

AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, April 4, 2017

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Board Executive Committee (3/2/2017) \_\_\_\_\_ (Lane)

Present

Board: Beverly Lane (Chair), Ayn Wieskamp, Dennis Waespi

Staff: Dr. Ana Alvarez, Beck Pheng, Jim O'Connor, Kelly Barrington, Anne Kassebaum, Mimi Waluch, Steve Castile, Denise Valentine, Sandra Hamlat, Jeff Rasmussen, Matt Graul, Brad Gallup, Debra Auker

Public: Whitney Dotson

Board Executive Committee Chair Beverly Lane called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m.

**I. Operations Strategic Plan Update**

Dr. Ana Alvarez, Deputy General Manager, introduced this agenda item. The Operations Division Strategic Plan ("Plan") was developed over the past several years to address challenges facing the division and succession planning.

Jim O'Connor, Assistant General Manager, briefly discussed some of the challenges including:

- Expansion: increasing land/facilities under management;
- Demand: year-round park visitation and increased programming needs; and
- Staffing: retirement of baby boomer generation and retention of staff.

Mr. O'Connor and his management team meet twice a year to analyze the Plan and to develop solutions. Director Beverly Lane inquired if consultants were brought in to help with the Plan. Mr. O'Connor replied that the Plan was developed internally with his management staff.

**Park Operations Department**

Steve Castille, Chief of Park Operations, gave a historical overview of the growth of park operations. In 1987, there were 40 parks and with the passage of Measures AA and WW, the number of parks and trails has increased considerably. The department's proposed

reorganization would increase the number of unit managers from six to seven. Each unit manager would be assigned to a zone (1 – 7). The zones would be broken up by location rather than function (i.e. lakes, interpretive parklands) thus improving department efficiency; improving the span of control; and reducing costs. Increasing the number of units would help reduce the number of time unit managers would spend on the road, and enable them to be out in the parks and to interact more with their staff. Mr. O'Connor talked about staffing strategies for the department, including position conversions, position up-grades, and a new classification for Park Ranger I and II.

### **Maintenance and Skilled Trades Department (“MAST”)**

Kelly Barrington, Chief of MAST, presented the proposed reorganization for the MAST Department. The proposal includes an addition of one maintenance superintendent assigned to oversee and manage the roads crew, trail crew, and contract paving. The current maintenance superintendent would be assigned to the trades crew (north and south), water utilities, and major maintenance. There are no proposed changes to the Fleet unit. The reorganization would also include an upgrade in the contract encroachment supervisor position and, if approved, the addition of a drafting technician/civil engineer.

Mr. O'Connor talked about the importance of having up-to-date data for budgeting purposes. Staff is currently evaluating several management information systems including Cartegraph and Square Rigger Program.

### **Business Services Department**

Mimi Waluch, Business Services Manager, gave an overview of the Business Services Department. The Park Residence Program has been in existence for over 70 years. Over the past three years, the average number of residences is 60, with a total of 63 as of 2016. The program serves as an important public service to help provide park resources; the residences serve as the “eyes and ears” for the Park District. One of the key goals over the next few years is to transition to a point of sale system (“POS”) at visitor sites. This is dependent on connectivity, site security, and staff training. The POS would help improve the collection of sales, membership processing, and the auditing process.

### **Interpretive and Recreation Services Department**

Anne Kassebaum, Chief of Interpretive and Recreation Services Department, presented the department’s Plan. The department manages visitor and interpretive centers; programs for children and youths; outdoor recreation programs; and coordinates the Parks Express bus program. The Interpretive Services Unit is divided into two sectors and is managed by Dave Zuckermann and Ira Bletz. The department’s priorities include the design or remodel of the District’s visitor centers and facilities, including Crab Cove Visitor Center, Del Valle Visitor Center, Tilden Environmental Education Center, Shadow Cliffs Interpretive Pavilion, and Coyote Hills Visitor Center.

Interpretive services is a critical component of the department and is seen as a leader in the field. Ms. Kassebaum talked about a new program that was being implemented--Foundation Documents; this program was borrowed from the National Parks Service to effectively manage and plan for a park's future. The Foundation Document aims to answer questions such as: What is the purpose of the park? What makes it significant? What are its fundamental resources and values?

Professional and youth development is another component of the department. The department will continue its outreach in the community through job fairs, youth academy, and staff training. Professional development programs will include job shadowing/peer review, presentations at conferences, and training.

Director Dennis Waespi asked for additional information on the conversion of park rangers to park craft specialists, and the number of conversions being proposed. Mr. O'Connor responded that staff is looking at two proposed conversions—one at Miller Knox and one Pt. Pinole. The conversion is complex and typically done when there is a vacancy. Director Dennis Waespi inquired about the costs of the MAST reorganization. Mr. Barrington responded that it would be under \$1 million per year.

Director Ayn Wieskamp inquired if the Park District is working with Los Positas College on a training program. Mr. O'Connor responded that he has not made contact with Los Positas College, but did speak with someone at Merritt College. He will revisit this in the spring and bring a presentation before the full Board. Director Ayn Wieskamp also commented that there is no job fair in the Tri-Valley, and suggested that staff consider holding at least one in the area this year.

Director Beverly Lane commented on the Park Operations Department proposed reorganization, and the emphasis on geography versus function. Mr. O'Connor responded that staff will work on that issue, and believes that the increase in travel time needs to be reduced. Management will look at cross training and increasing communication among staff.

The priority for the Operations Division will be the reorganization of MAST and Park Operations. There was discussion about the proposed drafting technician/civil engineer position. Staff responded that Acquisition, Stewardship, and Development Division ("ASD") has a busy workload, and it would be more efficient to have someone in-house (Operations Division) to provide support in drafting drawings for permits and smaller projects undertaken by the department. Larger projects would still be coordinated through ASD staff.

**Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.**

## **2. Biomass Utilization Pilot Project**

Sandra Hamlat, Senior Planner, presented this agenda item. The Park District is applying for grant funding through the Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program to fund a biomass utilization project. Projects that receive grant funding must focus on the use of trees and associated vegetation to provide multiple benefit solutions. Park District staff has submitted a

grant proposal for up to \$750,000 for a pilot project at Point Pinole Regional Shoreline and the Green Waste Recycling Yard in Richmond.

The proposed pilot project would install a compact modular biomass unit, which is mobile and can be moved to different locations throughout the Park District. Wood chips from fuels management projects would be used to produce energy. The clean energy created by the biomass would be more costs effective than disposing of it or hauling it to an off-site facility in Tracy. The biomass unit would be designed by *All Powers Labs*, in Berkeley. There are several biomass units currently being tested throughout northern California. Energy researchers at UC Berkeley have expressed interest in providing a third-party evaluation of the pilot project.

The Committee expressed their interest in the project and technology, and inquired about the costs of the biomass unit. Staff responded that the biomass unit is approximately \$400,000. The Committee also requested that staff share this information with the City of Richmond. Staff responded that they are working with the City on other issues and will bring it up with them at the next meeting. Director Dennis Waespi asked if this project is permissible in Alameda County. Staff was not sure, and will look into it. Director Ayn Wieskamp remarked on the importance of having UC Berkeley evaluate the project and that other agencies may be interested in using this new technology.

Dr. Ana Alvarez mentioned that this is one of several projects being undertaken to manage waste from the Park District's fuels management program. The Park District is continuing to look at other green energy projects.

**Recommendation: None. This was an informational item.**

### **3. Measure WW Urban Creeks Grant Program**

Jeff Rasmussen, Assistant Finance Officers, and Matt Gaul, Chief of Stewardship, presented this agenda item.

This agenda item was original an "information" item. Staff requested that it be changed to a "recommendation" item. By a vote of 3-0, the Board Executive Committee approved staff's request to change the agenda item from "information" to "recommendation."

This item was first presented to the Board Executive Committee last October 2016. The Measure WW Urban Creeks Grant Program would appropriate \$1.6 million in Measure WW funds. At that meeting, the Committee reviewed the draft Measure WW Urban Creeks Grant Program ("Program") and authorized the release of the draft Program for public review and comment. Staff received comments from members of the public and the Park Advisory Committee; those comments have been incorporated into the version that is being presented to the Board Executive Committee.

Staff is recommending that funds be available, based on the scoring criteria in the guidelines, District-wide for both acquisition and restoration project. In other words, there would not be limits based on metro areas. Staff noted that there is no policy that funds be spent according to

metros. Director Ayn Wieskamp asked if the Park District will be coordinating with Zone 7 on what they will be doing in that area. Mr. Rasmussen responded that local agencies are eligible and community groups are encouraged to partner with eligible agencies. Debra Auker, Chief Financial Officer, also noted that there is no policy that funds be restrained by metro areas and recommended that the first round of \$1.6 million be available District-wide.

Director Dennis Waespi inquired on the number of grants that staff expects to receive. Mr. Rasmussen anticipates that four to five grants will be awarded in the first round. Staff commented that some of the projects are really complex and may take years to complete. There was discussion about the scoring criteria and how points were allocated. Staff talked about the proposed grant schedule and recommended moving the grant announcement date from December 2018 to August 2018.

Director Beverly Lane commented that the Park Advisory Committee was very helpful in providing comments and changes to the Program.

Dr. Ana Alvarez asked staff to clarify the total number of points that an applicant can receive. Staff will clarify that on the revised draft.

**Recommendation: By motion of Director Dennis Waespi and seconded by Director Ayn Wieskamp, the Board Executive Committee voted 3-0 to forward the draft Procedural Guidelines for Measure WW Urban Creeks Program, as amended by the Board Executive Committee, to the full Board of Directors for consideration.**

**4. Open Forum for Public Comments**

None.

**5. Committee Comments**

None.

There being no further business, Board Executive Committee Chair Beverly Lane declared the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky K. Pheng

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