

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 January 23, 2017

ATTENDING: Bueren, Coffey, Gregory, Ho, Kern, Madsen, Palacios, Rickard, Robinson, Sanwong, Skaredoff, Thompson, Trotter, Volin, Yee

NOT ATTENDING: Best, Mercurio, Godfrey, Wilkins

STAFF ATTENDING: Erich Pfuehler, Sharon Clay, Jim O'Connor, Sandra Hamlat, Ana Alvarez, Jeff Rasmussen, Matt Graul

GUESTS: President Beverly Lane

PUBLIC: None.

The meeting began at 7:07 p.m.

1. **Approval of the November 28, 2016 Minutes:** The November 28, 2016 minutes were approved. The motion to approve was moved by PAC member Thompson. PAC member Volin seconded approval of the minutes. The motion was approved. PAC members Kern, Trotter and Skaredoff abstained.

PAC Chair Kern made a change to agenda. He clarified the Measure WW Update and Urban Creek Grant Program presentation is a recommendation item.

2. **Introductions:** Kern asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves. PAC member Trotter stated he is in his third term on the Moraga Town Council. He has done volunteer work in the Moraga community for over twenty years and has served on the Board of Save Mount Diablo. PAC member Skaredoff stated he was nominated by the Contra Costa County chapter of the California Special Districts Association and is also President of the Board of the Contra Costa County Resource Conservation District. Skaredoff commented he is a retired chemist for Shell Oil Company. His career with them spanned thirty-five years. He also worked with Ted and Kathy Radke as part of the Friends of Alhambra Creek.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Director Beverly Lane reported two new directors will be sworn in at the January meeting. They will replace retired Board Directors John Sutter and Doug Siden. There is also a vacancy on the Board for Ward 7 as Diane Burgis was elected to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. Lane reported ACSFME labor negotiations will occur this year. Dedications coming up in 2017: Shadow Cliffs solar panels project, the Atlas Bridge, and an opening of a segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail at Point Pinole. Lane explained a part of the trail will be a concrete boardwalk over the Hayward Fault. Both the trail and the Dotson Family Marsh will be dedicated this year at Point Pinole. At Del Valle, there are five convenience camping cabins scheduled for use this summer. There will also be Castleridge access to Pleasanton Ridge near the Alviso Adobe opening in 2018.

Lane commented she is looking forward to the Park Advisory Committee's study on the dog policy. She is also pleased the PAC will be looking at the permitting process for improving and opening parks, and mountain biking opportunities while natural resources are protected.

Lane invited the PAC members to attend Board Committee and full Board meetings. She also

mentioned the January 31st special Board meeting where they will be interviewing and selecting the new Ward 7 Board Member.

Lane recommended the PAC read the January/March 2017 Bay Nature magazine. It contains an extensive article about the Bay. Kern thanked Lane for her work.

Jim O'Connor, AGM of Operations gave a brief report about the impacts of the recent rains in the parks. The majority of the damage is common: downed trees, failed culverts, etc. The District is working with the County for an emergency declaration which could lead to CalOES or FEMA funding to repair damage. The biggest challenge has been at Del Valle. When the lake is full, Del Valle normally operates at 704 feet. At 705 feet, problems begin to occur because of the sewage system. The rain starting on January 9th through the 12th inundated Del Valle parklands with water. Staff were deployed to begin protection of the park and its assets. The ADA pier and dock flooded. At 708 feet the lawn area was covered in water. At 713 feet, the Oak Point restroom was submerged. Downstream flooding in Niles Canyon was so bad, that Del Valle was flooded to restrict the release of water downstream. All campgrounds are closed, as is the park.

4. **Public Comments:** None.

5. **Presentations:**

Kern announced a slight modification in the order of the presentations. Dr. Ana Alvarez will be presenting first.

(I) **a. Climate Resiliency Update – Ana Alvarez, Deputy General Manager**

Dr. Ana Alvarez, Deputy General Manager provided the PAC an overview about her role at the Park District. Alvarez explained she has management oversight for a large portion of the organization including: Operations; Acquisition, Stewardship and Development; Finance and Management Services; the Office of the Clerk; and Human Resources. When she was selected to serve in this capacity, she was also asked to work on a couple of initiatives on behalf of the General Manager.

One initiative is to lead management's relationship with the District's organized labor workforce. She is working to forge a new model for how District management relates with organized labor. One goal is to have a general understanding and awareness about mutual interest, and how to problem solve together in a real partnership. Alvarez stated they have been able to open new channels of communication with Local 2428, establish a new form of communication, and have screened through some of the legalities about how labor and management relate with one another. Alvarez emphasized employees are a key part of what the District does, and deserve to have a fair and equitable workplace.

Other initiatives she has worked on for employees include: a lactation room, and bringing new smart technology to field supervisors and park rangers to create more workplace efficiencies. She has worked on a task force about how the District extends emotional support, and other types of support, to employees when they have to respond to natural disasters or other types of challenging incidents. Another initiative Alvarez is working on is how to build capacity and flexibility within the organization while the District is transitioning. There has been a large wave of retirements in the last two to three years. The District has hired many new individuals

in key management positions. 86% of promotional opportunities have been in-house promotions. She is also working to ensure those in key positions sustain the legacy of good decision making by District managers. In addition, Alvarez is working to align the work force at every level. The alignment includes the values of the District as an agency, and also with the policy direction from the Board. Alvarez is also bringing in new concepts, speaking to issues of credibility, trust in each other, and trust with stakeholders and the public served by the District.

Alvarez explained she has a background in climate action planning. Her doctoral degree is in policy and planning. Her focus and dissertation was on climate change.

Alvarez explained her presentation is from her work with NRPA. She stated public agencies are key stakeholders in addressing and mitigating the effects of a changing climate. Climate change is not just about sea level rise or the pollution in the air, it's about understanding how it all connects ecologically under one system.

Alvarez proceeded to define climate change. It is changes to climatic conditions that directly alter temperature, sea level and precipitation patterns which result in a much wider range of consequences including: Drought, wildfire, flooding and species migration disruption not only for birds, but for plants. The consequences of these changes have the potential to disrupt or damage local resources and communities, including built environments, economic and social resources and ecosystems. It can also cause the displacement of communities. Alvarez said this is the time to take on an even greater advocacy role.

Alvarez spoke about natural infrastructure. She talked about the coastland, woodlands and regional trails for green transportation. She discussed the effects of climate change on the poor and elderly. Alvarez stated more extreme temperatures will create heat, stress and cardiovascular failure. Sea level rise and saline intrusion will cause injuries, fatalities and displacement of communities.

Alvarez discussed how the Park District has a great team working on climate change and their work is well known nationally.

PAC member Sanwong expressed interest in hearing Alvarez speak about the Park District's scientific testing and processing of the samples. She is familiar with that type of work.

PAC member Gregory asked about HARD's work on the Hayward shoreline. He wondered if Ora Loma Sanitary District's work had been acknowledged. Senior Planner Sandra Hamlat replied yes and there is support for horizontal levees. The Park District is looking at similar models to solve other problems along the Hayward shoreline. Hamlat continued many landowners along the Bay provide ad hoc protection and see horizontal levees as a way to strike a balance between shoreline protection, providing habitat and more natural systemic responses.

Kern asked PAC member Madsen if Greenbelt Alliance has been working on this subject. Madsen replied the Alliance is likely to work on this more in the coming months and years.

Skaredoff mentioned Contra Costa County LAFCo has recently adopted a regional open space, agriculture and land preservation policy. He said it would be good for agencies all around the Bay to incorporate these concepts when they make land use decisions.

Thompson asked if others have joined the District's efforts to expedite the permitting processes in Sacramento. Alvarez replied the District has testified before the Little Hoover Commission regarding the permitting process. The District is partnering with other special districts which are having the same issues. There will be a second hearing in February to take a close look at the permitting processes. There are also delays at the federal level. Government Affairs Manager Pfuehler said the District is also looking at the possibility of working on legislation with Senator Bob Wieckowski and Assemblymember Bill Quirk. It will be a tremendous challenge to streamline all the agencies involved in the process, but the District wants to raise the awareness of the permitting challenges in an effort to prevent an emergency before it happens.

(R) b. Great California Delta Trail Naming – Sean Dougan, Trails Development Program Manager, Sandra Hamlat, Senior Planner

Hamlat reported about the naming and details for the two proposed trail segments. The Delta Protection Commission (DPC) designated the Big Break Regional Shoreline Trail as a segment of the Delta Trail in 2016. While the District officially added the "Great California Delta Trail" naming to this section of trail, there are other sections the DPC is seeking to designate. The following East Bay Regional Park District trails located in Contra Costa County are proposed additional segments of the Delta Trail network:

- Carquinez Strait to Martinez Shoreline (existing and proposed)
- Martinez Shoreline to Point Edith (proposed)
- Benicia Bridge to Antioch Bridge (proposed)
- Marsh Creek Trail to Delta Access (existing and proposed)

The 35-miles of existing trail and proposed alignments follow the shorelines of the San Joaquin River. They meet the Delta Trail legislative intent. Additionally, these segments follow the Contra Costa County alignment of the Delta Trail as proposed in the District's 2013 Master Plan. The nexus of the Bay Trail and Ridge Trail with the Delta Trail at the Carquinez Strait provides the western gateway into the Delta and would continue to connect to the Big Break Regional Shoreline trail.

PAC member Coffey inquired about the efficacy of naming trails that don't exist as part of the Great Delta Trail. Coffey continued some of the segments between Martinez and Antioch are years away. Hamlat replied staff felt it would be better to present the bigger picture rather than bring back each segment to the PAC and Board as they come on line. PAC Member Ho commented having these proposed trails on the Master Plan map could lead to potential funding.

PAC member Bueren asked if the District is working from a plan adopted by the Delta Protection Commission. Hamlat replied no, the DPC is very resource constrained. They are actually looking to the District to see where there is alignment.

Lane asked if this action will amend the Master Plan. Hamlat replied no, there will be no change to the Master Plan for District trails, only the naming. PAC member Rickard made a motion to approve. Volin seconded the motion. It was approved.

(R) c. Measure WW Update and Urban Creek Grant Program – Jeff Rasmussen, Assistant Finance Officer; Matt Graul, Chief of Stewardship

Jeff Rasmussen, Assistant Finance Officer and Matt Graul, Chief of Stewardship provided an update about the Measure WW and Urban Creek Grant Program. Rasmussen reported the finance department has draft grant guidelines out for public comment and recommendations. On January 9th, the District held a public workshop at the Trudeau Center for Alameda County. A second meeting will be held January 24th at Big Break Regional Shoreline for Contra Costa County.

Measure WW has \$8 million in funding allocated for urban creek restoration efforts. The funds can also be used to acquire creek easements. The District has a great demand for urban creek projects. To date the District has appropriated \$70,000 of these funds. However, the demand for District sponsored projects alone exceeds \$40 million. The following is a list of suggested projects:

- Jewel Lake Restoration, \$4 million
- Restore Degraded Sections of Wildcat Creek, \$3 million
- Jordan Pond Restoration, \$2 million
- Wildcat Creek Watershed Outfall Restoration, \$1 million
- Eliminate Fish Barriers Skyline Trail in Sibley, \$500,000
- Redwood Creek Restoration, \$1 million
- McCosker Creek Renovation, \$5 million
- Wildcat Canyon Twin Culverts, \$1 million
- Pleasanton Ridge Creek Restorations, \$2 million
- Kennedy Grove Creek Restoration, \$250,000
- Markley Creek Restoration, \$500,000
- MLK Creeks Trash Racks, \$3 million
- BART to the Bay Trail, \$4 million
- Schoolhouse Creek Restoration, \$4 million
- Rheem Creek Re-alignment, \$7 million

Rasmussen discussed the distribution of funding. In an effort to balance Measure WW allocations, the District used scoring criteria which attempted to balance distribution between West Metro, Diablo Metro and South Metro regions. For the Urban Creek Grant Program, however, staff are considering different criteria. Rasmussen explained the scoring criteria:

- 1) Population within ½ mile of project site. (5 points per 1,000)
- 2) Project connects with EBRPD property. (10 points max)
- 3) Project is identified and/or consistent with other plans. (2 points max)
- 4) Percent match of funding. (1 point per percent over required 50%)
- 5) Number of permits in hand or satisfied by permitting agency. (30 points max)
- 6) Removes barriers to fish passage. (25 points max)
- 7) Improves habitat for endangered species. (25 points max)
- 8) Improves water quality. (25 points max)

- 9) Addresses climate change. (10 points max)
10) Provides public access. (15 points)

Thompson asked if grantees needed all of their permits in place to apply. Rasmussen replied permits are not required and one could still apply, but the best projects will be those with existing funding and permits in hand. Rasmussen would like to fund successful projects. Ho asked about the matching requirement. She wondered if applicants can count money already spent for planning and permitting. Rasmussen answered currently no, but he is open to doing in-kind matches.

Bueren stated it might depend on if the match was for the total project cost, which would include things like permitting and design. The other possibility would be a match for just the cost of construction. Having permits before receiving a grant means CEQA and NEPA would need to be complete. If the District is going to stick with this criteria, a five-year delivery would be reasonable. If, however, grantees are starting without permits, a longer delivery would be needed as these are difficult projects. Rasmussen agreed and will recommend the District move to a seven year delivery period. He added he would like the grantees to succeed.

Trotter stated seven years for a project would be a good compromise, but 8-10 years would be an even better length. Kern suggested a stronger vision of what a successful project would look like needs to be made more clear, so applicants have a better idea about the project description objectives.

Graul explained the last five points are habitat related criteria. He stated staff are trying to ensure these are good restoration projects which will enhance habitat, provide potential access to District facilities and other environmental benefits. One item of particular interest is creating fish passages for steel head or for native fish that migrate within a watershed, but don't get out into the Bay. If fish are present and the project removes barriers throughout the watershed, it will receive more favorable consideration. Graul stated this would be the highest ranking project.

Graul touched on the criteria which calls for improving habitat for both state and federally threatened and endangered species. If the project enhances for three species an applicant will receive 15 points, and for five species 25 points, etc. Many of these projects interface with the Bay could easily get the five points for endangered species. Graul explained the criteria for improving water quality. The lowest criteria would be improving riparian vegetation. The next level would be improving riparian vegetation, but also stabilizing the creek, reducing erosion and creating a more stable alignment of the creek. Finally for the most points, fully restoring a degraded creek.

Graul explained the criteria for addressing climate change are still being considered as comments from the last public meeting are being incorporated. Improving flood protection and enhancing habitat would receive the most credit. The last criteria is for public access. Graul stated this is clear, the project needs to provide trail connection, or the creek restoration has an adjacent trail that connects to a District trail, so there may be more interpretive elements associated with the restoration.

Graul explained the PAC's comments are welcome and will be combined with the public comments. The program will be revised to take to the Board later this spring.

Gregory asked if there could be a single award of \$1.6 million. Rasmussen replied there will be a minimum of two projects, with an \$ 800,000 maximum grant award.

PAC member Robinson asked why the District went from a metro based to a points based allocation. What was the rationale for the original metro based allocation. Rasmussen replied it was to provide a balance across the District for WW funding. Rasmussen stated going to the point system allows more fairness Districtwide for creek projects which can straddle different metro areas.

Volin made a motion to follow staff's recommendation for Districtwide criteria and not restricted by the metro area. The motion was seconded by PAC member Yee. It was approved.

PAC member Rickard made a motion to recommend the program to the full board for approval. Yee seconded the motion. It was approved.

5. **PAC Member Comments**

PAC Member Palacios reported she attended the East Bay EDA vision awards where Directors Siden and Sutter were honored.

Yee reported about the permit program at Mission Peak. It is working fairly well. Users were very happy to learn the park hours had been extended.

Gregory announced on March 20th at San Leandro City Hall there will be a Friends of the Creek workshop for city officials and property owners. Dr. Ann Riley, Executive Director of the Waterways Restoration Institute, will lead the presentation.

6. **Report from Chair** – Kern reported PAC member Best has agreed to chair the Finance Subcommittee for 2017.

Kern reported the Executive Committee members for 2017 will be PAC members Kern, Bueren, Best, Rickard, Mercurio and Thompson. The Finance Committee will be comprised of PAC members Kern, Best, Mercurio, Yee, Sanwong, Robinson and Ho.

Kern asked Thompson and Madsen to discuss the direction the PAC will take on Plan Bay Area. Skaredoff expressed interest in joining the discussion.

Kern will work with Pfuehler to produce a draft outline on the dog issue to present to the PAC membership. Kern spent time with the Executive Committee and Board members on the PAC Work Plan.

7. **Board Committee Reports** – None.

8. **Status of Recommendations** – None.

9. **Old Business** – None.

10. **New Business** – None.

11. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the November 23, 2016 minutes.
2. The PAC approved a motion to recommend to the Board of Directors the adoption of Great California Delta Trail Naming.

3. The PAC approved a motion to recommend to the Board of Directors the approval of the draft procedural guidelines and method of allocation for a proposed \$1.6 million Urban Creeks Grant Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Clay
Confidential Secretary