

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

**Monday, February 12, 2023, at 5:00 pm
20488 Hwy 116, Monte Rio, CA 95462
In Person**

1. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm by Board Chair Steve Baxman.

2. **Roll Call and Approval of Today’s Agenda and Minutes from January 8, 2023**
Present: Directors Steve Baxman, Jean Sasso, Allison Baumhefner (*via zoom*), Justin Copeland (arrived 5:08) and Administrator Marina McTaggart.

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

3. **Public Comment** – None

4. **Old Business** – None

5. **New Business** –
 - A. There were 3 applications received for the vacant board position due to the resignation of Director Paul Dubray. The 3 applicants were interviewed at today’s meeting. After careful consideration the decision was made to offer the position to David Gatlin. Jean moved to accept David as the new board member – second by Justin. Roll call vote – Steve Baxman, aye; Jean Sasso, aye; Allison Baumhefner, aye; Justin Copeland, aye. Marina will notify the applicants regarding the Board’s decision and will be in touch with David about next steps.
 - B. Approval of recommendation from the Budget Committee regarding inter budgetary transfers to balance payroll expenses categories. Justin moved to accept the Budget Committee’s recommendations, second by Jean. Roll call vote- Steve Baxman, aye; Jean Sasso, aye; Allison Baumhefner, aye; Justin Copeland, aye. Marina will notify accountant Craig Collins to make the necessary adjustments in QuickBooks.
 - C. Approval of recommendations from the Personnel Committee regarding merit increases for the following positions – Maintenance Mgr., (retroactive to January 1, 2024) Asst. Administrator, (effective February 1, 2024) Park Supv., and Bookkeeper (effective April 1, 2024) Jean moved to accept the Personnel Committee’s recommendations, second by Allison. Roll call vote- Steve Baxman, aye; Jean Sasso, aye; Allison Baumhefner, aye; Justin Copeland, aye. Marina will notify the Bookkeeper to make the necessary changes in Paychex.

6. **Reports & Information**
 - A. **Board Reports** – None

B. Staff Reports

Marina reported on the following:

- LACO Associates is assisting the District with the 5-year beach permit process. MRRPD has created an account with the Environmental Permit Information Management System (EPIMS) to which LACO also has access. There was a concern raised about the original quote of \$20,000. Brian indicated that the end amount could be substantially less as a grading permit may not be required. The permit process is progressing.
- County Analyst and Ombudsman Michael Makdisi will be extending his twice monthly office hours in the history room through the end of June.
- \$704.00 has been received as partial payment of the per capita grant for the Community Center.
- Marina took a free online graphic design class offered by the Sonoma Small Business Development Center.
- Marina was able to procure a 2nd water filling station for the Amphitheater through a grant from Zero Waste Sonoma. The order has been placed and Leslie and Jim will do the install.
- MRRPD is a sponsor of the upcoming Homeowners Insurance Seminar in partnership with Friends of Rio Nido and Fire Safe Sonoma. Meeting arrangements are being finalized. A podium has been ordered and Monte Rio Fire will assist with chair and table setup.
- Marina reported receiving a letter from the State Controllers office regarding unclaimed property in the amount of \$190.98 for which a check was to have been enclosed, but no check was received. Marina will follow up.
- There was an incident with a community member acting aggressively towards the District's janitorial employee. The community member was arrested, and the janitorial employee has filed a restraining order. Steve will follow up with law enforcement.

C. Budget Committee – see section 5 B above

D. Facilities/Safety Committee – See attached draft minutes from Feb 7, 2024 FSC meeting.

E. Personnel Committee – See Section 5 C above

F. Marketing Public Outreach –

- Justin reported that the Committee proposed using the remaining marketing funds to promote Facilities rentals (weddings, receptions, showers, parties etc) rather than promoting the beach.

7. Correspondence – None

8. Action Items – None

9. Review Monthly Accounts Payable: The P&L report reflected January expenses of \$19,042.20

10. Next Meeting/Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2024, at 5:00 pm.

FACILITIES AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING (in person)
Wednesday February 7, 2024 @ 8:30am

1. Call to Order – 8:30am

2. Roll Call and Approval of Today's Agenda and Minutes of January 3, 2024

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

Approval of agenda and minutes of January 3, 2024; moved by Leslie; second by Jean. All in favor.

3. Public Comment – None

4. Reports and Information

Leslie & Jim

- The heater at the Community Center stopped working. Repair work cost was \$1400. A yearly maintenance check/tune up was suggested.
- A small shed was built behind an existing shed for storage of flood gate parts.
- Jim has added a second wireless microphone receiver to the AV system. We now have 2 wireless microphones and one wired microphone. A podium will also be ordered and available for meeting use.
- Coit has cleaned the carpet and also the grout in the kitchen.
- Jim has been sanding and painting door trims in the Redwood Room and has power washed the inside of the restrooms at Creekside
- Leslie suggested adding barn doors to the playhouse structure at the Amphitheater which would provide additional space for events.
- A new lawn mower will be needed.
- There are cracks and pitting at the tennis courts and they may need resurfacing in the near future. The District will request an estimate on cost to resurface.
- Pieces of plywood were installed between the stage and the concrete at the Amphitheater to prevent access by persons and animals.
- Graffiti at Creekside above the designated graffiti mural was painted over.
- Hardware at the play structure has been replaced as needed and monthly inspections are being conducted.

Marina

- MRRPD is a sponsor of the West County Homeowners Insurance Seminar being held at the Community Center on February 17. Assistance is needed with set up.
- Marina reported on events and meetings for January and February.
- The Ombudsman office hours may extend beyond February.
- An Indie filmmaker was interested in using the Community as a film location for 8-9 consecutive days in August but lack of A/C and too much light were big concerns, and the decision was made to film elsewhere.

- A request was made to be able to use glassware at the Variety Show this year. The committee agreed to allow it for this year provided cleanup of any broken glass takes place.
- A request was made for a water filling station at the Amphitheater in order to reduce the use and sale of plastic water bottles at the Variety Show. Marina was able to obtain a second water filling station through a grant from Zero Waste Sonoma (retail value – over \$6000). The new station will be installed by the existing drinking fountain.
- Rio Theater owner Kim Lockhart has inquired if MRRPD would be interested in partnering with the Theater on either a recreation covenant to allow public access to the theater lawn or an improvement grant to turn the lawn into a community gathering space. MRRPD is not interested at this time.
- Brian will submit the Skatepark Project Status report which is due by February 29.

5. New Business – (error in omission from agenda)

- Starrett Hill/SWS Acquisition. Stephanie and Brain are attending meetings with Ag and Open Space and Sonoma Land Trust on behalf of MRRPD. See attached notes.

6. Old Business

A. Bridge Replacement Update. The bridge is not being replaced – will be retrofitted instead. Work is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2026.

B. Grant Updates

Per Capita

- A reimbursement request for \$60,000 has been submitted to Rosalind Rowe for the Community Center portion of the per capita grant.

C. Emergency Preparedness

- Flood gates at the Community Center will be installed when the river reaches 38 feet.

D. Update on Trails Projects (none on MRRPD property)

- Work continues to progress on the Monte Redwoods Regional Parks trails.

7. Safety Committee Report

- Sherry gave an overview on the Illness and Injury Prevention Plan (IIPP) that she has been working on. The plan calls for more involvement, training and record keeping by the Park Supv.

8. Adjourn/Next Meeting – Adjourned at 9:32 am; next meeting March 6, 2024

Starrett Hill Properties

Zoom meeting with Sonoma Land Trust

Meeting notes January 30, 2024

Attendees:

John McCaull, Land Acquisition Director

Shanti Edwards, Stewardship Senior Project Manager

Kyle Pinjuv, Acting Stewardship Director

Stephanie Felch, Representing the Monte Rio Recreation & Park District

John provided a conservation easement overview including how to draft a conservation easement and recreational covenant, long term committed stewardship partners (with SLT – Sonoma Land Trust). Draft a Letter of Intent or project term sheet / summary. The purchase and sale contract typically takes a year to negotiate including easement terms & an appraisal. What to expect : the Letter of Intent, easement documents for approval, recreational covenant timeline requires public input, what is protected will have a general commitment. Conservation values, natural resources, scenic resources and agricultural resources could be included in the baseline study. The intent of the process is to build the vision for the project.

Kyle elaborated on the process of drafting an easement including typical conservation elements such as natural versus built. Requirements for approvals, notifications, violations and amendments. Different areas include building envelopments with specific requirements, structures versus roads, natural area conserved, size and structure limitations. Need to allow for expansion and/or maintenance of the easement.

The approval process (for additional improvements) by the AOS typically takes a month to half a year while simple modifications require notifications and written approvals. It is useful to understand what uses are allowed with AOS oversight and which are not (such as a recreational kiosk with a floating detailed plan envelop).

Kyle discussed the master-planning process expands what the easement allows and that overall CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) process can exempt elements such as trails & parking areas as structures. An example is the Mark West Park site plan or key features map with infrastructure improvements. A flow chart can help understand what is required for permanent versus impermanent structures (such as a non-tethered picnic table).

Kyle suggested at the next meeting we should go through an easement to better understand what can be included and that easements are forever. SLT is a long-term partner with the MRRPD and both organizations can benefit from being valuable partners in the press (related to news releases).

Shanti provided an example related to Pole Mountain where tree branches were blocking the view of fire cameras and there was interest in removing the branches. As part of pro-active forest management plan a key portion of the agreement included not cutting “native” trees. AOS required approval to perform the work. Also, consideration should be given related to ecologically designated natural areas such as creeks.

Another example that Shanti provided of how an easement works is how Regional Parks in conservation easements allow dogs in certain areas on leash with prohibition on off-leash dog areas.

Shanti mentioned that trail maintenance can typically be performed with hand tools or weed-whacking with assistance by the Sonoma County Trails Council. She also indicated to consider the tribal relationship in the project structure to provide more early guidance and input results in a richer project including cultural resource protection. She referred to a long-term partnership that SLT has with the Bennett Valley Federated Rancheria. SLT owns, allows access and cultural practices. The Kashia Historic Preservation officers could assist with the CEQA

cultural resource protection for the Starrett Hill properties by providing ways to have less impact to existing cultural sites and through forest management practices.

John suggested scheduling a site visit soon to make the project real.

Next meeting: John will confirm with Olivia Fiori (AOS Acquisition Specialist assigned to the project) regarding the timing of the Letter of Intent. We will review a conservation easement in more detail and SLT can provide some examples of key documents.

Starrett Hill Properties

Zoom meeting with Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District

Meeting notes February 1, 2024

Attendees:

Olivia Fiori, AOS Acquisition Specialist

Eric Schanz, General Manager Sweetwater Springs Water District

Brian Grant & Stephanie Felch, Representing the Monte Rio Recreation & Park District

There was discussion about the purpose of the Letter of Intent as being a high-level document which stipulates allowed and limited uses. This document is produced in collaboration with Ag & Open Space (AOS), SSWD and MRRPD and ideally is completed in March 2024. It should be noted that the LOI is not legally binding (the conservation easement and recreational covenant are legally binding).

Improvements that could be included such as parking (difficult to provide due to topography), trash cans, picnic tables, long view benches, fuels resiliency and dog access to trails (should be considered).

Brian and Stephanie presented a list of possible improvements to include in the project structure features map:

- 1.) Points of access to the properties (will require greater analysis)
- 2.) Trail alignments with existing or proposed trails off-site for pedestrians & mountain bikers
- 3.) Day-use picnic areas
- 4.) Campground(s) and/or hike-in huts (part of a hut-to-hut system)
- 5.) Ranger's residence (primary building envelop – can be “floating” meaning non-specific to a location)
- 6.) Trailheads, parking & restrooms
- 7.) Forest management/timber harvest
- 8.) Fire management
- 9.) Staging area (for various activities such as trail repair & tree removal)
- 10) Protection/education for old growth fir & redwood stands
- 11) Understanding and delineating wildlife corridors
- 12) Extreme mountain bike trail (due to existing topography)
- 13) Zip-lines
- 14) Viewing platform built on a tree
- 15) Question about providing wild flower tours & mushroom foraging (rec & education)

Next steps: Olivia to update the project structures feature map (include the existing SSWD water tanks) and provide a project structure memo for the next meeting.