific authorized area, under authorized conditions. Pfuehler stated a number of bills about regulating drones have been considered and this is an ongoing discussion amongst policy makers.

PAC member Palacios mentioned that within the General Manager's report in January, perhaps Robert Doyle could discuss his ideas about the reorganization of the District; particularly the need for staff development because of the changes. Kern and Pfuehler will meet with Doyle regarding the PAC Goals and provide input about the January State of the District report.

Simmons made a motion to accept the recommendations and prioritization of the PAC Goals. Wilkins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(R) d. Elections of PAC Officers – Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager

Pfuehler suggested Mercurio nominate Kern to continue as Chair. Wilkins made a motion for Kern to serve as Chair for 2016. Beyaert seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously. Mercurio was also unanimously approved to serve as Vice-Chair for 2016.

6. PAC Member Comments:

Rickard reported he attended many committee meetings. The most interesting was the Natural Cultural Resources Committee. He cited a study which indicates 25% of live oaks are resistant to Sudden Oak Death. There are now genetic studies to try and identify those trees.

Simmons commented he just returned from a 17-day trip to Bhutan. The center piece of the trip was a five-day trek called the Druk Path Trek which attained 11-13,000 feet. Simmons noted there are many needy projects in Bhutan, but they lack resources, infrastructure or volunteers do to the work. The greatest danger on the trek was avoiding the yaks that also use the trail.

Beyaert hiked the McLaughlin Eastshore section of the Bay Trail in Richmond and saw three Clapper Rails foraging. Last Tuesday, the District's Board of Directors approved an appropriation of \$840,000 dollars to hire Nichols Consulting Engineers (NCE) as a consultant for design, permitting and construction management of 2.5 miles of Bay Trail between the Richmond San Rafael Bridge and the northern border Pt. Molate. This will be new public access to the shoreline owned by Chevron and the City of Richmond. In 2017, the trail should be open the same time the Bay Area Toll Authority completes the Richmond San Rafael Bridge Public Access Improvement Project connecting Marin to Pt. Richmond.

PAC member Robinson mentioned the December 3rd Contra Costa County Watershed Symposium to be held at the Pleasant Hill Community Center. It's a chance to get together with all the different agencies and nonprofits involved in watersheds in Contra Costa County.

Lane passed out the District's Green Transportation brochure regarding the augmentation transportation sales tax in addition to Measure J for Contra Costa County. The District is seeking more funding to build and maintain trails. Kern asked what role the PAC can have in this endeavor. Pfuehler said it will be brought up in the legislative section, and in a separate presentation that will cover all of the ballot initiatives that are relevant to the District. Pfuehler continued the brochure is for educational purposes and more brochures can be made available if PAC members would like to hand them out.

Palacios said she went to the Greenway Dedication and felt it is was a great trail project much needed in East Oakland. She was particularly impressed with the Oakland Scraper Bikes.

7. Report from Chair

Kern reported it is was great to attend the Greenway Dedication, and also the opening of the ten-mile Stonebrae trail in Hayward.

8. Board Committee Reports – None.

9. Status of Recommendations – Current

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business – None.

12. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The October minutes were approved at the November 23, 2015 Park Advisory Committee.
2. The PAC approved Goals for 2016 and recommended approval by the Board of Directors.
3. The PAC approved reappointment of Kern as PAC Chair and Mercurio as Vice Chair.
4. The next meeting is the holiday dinner, December 7, 2015 at Spenger's Restaurant in Berkeley.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary