

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
June 24, 2019

ATTENDING: Andrade, Brubaker, Corkin, Deschambault, Dieter, Godfrey, Ho, Nason, Obringer, Rickard, Robinson, Skaredoff, Williams
ABSENT: Best, Bueren, Burke, Tsutsui, Yee, Gregory, Lacy, Sanwong
STAFF ATTENDING: O'Connor, Pfuehler, Auker, Strawson-O'Hara, Lavalley, Thai, Clay, Johnson
GUESTS: Board Member Ellen Corbett
PUBLIC: Ollie Olson

The meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

1. **Approval of the Aril 22, 2019 Minutes:** The April 22, 2019 minutes were approved. The motion to approve was moved by PAC member Deschambault. PAC member Nason seconded approval of the minutes.
2. **Introductions:** PAC Vice Chair Rickard asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Director Ellen Corbett discussed current events in the District. She thanked staff for their work. She noted there was a large coordinated effort by all divisions to organize and host the Special Park District Forum. Corbett mentioned the District is celebrating the 85th Anniversary and will host several special events. Corbett commented the Volunteer Recognition Dinner was a great success and very well attended. Corbett touched on the funding received from Measure AA, the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, for the restoration of the dunes at Encinal Beach in Alameda. Corbett invited the PAC members to attend the Concerts at the Cove events. Corbett announced July 13 is the dedication date for the conveyance of Concord Hills. She encouraged PAC members to attend.
4. **Foundation Update:** Carol Johnson, AGM Public Affairs reported the Foundation received a \$2 million donation to assist in some work along the Oakland shoreline. The Foundation will be working with the District to make sure the money is well spent in the next couple of years.

Johnson reported the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy (ECCHC) has funded over \$60 million to assist the District in purchasing at least 15,000 acres in East Contra Costa County. The ECCHC board was looking for a nonprofit organization to assume the responsibility of their endowment. In thirty years, ECCHC will no longer be in existence. The endowment will fund the purchase of properties in perpetuity. The endowment is expected to reach about \$80 million. The Regional Parks Foundation was accepted as the recipient organization to manage these endowment funds.
5. **Public Comments:** None.
6. **Presentations:**
 - (I) a. **East Contra Costa County Delta Atlas – Neoma Lavalley, Acting Principal Planner, Kim Thai, Senior Planner**

Neoma Lavallo, Acting Principal Planner explained the East Contra Costa County Delta Atlas is a collaborative effort within the Planning and GIS Department. Its main objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of existing conditions, potential opportunities and constraints within the East Contra Costa County area of the Delta. Staff intends to use the East Contra Costa County Delta Atlas as an informational tool to guide District decision making. It considers recreation and open space preservation opportunities in accordance with the District's mission to preserve a rich heritage of natural and cultural resources, provide open space, parks, trails, safe and healthful recreation, and environmental education. The Atlas is also a regional planning document for the future. Data on recreation and development projects and priorities was gathered as part of a collaborative stakeholder process with internal District staff and external partner agency staff. The Atlas provides information and projections on sea-level rise, demographics and development projects in the Delta.

Lavallo reported an external stakeholder meeting was held. Representatives from the local cities, jurisdictions and state agencies attended to discuss work being done in this area. Lavallo thanked staff for their help producing the Atlas.

PAC member Andrade asked if the District is in contact with other planning agencies north and east of the Delta. Lavallo replied there was a lot of participation from the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, Oakley, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California State Parks, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Delta Stewardship Council, Department of Water Resources, ECCHC, State Coastal Conservancy and UC Davis.

PAC member Obringer asked if Save Mt. Diablo is a partner. She also asked if the ongoing discussion by cities about the urban limit line and development factored into this report. Lavallo replied staff did not specifically reach out to Save Mt. Diablo. She will provide them the document. Lavallo continued this is meant to be a living document and will be updated.

Deschambault asked if this was the first time the document was created. Lavallo replied yes. Deschambault asked if Adapting to Rising Tides (ART) and San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) were involved. Lavallo replied they did look at the data about adapting to rising tides. BCDC's jurisdiction stops a little to the west of the project area.

PAC member Robinson said it is great to see the results of the stakeholder meetings last year. BCDC and ART are holding an East Contra Costa County stakeholder meeting in July. It would be a great place to share this document. Robinson mentioned there is no public swimming access to the Delta in East Contra Costa County.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

(R) b. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) – Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services

Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services, provided a PowerPoint presentation about the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Auker stated the District received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. Auker stated one of the reasons the District has a AAA rating is because the District has strong fiscal policies.

Auker explained the District is in sound financial condition. The complete reconciliation of the 2018 fiscal year demonstrates the continuing effectiveness of the District's sustainable financial approach. It reflects the strong support of the Board of Directors toward financial transparency and long-term planning. The CAFR records the continuing commitment of public funds to providing services through expenditures. Expenditures include land acquisition, development projects, employee wages and benefits, debt service on bonds, and all required and recommended governmental activities necessary to operate the District. These year-end financial results will be used as the basis for making recommendations to the Board of Directors for future budgets.

The District's net position totaled \$784.6 million, which increased by \$12.9 million in 2018 primarily due to property tax revenue being greater than budgeted. There were also some savings due to unpaid salaries and benefits from staff vacancies. Auker explained the key operating account for the District is the General Fund. Most of the District's revenues and expenditures are recorded in the General Fund. The District's major revenue source is general property tax. The District also does a great job securing grant funds. Federal grants were \$3.6 million. The District also receives millions in state and foundation grants. Another area of growth is interest revenue. 60% of the expenditures are for staff providing services in the parks. In this calendar year, the District was authorized to increase staffing by 15.8 full-time equivalents. As revenue grows, new parks are opened, land is acquired and staging areas added, so staffing must keep up.

Auker stated OPEB, or the Retiree Medical Liability, has a \$21.9 million liability. It covers over 1,136 retired District employees. Auker explained the total 2018 Pension and OPEB liabilities are \$148.8 million. The Board asked for additional money to be set aside in an irrevocable trust to prefund pensions. \$5.4 million has been accumulated in the trust. It will be used to stabilize rates. PAC member Skaredoff asked what a pension safety plan is. Auker replied the District's sworn police officers have a separate pension formula apart from other public safety employees.

PAC member Williams asked about \$5 million in the pension trust fund against \$150 million in liabilities, plus a 70% funded rate. He wondered if there is another source of committed money for OPEB and pension liability. Auker replied PERS pensions are a separate trust put into CalPERS. They hold the money, not the District. The District pays the minimum annual required contributions. Based on the District's actuarial information, CalPERS determines the amount the District needs to pay each year to adequately fund long term employee pensions. PERS has assets in the District's name that offset the liabilities. The District is at 70% full funded.

Andrade asked if new retirees will still get medical benefits. Auker replied there are still medical benefits for employees once they vest. Benefits are based on different categories for new employees. PAC member Corkin asked if the original OPEB trust is separate from the miscellaneous pension trust. Auker answered the District has a trust for the OPEB. It is another section of CalPERS. A special trust is holding these funds for retiree medical benefits.

PAC member Godfrey commented he attended a Board of Directors meeting for CalPERS in Sacramento. Some questions were about CalPERS making socially responsible investments. If they are investing in fossil fuels, how sustainable will that investment be in 15 to 20 years. Godfrey asked if the District has thoughts about how the money is invested. He wondered what is sustainably strong over a long period of time. Auker replied PERS has been working very hard for the last ten years to change their policies to be more sustainable. There are more retirees than there are active employees which is causing PERS to have some cash flow problems. PERS will have to change some their policies. PERS is trying to make sure the funds will be able to provide what is

promised. The District is exploring Environmental Social Governance investing (ESG), as are other California agencies.

Recommendation: Motion made by PAC member Godfrey. PAC member Skaredoff seconded the motion to approve the CAFR. The recommendation passed unanimously.

**(R) c. 2020 Measure CC Budget and Spending Plan – Debra Auker, AGM/CFO
Finance and Management Services**

Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services, explained the special excise parcel tax was approved by voters in Alameda and Contra Costa counties within the Measure CC boundaries in 2004. In November 2018, the voters approved an extension of this funding source as Measure FF. The current Measure CC tax receipts provide a consistent \$3.2 million per year in ongoing funding to projects and operations in the Measure CC area through the year 2020. This is the sunset date voters approved in 2004. The fiscal year of 2019/2020 is the last year for the tax levy. There is no deadline on spending the money.

The CC zone includes the District's older parks. Measure CC provides capital and maintenance money for the parks in the zone. Auker explained 83 projects were included in the ballot materials for Measure CC. Of that, 46 have been completed and the remaining 37 projects are on track. Total Measure CC expenditures is \$36,421,524 million and there is \$9,184,300 remaining. Most of the time the CC money is just a small fraction of the total spent on a project.

Auker reported Measure CC provides operational funding to pay for staffing and expenses associated with the operation of parks. Sample projects include year-round operations of the Crab Cove Visitor Center, vegetation management at Anthony Chabot and monitoring for the Dotson Family Marsh. Approximately \$886,505 is proposed as an appropriation for the preliminary 2020 expenditure plan.

Nason inquired about programing for citizens who live in the flatlands. There are parks, but no accessible programing for low income citizens within the Measure CC area south of Pinole. Auker replied a lot of stakeholder outreach was done for these specific funding allocations. Specific language about what Measure CC funding can be used for was included in the ballot. Auker continued Measure FF and CC aren't really recreation services focused. They are primarily for capital, maintaining safety, maintenance and resource management.

Corbett commented the District is currently undergoing a huge community outreach survey. The District is actively trying to find as many people possible to respond to the survey. The District will use the data for programing based on people's interests, concerns and needs. Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager asked the PAC to reach out to their communities to weigh in by taking the survey. Rickard stated if PAC members know groups who might be interested in the survey, he encourages them to participate. There are bookmarks available to distribute.

Williams asked if the District must zero out funding when Measure CC sunsets once Measure FF begins or can the District carry funding over. Auker replied they are treated as two separate funding sources. The District is committed to tracking every dollar of Measure CC funding. Measure CC includes a process for the Board of Directors to alter the expenditure plan if a project can't be done. Change requires a vote of the Board.

PAC member Ho asked for clarification about the recommendation before the committee. Auker explained staff put together a recommended 2020 budget for spending Measure CC about \$1.2 million in funding. Auker stated staff are asking the PAC to say this looks in line with what the voters approved. Staff would like the PAC to move forward a recommendation to the Board concurring this spending plan reflects the will of the voters. Ho stated the PAC was given the number, but not the breakdown of the total. Ho said it is hard to agree to a spending plan with limited documentation. Auker replied she would be happy to go over the details if Ho has questions. Ho asked if it goes before the Board of Directors before the next PAC meeting. Auker replied yes.

Nason made a motion to approve the staff recommendation, but to include a message encouraging the Board to consider how these funds can be of greater benefit to low income communities in the west central part of the CC zone from the southern portion of Richmond down to Emeryville. PAC member Dieter suggested the motion not state a location, but just that it is for low income.

Rickard restated the motion is the spending plan will be forwarded to the Board with a message that the PAC would like consideration be given to low income areas within the CC zone. Godfrey seconded the motion. Ho stated she will abstain because she feels she doesn't have enough detail about the Measure CC budget and 2020 spending plan.

Corbett asked if the PAC needs to approve prior to the Board meeting. Auker replied this could come back to the PAC again. The item that's going before the Board at the next meeting is to authorize the levy. There is a deadline to transmit the levy fee to the counties. Staff have not, however, begun the 2020 budget process, so there is time to bring additional information to the PAC about the spending plan. Auker restated the official language approved by the voters is for maintenance and capital. Staff can look at low income areas, but it is going to be for maintenance. Corbett shared the Board routinely discusses how to best make District resources available to low income communities. The Board is constantly interested in finding out ways to ensure more access to District programs. The Foundation raises a lot of money to provide transportation to many District parks. Transportation is often a barrier, because unfortunately, public transit is not always as good as the District would like it to be. Corbett stated the PAC's comments are reflected in many of the Board's conversations. It is something very important to the Board. It's not only programs needed, but transportation.

Corkin stated she walked precincts for the original Measure CC parcel tax and for the Measure FF extension. Corkin commented she is extremely grateful the District has committed to put many resources into vegetation management. It is important work that benefits us all. Ho made an amendment to the motion to recommend establishing the levy fee with the counties, but that the spending plan come back to the PAC with additional detail. Nason accepted the amendment and clarified the comment to benefit low income communities remain in the recommendation. Ho requested, in the future, the PAC should be provided more information, so she doesn't feel like she is being asked to rubberstamp something.

Jim O'Connor, AGM Operations offered to come back to the PAC with a presentation about programming in the area discussed.

Robinson asked the motion to be read again. Ho stated the motion is to recommend to the Board approval of the overall Measure CC 2020 Budget and Spending Plan, with a request that attention be paid to providing access to low income communities within the CC zone, and that additional details of the Spending Plan be provided to the Park Advisory Committee at the next meeting.

Williams asked if the presentation comes back to the committee, will it be informational for the PAC to understand. He wondered if the PAC have the authority to weigh in on specific projects. Ho stated the motion she made was to recommend the overall 2020 spending plan, because she understands that the total budget number is needed to establish the fee for the counties and staff had stated that the recommendation for the total budget number cannot wait until the next month's PAC meeting. Ho continued that she still thinks the PAC should review the details of what adds up to that total number, and that in the future that sort of detailed information should be provided before requesting a PAC recommendation. Pfuehler interjected, to be clear, these are voter approved projects and expenditures. They are locked in. The Measure is almost out of funding, so the scope of what can be modified by the Board is pretty limited with minimal flexibility. It would take a Board action to actually change spending allocations. Auker said staff could provide details to provide more clarity. Comments made by the PAC would be forwarded to the Board as staff put together the 2020 budget. The PAC's role is advisory to the Board of Directors. Comments on the spending plan would be advisory to the Board of Directors and staff would clearly communicate them as they put the budget together.

Recommendation: Motion made by PAC member Nason. PAC member Godfrey seconded the motion to recommend to the Board of Directors approval of the overall Measure CC 2020 Budget and Spending Plan, with a request that attention be paid to providing access to low income communities within the Measure CC area, and that additional detail for the 2020 Spending Plan be provided to the Park Advisory Committee at the next meeting.

The recommendation passed unanimously. Deschambault and Ho abstained.

(I) d. 2019 Measure WW Update - Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services

Debra Auker, AGM/CFO Finance and Management Services, provided an update about Measure WW the District's voter-approved 2008 General Obligation Bond Measure. The measure includes an annual status review of the program by the PAC. Auker stated the 2019 status report is based on information provided to the Directors during the annual Board Workshops.

Auker explained the Measure WW authorization of \$500 million was a continuance of the District's 1988 Measure AA. Of the \$500 million, \$125 million was for local grants to other agencies within the District's jurisdiction, leaving \$375 million for District capital purposes. Of the \$375 million, 75% is allocated for acquisition and 25% is allocated for development. The District issued several series of bonds in 2009, 2013 and 2017.

Measure WW includes a 7% or \$26.25 million reserve. The balance is currently \$20.8 million. Measure WW reserves were utilized for the first time during 2015 following Board approved appropriations:

- \$1.5 million for the Point Pinole Atlas Road Bridge project (2015)

- \$857,540 for the restoration of Dotson Family Marsh at Point Pinole (2015)
- \$1,600,333 for the San Francisco Bay Trail Pinole Shores to Bay Front Park project (2016)
- \$200,000 for bond related administrative fees (2016)
- \$1 million for San Francisco Bay Trail connection behind Golden Gate Fields (2018)

Staff has received guidance from the Board for the future use of Measure WW reserves, but no consensus has been reached on establishing a formal policy. Staff will return to the Board to discuss specific proposals and alternatives before more formal appropriations of WW reserves are made.

Andrade inquired about accounting for inflation. Does the District want to spend funding earlier on projects as bond funds retain less worth less over time? Auker replied the District tries to get projects completed. There are a lot of challenges, such as environmental regulations, before a project can be completed. Andrade asked when Measure WW ends. Auker replied there is no end date. It is when the bond money is spent. Pfuehler replied it is projected to end in twenty years.

Ho asked about the restore Dotson Marsh project. She asked why it is listed in several different places. She wondered if it needs to satisfy different criteria. Auker replied some of the large projects utilize multiple allocation areas.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

PAC Member Comments

Dieter recommended some changes to how the packet is posted online. Dieter suggested it would be easier to follow if there was a link for each item on the agenda to the corresponding attachments. Searching through a full PDF document is time consuming. Auker replied it is in the works to upgrade software and provide direct links in online meeting packets.

Godfrey reported he worked with an Eagle Scout over the last three months on a project near Lake Chabot in the Redwood Canyon Golf Course. They replicated work done on the east coast by the author of the book *Honeybee Democracy*. Godfrey explained they tested feral bees to see if they get the same diseases and problems as the beekeepers are seeing in their hives. They found there was essentially no varroa mite on the feral bees. Godfrey thanked the District for the opportunity to do this work.

Obringer explained that she got involved with Concord politics because of the redevelopment of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station. She shared she met with Director Lane and they discussed forming an advisory committee between the City of Concord and the District for coordination moving forward. She stated her community is excited about the park being developed.

Skaredoff announced an employee of his conservation district will be joining the District as the Rangeland Manager. He announced two conservation district board members will retire.

Deschambault announced Contra Costa County has recently begun the process of updating their general plan of the unincorporated areas.

Andrade visited Big Break Regional Shoreline at the Delta. He commented that it is a model for the rest of the Delta. He also went for a nice hike at Lake Chabot during the Summer Solstice.

Robinson went on the Board Field trip to Bay Point. It was good to see the trails and opportunities available. The Contra Costa Watershed Symposium announced they have a keynote speaker for the conference. The conference speaker will be Obi Koffman author of the California Field Atlas.

Robinson stated she went to Sandy Beach Solano County Park in Rio Vista at the Delta. She commented the District is doing much better job than Solano county in controlling invasive species.

7. **Report from Chair** – None.
8. **Board Committee Reports** – None.
9. **Old Business** – None.
10. **New Business** – None.
11. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the April 22, 2019 minutes.
2. The PAC approved the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
3. The PAC approved the overall Measure CC 2020 Budget and Spending Plan, with a request that attention be paid to providing access to low income communities within the Measure CC area, and that additional detail for the 2020 Spending Plan be provided to the Park Advisory Committee at the next meeting.