



REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
CV Starr Community Center
300 South Lincoln Street
Fort Bragg, CA. 95437
Wednesday, March 15, 2023
5:30 P.M.

Minutes

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 5:30PM
- Present: Barbara Burkey, Angela Dominguez, John Huff, Kylie Felicich
- Absent: Bob Bushansky

2.0 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Items to be removed from or changes to the agenda should be done at this time

- 6.1 was struck from the agenda and the agenda was approved as amended. 6.1 will happen at a special meeting March 22nd 2023.
- A motion to approve the Agenda as amended
- M/S/C: Felicich/Huff/Unanimous
- Yeyes: Burkey, Dominguez, Huff, Felicich
- Naves: None
- Absent: Bushansky

3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION-NON AGENDA ITEMS

A maximum of 3 minutes is reserved for members of the public to address the Board on items not listed on the agenda and a total time for public input on a particular issue is limited to 20 minutes (Government Code 54954.3). The Board is prohibited from discussion or taking action on matters not on the agenda but may briefly respond or ask a question for clarification (Government Code 54954.2).

- None

4.0 STAFF REPORTS:

4.1 Administrative Report (Moneque Wooden)

- Wooden stated that 6.1 will be moved to the special meeting next week and corrected her report to say that the City of Fort Bragg Mid-Year Budget Workshop meeting did not happen today as planned. It will be held on Wednesday, March 22nd.
- Wooden asks that all board members turn in form 700 and also complete their online trainings that have been assigned.
- April 7th the CVSCC will be opening on Fridays 9:00am-2:00pm.

4.2 Maintenance Report (Paul Kelley)

- Wooden reviewed Kelley's report and went over the air handling project.

4.3 Guest Services Report (Carly Wells)

- Wells pointed out the good news in the day passes sold. They are at pre-

pandemic levels.

4.4 CVSCC Recreation Services Report (Kim Ramey)

- Ramey informed that board that the CVSCC has been VERY busy on the weekends.

4.5 MCRPD Recreation Services Report (Ellie Collins)

- Collins reviewed the current MCRPD programs that are running.
- Marketing in the South Coast was discussed.
- Burkey brought up the idea of maybe offering special events like concerts in the South Coast.

5.0 OTHER REPORTS:

5.1 Friends of MCRPD

- Wooden reported that she attended their meeting. The Friends of MCRPD will now allow CVSCC staff to give out scholarships for swim lessons on registration day without pre-approval.

5.2 South Coast

- Burkey attended the RCRC meeting. RCRC is going ahead with plans of developing their pavilion. They are looking into fundraising and developing budget. They would like to again set up swim lessons at the sea ranch pool.

5.3 MECCA

- No meeting

5.4 Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens

- Burkey attended their meeting. They raised \$116,000 from their annual appeal they also received \$116,000 for an employee retention grant. They hired a fundraising consultant to look into more ways to raise funds.

5.5 Personnel Committee

- No meeting

5.6 Regional Park Committee

- No meeting

5.7 District Services Committee

- No meeting

5.8 Finance Committee

- Burkey reported that the Finance Committee met today and went over the MCRPD January finances. Everything is looking good. Special events looked great due to the success of the Aquathon. Bushansky did not attend.

5.9 Board of Directors

- No comments

6.0 DISCUSSION/ACTION

6.1 Purchase Agreement Highway 20; Regional Park Property

- Struck from agenda.

6.2 MCRPD FY2022-2023 Mid-Year Budget

- Moneque read through the budget summary. Enrichment will be lower due

to not operating the Just for Kids program. Youth sports will end the year higher due to higher-than-anticipated attendance. Special events is much higher due to the Aquathon not being planned for this year when the budget was created. Drop-in programs are running well. Adult sport programs have been a bit slower at gaining back their momentum. Miscellaneous revenue is higher due to the reimbursement for KUDOS/ASSETTS being reimbursed at the correct rates. Wages and Benefits will be higher due to adding more staffing to MCRPD recreation so that staff can be trained before current staff departs the District. Adult Sports expenses are up due to the District limping along for many years, equipment needs to be replaced. Miscellaneous expenses are lower due to there not being a need for a board elevation this year.

- Burkey asks about the net loss and how it compares to years past.
- Wooden stated that it is similar to years past.
- Huff asks for clarification on the laws about volunteers and employees and why we can't have both at the same time.
- Wooden explained the law but did not recall the actual name of the law at the time.
- A motion was made to approve the 2223 MCRPD Mid-Year Budget as presented.
- M/S/C: Huff/Felicich/Unanimous
- Yayas: Dominguez, Burkey, Felicich, Huff
- Nayas: None
- Absent: Bushansky

6.3 Introduction of Sea Dragons and their program

- Derek Hutchinson introduced himself as the head coach of the Sea Dragons Swim Team and stated he was here to answer questions about the Sea Dragons. He gave a description of the Sea Dragons and how they are a youth recreation organization. They have been at CVSCC since we opened, They have 30 to 80 swimmers between the ages 6-18. The Sea Dragons offer novice and competitive levels of swimming with their organization. They provide swimmers an opportunity to swim, compete, have fun, and learn. Hutchinson then went over the challenges that the team endured though the pandemic.
- Jamie Ries introduced herself as the Sea Dragons Board President. Sea Dragons are 501c3 organization. They have a six-member board made up of swimmer parents and non-parents. There are currently 50 active swimmers. They do offer a financial assistance program. There are four coaches all who are full time employees for with either MUSD or FBUSD. Ries went over the fundraisers as well as the Swim Meet. The popularity of the annual thanksgiving classic swim meet among other teams. The asked around to get an estimate of how much money the Swim Meet brings to our town from out-of-town swimmers and their families. They estimate that around \$100,000 is brought to the community by this event every year. Ries thanked the CVSCC staff and stated how appreciated the

CVSCC is by the Sea Dragons.

- Carol Mckevitt spoke about bringing her son here for years and how much they appreciate being part of the Sea Dragons swim team.
- Heidi Sorenson spoke about her family being a new swim team family. She is very happy with how her family has built relationships with the CVSCC staff and the Sea Dragons coaches. She is very appreciative of how the coaches work with the kids all at their own levels and is happy to see the confidence that it is instilling in her daughters. Because of being here with the swim team four days a week, the family decided to purchase a family CVSCC membership so that they can all utilize the Center while they are here.
- Angelica is a parent of swim team members. She stated that the swim team had helped her and her family learn to speak English. They swam in Mexico and were worried about not having a team when they moved and were so happy to find out that there is an amazing swim team community here. Her kids can swim year-round in a safe place.
- Burkey thanked everyone for speaking and sharing their experiences and invited everyone to come back to MCRPD meetings.
- Felicich thanked everyone for all the time that they are putting in for their kids.
- Huff thanked them for what they do for the kids. He didn't realize how much money came into the community for Swim Meets and didn't realize that the Sea Dragons go year-round. Huff asked if they needed anything to please ask.
- A parent from the Sea Dragons echoed that and said they would be happy to help out the MCRPD as well.

6.4 MCRPD's future with obtaining state grants.

- Wells read comments submitted by Dave Shapk aloud to the Board. (attached at the end of the minutes)
- Burkey read her notes on the history of this topic: "In October 2017 the California Department of Parks and Recreation Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHMV) approved a \$255,000 grant to the MCRPD to prepare a draft and final EIR as well as an economic feasibility study for a proposal to create an off-highway vehicle park within a portion of the District's Highway 20 property. In April 2018 the OHMV approved \$2,739,000 for both a planning and a restoration grant. The scope of work for these grants included debris removal, fencing the entire property, installing access gates, restoring trails, and removing invasive species from existing logging roads and trails. With the grant funds approved, the district began to take steps to obtain the initial EAR only to be brought to a halt by an audit conducted by the OHMV. An interim audit report dated December 10, 2018 was provided to the district in mid-February, 2019. Because of the audit, all the grant funds were frozen. As of mid-March 2019, the District was told that the audit was in the Attorney General's office. The District's inquiries as to its status went unanswered

with the explanation that there was “an audit in process.” In May 2019, the District’s attorney, Douglas Provencher, and Westamerica bank’s attorney, Nicolas Delancie had a conference call with Sixto Fernandez, Brian Robertson and Katherine Tobias on behalf of the OHMV about the status of the grants. They advised that the matter was with the California Attorney General’s office for some undisclosed reason. They indicated their belief that the District’s Board was seriously conflicted and had not followed the proper grant procedures. They informed the District that they would only be willing to deal with “untainted Board Members.” On June 15, 2020 a conference was held with the following people in attendance:

Brian Robertson, CA Parks Department
Susan Austin, Assistant Attorney General
Sixto Fernandez, Grants Manager, CA Parks
Katherine Tobias, Attorney for Parks Department
Nicholas DeLancie, Attorney for Westamerica Bank
Jane Ivy-Jones, Westamerica Bank
Moneque Wooden, MCRPD District Administrator
Carly Wells, MCRPD
Barbara Burkey, Board Member MCRPD
Leslie Bates, Board Member MCRPD
Douglas Provencher, Attorney for MCRPD

The purpose of the meeting was to determine if the two existing grants might be reinstated or restarted. The Parks Department attorney, Katherine Tobias advised that the grants were suspended due to alleged inappropriate conduct between the California Recreation Alliance (CRA) and the District regarding the use of grant funds and the District’s required matching funds. Because of this alleged misconduct, the Parks Department would not proceed with the grants unless the District provided adequate assurances that the grant funds would be appropriately used. This would require a new party to administer the funds. In view of the history of alleged self-dealing, the District would need to satisfy the Parks Department that there would be no further issues in order for additional grant funds to be authorized. The allegations of self-dealing and misconduct were tied to irregularities with the bidding process for the fence by “several Members of the Board.” The MCRPD was advised to “disassociate” itself from tainted Board Members, John Huff, Bob Bushansky and Kirk Marshall. The Parks Department will not proceed with grants to MCRPD as long as any BOD member that approved the arrangement for the fence bid remains on the Board.”

- Huff asked if we can get that in writing from the State of California.
- Burkey said she would ask.
- Huff asked what the outcome of the investigation was.
- Burkey said that they would not pursue criminal charges but also not release the awarded funds to the MCRPD. This is because there was an appearance of “self-dealing.”
- Huff asked if there was anything bad done?

- Burkey went over the fence bid process and who got it. That is the issue that the State believed was mishandled. Burkey stated that even if wrongdoing did not happen, there certainly was a perception that it did and that was why the State needed to freeze funding.
- Huff asks if he was one of the board members in question.
- Burkey said yes, it was him and Bob Bushansky.
- Huff asked if he was in the company that was awarded the project or had finance interest in it.
- Burkey said no, not to her knowledge.
- Burkey pointed out CRA involvement and Huff's wife's involvement with CRA.
- Huff stated that he was a volunteer of CRA and his wife was an employee.
- Huff again asked for these statements in writing from the State of California.
- Burkey stated that the only way we can get grants from the State of California is if the board members currently deemed "tainted" by the State of California are no longer on our board. There would need to be a recall election or board members step down.
- Huff brought up CVSCC transfer to the City of Fort Bragg. He believes that because it was not done correctly that is why the MCRPD was not eligible for State Grants and that we were not eligible even though we were awarded grants and it was found out during the OHV audit.
- Dominguez asked why Huff will not step down for the sake of the District. That there is clearly a perception that we will not be given funds if he is on the board.
- Huff says he won't step down because he didn't do anything wrong.
- Dominguez said that Huff should step down because he is in the way of the District being able to get grants according to the state and it didn't matter if he did anything wrong or not it is a road block.
- Huff stated that this is only according to the state of California and not that he did anything wrong.
- Burkey stated that Huff is a stubborn person for not stepping down and she also believes that Bushansky should also step down.
- Huff asked Dominguez for her opinion if he should step down.
- Dominguez stated that she is for the District and to be in support of the district she believe that Huff should step down.
- Huff asked Felicich her opinion.
- Felicich thought that it is terrible that MCRPD cannot get grants. At the end of the day there is a lot of money for the community. She felt bad if Bushansky and Huff were treated unfairly.
- Burkey stated that the ball is in Huff's court.
- Burkey then addressed the second part of the comments given to the board by Shpak. She believes that we need to give more support to the Bower Park.
- Ramey spoke to how excited she was when she started her position to get

things going in the South Coast. She brought up the challenges of finding areas to do recreational programs.

- Felicich agreed with Ramey and explained the shape that the facilities are in within Bower Park.
- Collins asked what is exactly being asked of the District for Bower Park.
- Felicich states that she believes that the Bower Park needs to be fixed up and repaired so that it can be used safely for recreation.
- Burkey spoke to the idea that the South Coast could look into succeeding from the MCRPD and then form their own park district.
- Wooden stated that when you look at the budget it is clear that MCRPD would have to get grants to sustain Bower Park. Wooden also spoke to the challenges finding employees in the South Coast. Wooden also agreed that MCRPD may want to look into adjusting the MCRPD boundaries so that the South Coast would be excluded from MCRPD and could then form their own district.
- Felicich stated that she does not want to simply wash her hands of the South Coast but wants what is best for everyone.

7.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

All items under the consent calendar will be acted upon in one motion unless a board member requests that an individual item be taken up under DISCUSSION/ACTION

7.1 Approval of minutes for board meetings and standing committees: 02-15-2023
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, 02-15-2023

7.2 Approval of financial documents, as recommended by the Finance Committee: MCRPD financial statement, January 2023; MCRPD check register, January 2023

- A motion was made to approve the March 15th 2023 Consent Calendar as presented.
- M/S/C: Felicich/Dominguez/Unanimous
- Yeyes: Dominguez, Burkey, Felicich, Huff
- Nays: None
- Absent: Bushansky

8.0 ADJOURNMENT –

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:47pm