

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
MONTE RIO RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Monday, January 8, 2024, at 5:00 pm  
20488 Hwy 116, Monte Rio, CA 95462  
In Person**

- 1. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Director Jean Sasso

The Oath of Office was administered by the Board Clerk Marina McTaggart to Steve Baxman, Allison Baumhefner, and Justin Copeland.

- 2. Roll Call and Approval of Today’s Agenda and Minutes from November 27, 2023** (*no meeting was held in December*)

Present: Directors Steve Baxman, Jean Sasso, Allison Baumhefner (*via zoom*), Justin Copeland and Administrator Marina McTaggart. Absent Paul Dubray

Jean moved, Justin seconded approval of this agenda and minutes. All were in favor.

- 3. Public Comment** – None

- 4. Old Business** – Per capita grant- board approval of Gillis Construction contract for work at Creekside Skate Park. Jean moved to approve the Gillis Construction contract, second by Justin. Roll call vote- Steve Baxman- aye, Jean Sasso- aye, Allison Baumhefner- aye.

- 5. New Business** –

- A.** Marina reported that she had received a resignation letter from Director Paul Dubray.
- B.** Nominations for 2024 Board Chair and Officers- Allison nominated Steve Baxman as Board Chair and Jean Sasso as Vice Chair. All were in favor.
- C.** Reorganization of Standing Committees- Facilities and Safety Committee- Steve and Jean, Marketing and Public Outreach- Allison and Justin, Budget Committee- Allison and Justin, Personnel Committee- Steve and Jean.
- D.** Approval of COLA increases for MRRPD non seasonal employees and increase in compensation for Administrative position while performing dual roles (Event Director) Jean moved to accept both the COLA and Administrative position increases- second by Justin. Roll Call vote – Steve Baxman-aye, Jean Sasso-aye, Allison Baumhefner-aye, Justin Copeland-aye.

- 6. Reports & Information**

**A. Board Reports** – see New Business (A) above.

- B. Staff Reports**

Marina reported on the following:

- The yearly audit will take place March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Engagement letter has been signed.

- The owners of the Monte Rio Theater have requested to present at the February board meeting with an update on future plans for the theater. (*the theater is not on MRRPD property – presentation would fall under ‘public comment’*).
- Michael Makdisi The County Ombudsman Michael Makdisi has begin holding public office hours in the history room on select Tuesday afternoons from 2pm – 6pm.
- New Tuesday evening yoga class begins on January 9.
- Ori Ginzberg from Lightwave Café has expressed an interest in holding monthly pop up dinners at the Community Center. Dates to be determined. Ori has also expressed an interest in holding a ‘table tennis night’. He will follow up with Marina.
- Friends of Rio Nido has contacted the district regarding holding an insurance seminar for Sonoma County. The topic is homeowners’ insurance, and the seminar would be presented by an outreach analyst from CA Dept of Insurance and a representative from United policyholders – a consumer advocacy non-profit. This is a topic of great community interest and MRRPD has agreed to be a sponsor of the event.
- Brian and Stephanie of Praxis Architects are representing MRRPD in working with Ag and Open Space on the Sweetwater Springs Acquisition (adjacent to the Monte Rio Redwoods Regional Park) Ag and Open Space will acquire the property, put a conservation easement on it and then transfer the property to MRRPD. Sonoma Land Trust will come on board as a consultant to MRRPD.

**C. Budget Committee** – None

**D. Facilities/Safety Committee** – See attached draft minutes from January 3, 2024 FSC meeting.

**E. Personnel Committee** – None

**F. Marketing Public Outreach** – None

**7. Correspondence** – None

**8. Action Items** – None

**9. Review Monthly Accounts Payable:** The P&L report reflected December expenses of \$27,957.23

**10. Next Meeting/Adjournment** – Meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2024, at 5:00 pm.

**FACILITIES AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING (in person)**  
**Wednesday October 4, 2023 @ 8:30 am**

**1. Call to Order - 8:35am**

**2. Roll Call and Approval of Today's Agenda and Minutes of September 6, 2023**

Present: Board members Steve Baxman and Jean Sasso; Administrator Marina McTaggart and Asst. Administrator Sherry Pimsler (by phone); Park Supervisor Leslie Hofelich and Asst. Park Supervisor Jim Lewis, PRAXIS Architects consultants Brian Grant and Stephanie Felch

Approval of agenda and September 6<sup>th</sup> minutes moved by Jean; second by Leslie. All in favor.

**3. Public Comment – None**

**4. Reports and Information**

Leslie

- Reimbursement for the drinking fountain was discussed.
- A leak under the MRCC kitchen hand sink was fixed.
- Peter of CoolPoint repaired the ice machine, which was making a lot of noise. Under warranty.
- Peter and Leslie discussed purchase of a new fridge, which would cost around \$750. Leslie will report back.
- A sensor light at Creekside Park was mistakenly tied into the irrigation. It has been addressed.
- Logs have been placed in front of the mural at Creekside as bumper guards.
- Schedule for having septic systems pumped every year was discussed.
  - 1x/yr for the Amphitheater
  - 1x for Creekside (Fire House partly paying through annual contribution?)
  - 2x for F&W restrooms
- Bent irrigation pipe behind Creekside. Bigger logs around path now secured with rebar to prevent further damage.
- Leslie suggested ordering two new BBQ's. Existing ones are 8-10 years old, with holes in the back.
- Also, new kayaks needed.

Marina

- A meeting with Ag + Open Space is scheduled for Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, to introduce Olivia Fiori, new Acquisition Specialist, who will oversee the Starrett Hill project.
- New office hours are Mon. through Wed. 12:00-3:00. (Mondays only Oct 30–Nov 18.)
- There was a security issue on Saturday, Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. Everyone was called.
- The December Board meeting/holiday party is scheduled for Nov 27<sup>th</sup>, a day after the Holiday Craft Fair.
- The County has scheduled a vacation rental workshop at the Community Center.
- There was a snafu with the Friends of Villa Grande party planned for the Community Center, so they have pulled out and will rent the F Street Studios instead.
- There are now 14-16 vendors for the Craft Fair. Marina plans to make it more festive and has boosted the post on FaceBook. There will be Christmas music and a tree.

## 5. New Business - None

## 6. Old Business

### A. Bridge Replacement Update

### B. Grant Updates

- Brian – Ag + Open Space Permitted Use approval was applied for (*and subsequently received*) for the planned skate park expansion as part of the Per Capita Grant.
- Marina announced that the Deed Restriction documents have now been done properly and recorded. She will be requesting copies via USPS and Rosalind plans to request as well.
- Brian is looking for a completion date for Creekside since everything must be in by June of 2024. He is working on the project completion documents for the Community Center.
- The Creekside skatepark area will be closed off during construction, but Ori and Gal plan to be gone during that period.

### C. Flood Impact Progress Report

### D. Emergency Preparedness –

- A check will be sent to Presray as a deposit for the flood gate parts.
- The generator at MRCC and Creekside will be serviced at the same time.

### E. Update on Trails Projects (none on MRRPD property)

- Steve would like to see all of the trails identified on a map. There was an emergency and the responders had a hard time locating the person.

## 7. Safety Committee Report

- On Friday August 25, Bonnie Lewkowicz, who is an ADA consultant (not certified) toured our beach facilities with Park Supv. Leslie Hofelich. Bonnie's report was received, citing concerns regarding the ADA parking and boardwalk accessibility. Bonnie suggested adding an extra pullout along the boardwalk to allow wheelchairs to pass one another. She also suggested making the picnic access and turnout wider. Leslie will extend the parking offload area another 5 ft. into the berm and will add another ADA port-a-potty under the bridge.
- Sherry attended a webinar given by the Coastal Conservancy, who have grant money available for accessibility. She was referred to Orange County, who have been working with the Conservancy to make beach wheelchairs available to districts.
- F&W restroom doors, including ADA, were replaced by HTI.
- Steve and his crew continue to work on sink holes.

## 8. Adjourn/Next Meeting – Adjourned at 9:22; next meeting on November 8, 2023

**FACILITIES AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING (in person)**  
**Wednesday November 13, 2023 @ 12:00 noon**

**9. Call to Order – 12:05 pm**

**10. Roll Call and Approval of Today's Agenda and Minutes of October 4, 2023**

Present: Board members Steve Baxman and Jean Sasso; Asst. Administrator Sherry Pimsler; Park Supervisor Leslie Hofelich; PRAXIS Architects consultants Brian Grant and Stephanie Felch.

Absent: Marina McTaggart

Approval of agenda and minutes of October 4; moved by Leslie; seconded by Jean, with correction to remove conversation at end of meeting, unrelated to FSC business. All in favor.

**11. Public Comment – None**

**12. Reports and Information**

Leslie

- Leslie reported on installation of a Comcast modem in the Community Center by Equitable Access (EQAC) to facilitate community-wide wifi.
- Installation of the water refill station, funded by a Zero Waste Sonoma grant, has been completed. Work (reimbursed by the grant) was performed by Leslie and Jim.
- Brian and Stephanie are supplying bay logs to place along the walking path across the creek from a neighbor's property, to prevent a possible tenant from coming onto MRRPD property to mill a fallen tree. He has been told many times that he cannot continue; Steve will talk to him, but if he does continue, we will involve Fish & Wildlife.
- In Marina's absence, Leslie oversaw two big events at the Community Center this past weekend: a shower on Saturday and a memorial on Sunday. All went without incident.
- Jim and Leslie have been lifting the bottlebrush canopy in the Community Center back yard. The apple tree may need to be removed because it is pushing against the fence.
- Leslie asked Sherry to check in with the McCollum (MGE) tech who last inspected the Creekside OSWTS about the need to pump the system. Brian suggested contacting David Lincoln, the tech who regularly performs the inspection. (Steve confirmed that the Fire House connection to MGE's monitoring system is up and running.)
- Leslie asked Steve to help her in cleaning out the culvert at Creekside that runs under Bohemian Hwy.

Sherry

- Ori and family are currently in Hawaii. They plan to remain in the area through the winter to see how weekend business goes and possibly do some pop-ups. Brian confirmed that work on the skate park will not interfere because it will take place on week days.
- Michael Makdisi, new ombudsman for the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) on wastewater issues, has reserved the Community Center for a public meeting on Nov. 29. Semi-monthly CAG meetings will possibly commence in January.
- A Cazadero resident is interested in holding Tuesday night yoga classes.
- Marina is in the process of correcting and updating some of the Events rental forms.
- We will host more vendors for this year's Craft Fair than last. New vendors have joined.
- Marina received a request from Sonoma County to see if MRRPD could offer the Community Center as a warming/cooling center. The Center does not qualify as a cooling center since it does not have air conditioning; also, staffing and wear and tear on the facility are a concern; and it would be a 3-day commitment that might interfere with scheduled

events. Although the County would reimburse facilities, the Committee agreed with Marina that it is not advisable.

- Sherry will attend a workshop on Nov. 14 about CAPRI site visits

### 13. New Business - None

### 14. Old Business

#### F. Bridge Replacement Update

#### G. Grant Updates

##### Per Capita

- Brian and Stephanie supplied Sherry with a list of the Community Center project close-out needs, indicating items they will handle and what is needed from the District.
- They have gathered sufficient bid information for the Creekside skatepark repair work and recommend a Sebastopol contractor. A contract will be ready for Board approval by November 27<sup>th</sup>, after which work will commence. Funding has already been approved. The plan is to close the lower park during the work, and rather than fencing off the area, use signage asking for cooperation from skaters. A portable toilet will be provided.
- This work may be an opportunity to reassess and possibly expand parking at Creekside.
- Ag + Open Space granted approval for the proposed skatepark project.

##### Coastal Commission

- The Commission referred MRRPD to Orange County where a grant funded by the Commission is being approved. MRRPD has requested to be on the RFP list for a beach wheelchair.

##### California Resilience Challenge – [resilience@bayareacouncil.org](mailto:resilience@bayareacouncil.org) –

- [Mitigation funding is available for agencies facing climate threats, such as repeated flooding. The last RFP period closed 9/29, but it is something to keep an eye on for the Teen Center and Old School Wing. Sherry signed up for mailings.](#)

#### H. Emergency Preparedness

- Brian confirmed with Presray this morning that flood gate parts will be shipped right after Thanksgiving and should arrive within two weeks of shipping.
- Sherry is working on revisions to the IIPP Policy in response to CAPRI's last site visit.

#### I. Update on Trails Projects (none on MRRPD property)

- Steve Baxman and Marina attended an October 25 site tour of Sweetwater Springs property with Ag + Open Space Acquisition Specialist Olivia Fiori and her assistant Simon; SWSWD Board members Suki Robb Wilder and Rich Holmer; and SWSWD GM Eric Schanz.
- Notes from a subsequent meeting on Nov. 2 with Olivia Fiori are attached. This is the first of monthly meetings.

### 15. Safety Committee Report

- Sherry asked about MRRPD's involvement with the Fire Safe Sonoma group, as part of the Bohemian Collaborative. MRRPD will defer to and support the Fire District's involvement. Steve said the MRFPD has received a chipper as part of a recent grant. They have need of a masticator and boom truck.
- ADA: The recent site visit from an ADA consultant missed an opportunity to assess sites other than the beach.
- ADA restroom door installation complete at the F&W restrooms.

### 16. Adjourn/Next Meeting – Adjourned at 1:00 pm; next meeting on January 3, 2024

So. Co. Ag + Open Space meeting re Starrett Hill Acquisition  
November 2, 2023

Present: Olivia Fiori, Acquisition Specialist for So. Co. Ag + Open Space; Eric Schanz, GM for Sweetwater Springs Water District; Brian Grant, PRAXIS Architects; Sherry Pimsler, Assistant Administrator

### Project Structure

To show how a Project Structure Map is used, Olivia began by displaying one for a recently closed project in Cloverdale.

- A Project Structure Map outlines envelopes drawn around specific planned uses within the property, such as agricultural areas, buildings, or parking lots, for example, and can even include undefined locations, such as camping areas, etc. The map may include utilities or structures that will need maintenance to ensure conformance with the conservation easement. Project structure is a method to ensure that there will be no private benefit, ensure IRS verification, and, for the stewardship team, the ability to see what is allowed or restricted (for forested recreation projects, for example, allowance for restrooms or a ranger residence to provide a point of contact and security on site). The Project Structure also facilitates future options. (Olivia is sending Brian a list of common Project Structure elements.) The initial on-site visit of October 25 was to begin to check out possibilities.
- Beyond SCAOS development of the Project Structure, Regional Parks may be able to provide input for additional elements such as picnic benches, pavement, decking, and more extensive facilities.
- The Project Structure also needs to define areas that SWSWD will need in order to access their facilities. (Eric will coordinate with SCAOS to share SWSWD needs.)
- In addition, sensitive sites need to be defined, such as meadows and areas that need protecting, or spaces defined where people might enjoy the view, to give an example.
- The last site visit gave Olivia a feel of the road construction. (There is no regulation over steepness.)
- Easement structure can include two pathways: specific requests or the overall master plan.
  - Initial Public Access Operations and Maintenance provides funding (10% of their budget) for: master planning; enhancing access; critical crossings such as a culvert; and O&M funding on a reimbursement basis for the first three years - either pre- or post-closing. She has a contract sample that lists requests to give us some examples. With smaller districts, Olivia suggests starting work on a proposal for funding to submit before closing (by end of 2024 according to the calendar). She mentioned that IPAOM provides generous opportunities.
- Reg Parks has indicated they will help with security aspects and trail development; also, vegetation management (grant writing?). Important to keep parallel conversations going with Steve Ehret.
- The closing is scheduled to take place by Jan. of 2025 and Project Structure wrapped up by Jan. of 2024.

- In regard to the possibility of a trail straddling both Starrett Hill and Regional Parks property, Open Space can only fund what occurs on the Starrett Hill ownership. \_\_\_\_\_ might have to be submitted separately(?).
- The access point across from Creekside was discussed. Olivia will ask Steve Ehret about it, since the map indicates that it is part of the Regional Parks acquisition.

### Calendar

Olivia reviewed the project calendar. Regular meetings will take place the first Thursday of every month at 3:30 pm; next meeting on Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>. She will try to fit in another site visit, inviting everyone.

Post meeting, Olivia sent out the following Action Items:

1. Draft and/or provide a list of common project structure elements. (She will send at a future date.)
2. Provide project team a copy of Ag + Open Space's Initial Public Access Operations and Maintenance (IPAOM) Policy
3. Provide project team a sample contract for IPAOM (will send at a future date)
4. Schedule another site visit for Olivia, Brian, and others to hike a portion of the property
  - a. She will follow up with some potential dates soon!
5. Schedule a site visit with Steve Ehret