

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETINGS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

November 19, 2019

C. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Board Legislative Committee (10.18.2019) _____ (Corbett)

Present

Board: Chair Ellen Corbett, Colin Coffey, Dee Rosario

Staff: Robert E. Doyle, Ana Alvarez, Erich Pfuehler, Nika Hoffman, Lisa Baldinger, Debra Fuller, Debra Auker, Jeff Rasmussen, Jason Rosenburg, Juliana Schirmer, Matthew James

Consultants: Doug Houston

Public: Eric Holmes, Rick Rickard, Taj Tashombe

This meeting was called to order at 12:33 PM.

I. STATE LEGISLATION / OTHER MATTERS

A. NEW LEGISLATION

1. **AB 1298 (Mullin D-South San Francisco) – Climate Resiliency, Fire Risk Reduction, Recycling, Groundwater and Drinking Water Supply, Clean Beaches, and Jobs Infrastructure Bond Act of 2020**

Legislative Advocate Doug Houston mentioned AB 1298, a bit different from SB 45 and AB 352, is an infrastructure-oriented climate resources bond measure with several funding allocations for which the District would be eligible. As of now, no funds have been associated with the bond. A tactical purpose of AB 1298 is to move Assembly Members to the negotiation table.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

2. Other Matters

B. OTHER STATE MATTERS

1. **Discussion about AB 1191 (Bonta D-Alameda) – State Lands Commission Howard Terminal Oakland Waterfront Ballpark Act**

V.P. Government Affairs for Oakland Athletics Taj Tashombe addressed AB 1191 now signed into law. Tashombe presented about the A's plans for a ballpark at Howard Terminal. It would be a 34,000 seat, first-of-its-kind, public access ballpark with year-round park atop the roof. The site will provide public

amenities as well as connect a gap in the Bay Trail. Separate from Howard Terminal is the Coliseum site. In support of East Oakland, the A's plan to steward this multipurpose project to provide affordable housing, workforce development, youth sports and educational opportunities. The site will feature parks and wetland restoration. General Manager Robert E. Doyle expressed opportunities for creek/wetlands restoration and providing shoreline access to a community impeded by the freeway. Director Ellen Corbett thanked the A's for staying in East Oakland, for investing in and being stewards of the community. Director Colin Coffey expressed initial concern as to why the District would engage in this effort. After explanation by General Manager Doyle, Director Coffey agreed these combined projects present significant land use opportunities for the District. Eric Holmes from AFSCME 2428 voiced support of the projects, encouraging acceptance of the staff recommendation to "support."

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

2. State Legislation Year in Review

Legislative Advocate Doug Houston noted the state budget going into the fiscal year had \$6 to 8 million in surplus revenues. State Parks received \$34 million one-time capital outlay for projects. The budget awarded over \$200 million in funding to individual members on the resource side with the District receiving \$4 million for McCosker Creek Restoration. \$40 million will be available for urban greening and urban forestry. Proposition 68 had a direct set aside of 5% for community access and programming. The Department of Finance suggested it is not an appropriate use of bond funds. A substantial amount of Prop. 68 Bay Program money might be spent on Alameda Creek for improvements. General Manager Doyle expressed concern about directing Bay Area Program Prop 68 money to one project. It is about half of the highly competitive funds at \$30 million for one project. Houston stated bonds SB 45, AB 352 and AB 1298 moved out of their house of origin. The last word from Administration was they were not ready to support a climate bond just yet. Houston mentioned AB 1111, which would create an Office of Outdoor Industry at the State level, has stalled. AB 209 was signed into law and seeks to create outdoor equity for environmental education. SB 8, signed into law, stops smoking in State Parks. AB 834 on water quality and algal blooms was signed into law. For next year, the District needs to monitor park development impact fees. There have been several bills this year looking to reduce or eliminate fees.

3. Other Matters – N/A

II. FEDERAL LEGISLATION / OTHER MATTERS

A. NEW LEGISLATION

1. S. 2384 (Hirono D-HI) – Botanical Sciences and Native Plant Materials Research, Restoration and Promotion Act

Government Affairs Manager Erich Pfoehler stated the District has supported similar legislation in the past. It encourages use of native plants in Federal projects and creates a grant program for research. The District might be able to take advantage of funding to keep plants off the endangered species list.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

2. S. 2467 (Booker D-NJ) and H.R. 4273 (Gomez D-CA) – Transit to Trails Act

Pfoehler shared the Transit to Trails Act will provide corridors for communities to connect with open space. S. 2467 would create a \$10 million a year grant program. The maximum single year award would be \$500,000. The District was able secure bill language stating "a special purpose district (including a park district)" qualifies. Director Dee Rosario asked how the grants would be used. Pfoehler envisioned their use in Richmond, Oakland and Antioch for extensions of paved trails.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

3. H.R. 4197 (Maloney D-NY) – Revitalizing Cities Through Parks Enhancement Act

Pfuehler said the Revitalizing Cities Through Parks Enhancement Act provides funding to nonprofits for open space and park creation primarily in urban areas. A \$10 million grant program with a max of \$250,000 per entity per year. The program and grant level are a good size for the Regional Parks Foundation participation.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

4. H.R. 4236 (Quigley D-IL) – Reducing Waste in National Parks Act

Pfuehler explained the Reducing Waste in National Parks Act is essentially an effort to eliminate the sale or distribution of plastic water bottles in National Parks. This policy was originally enacted under the Obama Administration and National Parks Director Jonathan Jarvis. The current Administration rescinded the Act. H.R. 4236 would re-codify it.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

5. H.R. 4512 (Barragan D-CA) – Outdoors for All Act

Pfuehler stated the Outdoors for All Act creates a Federal grant program to fund urban parklands. The District is eligible for grant funds as referenced by the ‘special purpose district’ program language in the bill.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

6. Other Matters

B. OTHER FEDERAL MATTERS

I. Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD Transportation Discretionary Grant Program Overview

Pfuehler shared BUILD was previously TIGER. This administration has refocused priorities to improve safety and traffic. The District is considering applying to the program. The BUILD grant program has been allocated \$1 billion for next year with a maximum of \$25 million available per request. With a package of trail projects, overcrossings and more, \$25 million would have a big impact. General Manager Doyle commented many gaps remaining are the most expensive and this funding could be critical.

2. Other Matters

III. 2020 CONSULTANT CONTRACTS

A. Houston Magnani and Associates

Pfuehler stated Houston Magnani and Associates compensation is tied to Consumer Price Index (CPI). Director Corbett requested action to approve the contract as recommended with a correction before it goes to the board clarifying the additional \$12,000 is included in the overall sum and not in addition to. She asked when the contract comes up again the District should look at the CPI. Director Coffey agreed that perhaps it should not be automatically awarded.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

B. Strategic Research Institute

Pfuehler requested the Strategic Research Institute contract proposal be continued at its current rate for two years. Director Corbett requested a list of Dr. Manross' past projects to understand his work with the District and gave direction to staff to gather all data from him.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

C. E2 Strategies, LLC

Pfuehler said E2 Strategies, Peter Umhofer's firm, assists the District in Washington, D.C. Due to his support the District was able to include special park district language in multiple Federal bills. He may assist with Federal grant applications next year. Director Corbett noted the contract is not to exceed \$100,000. She also requested clarification about how much he has received in the past years. Pfuehler responded Mr. Umhofer has always been well below the \$100,000 annual cap.

The Board Legislative Committee voted unanimously to SUPPORT.

IV. VALUE AND HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Acting Legislative Assistant Nika Hoffman presented about the value of Government Affairs in the District's history, a presentation which spans the 85-year history of the Park District. Pfuehler thanked Hoffman for her effort to pull together this presentation. It will become a blueprint for presentations that can be turned into a historical chronicle for the District. Thanks to General Manager Doyle for suggesting the idea and support. He also acknowledged Acting Grants Manager Lisa Baldinger's support and assistance in its creation. General Manager Doyle added we will continue to update the presentation as we speak with people. Director Coffey mentioned someday to bring this presentation to the full Board.

V. HIGH LEVEL PARK AND PUBLIC INTEREST DISTRICTWIDE SURVEY RESULTS

Acting Grants Manager Lisa Baldinger provided an update about the Park and Public Interest Community Engagement Survey. The survey was widely available and after three months there were 8,268 responses. As a high-level overview, staff discovered 99% of respondents found the District is a valuable resource. The primary reason folks visit the parks are for health, stress relief, and time with family and friends. Top feature feedback requests were for water bottle refilling stations, access to composting and recycling containers, and additional restrooms. Having collected a variety of information, next steps will be to work with the District GIS team to map out results. Pfuehler relayed how engaged staff was in asking for additional copies of the survey form to use when interacting with public. The media was positive. Anecdotally, park visitors were happy to provide opinions and stories. An additional benefit was by simply asking people for their opinion, the District's brand became even stronger. General Manager Doyle added the survey was kept open longer at the request of Interpretation and Recreation staff.

IV. FASTER BAY AREA

Pfuehler raised awareness about FASTER Bay Area, a 40-year, \$100 billion regional transportation measure that has the potential to improve all the different transportation systems, including active transportation. It is being tracked at the state legislative level. District staff will be in communication with MTC about the need to include active transportation language with the overall package.

V. ARTICLES

VI. OPEN FORUM PUBLIC COMMENT

VII. BOARD COMMENTS

This meeting adjourned at 2:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Debra Fuller

Confidential Secretary

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