

# Marin County Special Districts Association

*An Organization to propose and advocate constructive means for the improvement and functioning of Special Districts within the County of Marin, State of California, and to assist such Special Districts and their governing bodies to provide a more effective and efficient government at the closest level to the citizens of Marin County that will result in benefit to the public.*

## NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Tamalpais Community Services District /Hosted Zoom, Phone Call Meeting

### CALL TO ORDER

President Heather Abrams called the meeting to order at 2:33 pm

### 1. ROLL CALL BY ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Roll was taken and quorum was met. The following were in attendance:

*Officers: Heather Abrams, President, General Manager, Tamalpais Community Services District  
Bill Hansell, Vice President, District Manager, Alto Sanitary District  
Craig Murray, Treasurer, Board Director, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitation District  
Shelley Redding, Secretary, Administrator, Inverness Public Utilities District  
Lew Kious, Officer At Large, Board Director, Almonte Sanitary District*

*Officers Absent: Shelley Redding, Inverness Public Utility District*

*Staff Present Colleen Haley, CSDA*

*Public Present Stephanie Moulton-Peters, District 5 Marin County Board of Supervisors  
Jason Fried, Marin LAFCo  
Mary Halley, Muir Beach CSD  
Rich Pearce, Tiburon Fire Protection District  
Catherine Hilliard, Southern Marin Fire District  
Don Lancaster, Marin CSD  
Nancy Shapiro, Strawberry Recreation District  
Bonner Buehler, Homestead Valley Sanitary District  
Ryan Clausnitzer, CSDA Board President /  
Alameda County Special District Association*

### 2. OPEN FORUM/PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comments were made.

### 3. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

#### a) Approval of Minutes for July 14, 2021 Executive Officers Meeting

There was one correction to the meeting minutes for the July 14, 2021. The number of attendees at the Workshop by LAFCo was attended by “people” not agencies.

M/S by Officers Hansell/Kious to approve the Consent Calendar with the meeting minutes as amended. Ayes: Abrams, Hansell, Kious, Naves: none. Abstains: Murray. Consent Calendar approved

### 4. Updates/Presentations:

#### A) Conference Updates and Legislation Opportunities – Craig Murray

Craig reported that he attended the CSDA Conference in Monterey. He noted that the conference was nice, well organized. Chapter round table, he was introduced as a representative of the new Marin CSDA chapter. He summarized topical items:

- 1) AB 1486 Compliance. Meyers and Nave presented an interesting session on buying, selling, or leasing properties in the State of California and the oversight, with leases over 5 years are now subject to review.
- 2) Another was on the Reserve Policy for Special Districts. CPA oriented talked about a promise of public trust, ICM (Identify, Clarify and Magnify), focus on the need to over-emphasize for public engagement.
- 3) Also noted legislative booklets and vendors that provided resources for Districts.
- 4) Fiscal and Cyber-Security experts from Department of Homeland Security did a session, but it was guarded for security reasons. Reported on vulnerabilities in the technical environment, especially financial.
- 5) Another topic was on the challenges related to the homeless for communities, despite significant efforts and funds.
- 6) Talked about Streamline and the website service, especially since the Marin County Grand Jury focused on transparency issues on websites. He noted state legislative actions: SB 929, create and maintain a website with contact information, SB 272, Enterprise System Catalogs; AB 2853, Posting of Public Records on websites, AB 392, AB 2297 that addresses website postings for agenda events and related material on platforms.

B) Marin County Disaster Council Update and CASA Conference Update – Lew Kious

- 1) Director Kious reported on his swearing in on the Disaster Council the day before the DC3 (Disaster and Citizens Core Council) on September 9<sup>th</sup>. The session was good, had to get up to speed on who the other council members were, and he estimated that there was approximately 20 members on the call. Spent time trying to figure out what constituencies were represented. The COVID pandemic was a major topic. It was reported that Marin County was the most vaccinated County in the Country. Chief Webber gave a presentation on the active fires in the state and had a favorable outlook. Chief Webber also discussed the Public Disaster Education Preparedness Effort, which seemed to be in earlier stages of implementation and a subcommittee of DC3 was working on that effort. Could be used by any public agency throughout Marin. Meeting was an hour and half. Seemed to be a good use of time.
- 2) Director Kious reported that he attended the CASA (California Association of Sanitary Agencies) Conference in San Diego with Mark Grushayev, General Manager of Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin (SASM). It was the first time he had attended the conference. About 300 attendees, with several representatives from Marin in attendance. Biggest takeaway is the reality of climate change, sea level rise and drought conditions and plans need to be made now towards a future that addresses infrastructure damage mitigation and how to live with less precipitation. SASM received an award for best treatment plant project of the last year for a project that Director Kious championed. Catherine Hilliard asked if there was any discussion of tertiary treatment of wastewater to replenish groundwater. She noted the example on Whittier, California. Director Kious stated that he wasn't aware of any current projects but did speak about the San Diego project. At SASM, they are preparing a study of what they could do with further treatment for possibly landscaping. Right now, they don't produce enough but Mill Valley does. Director Murray noted that Las Gallinas noted that they do provide some to Novato and they are part of a regional group throughout Sonoma and Marin. They work with Marin Municipal, but it is really down to the Capital costs of expanding the system, and future federal funding for adding more pipe in the ground and relieving the stress on the potable water systems. Director Kious noted that 6-7 years ago the study done on pursuing recycled water concepts with Marin Water, but it was shelved due to cost concerns.

C) Update on Solid Waste Working Group – Bill Hansell

Director Hansell summarized the background of the Solid Waste Group. Nine different agencies use Mill Valley Refuse service. R3 was hired and there were three different components to R3's study, one that assessed the different contracts, rates, and services. The other was an audit of the rate proposal. The final study is the SB1383 and how efficiencies can be identified in complying with the requirements. The meeting that they had that wrapped up the report with recommendations that would work in the next few years and help with the coordination with all the agencies. The consensus

after review of the recommendations from R3 concerning the service audit and rate study was to work with MVRS as the agreements currently exist. Concerning the SB1383, the discussion around the group of the nine agencies (including the County) have an interest in collaborating to achieve compliance and further meetings will be focused on what was recommended in the R3 report. Director Kious noted that there was an understanding that the compliance requirement of SB1383 may be deferred up to one year. Member Buehler also noted that there may be waivers issued to smaller operators by population size, originally discussed for municipalities but now being considered for Special Districts.

**D) Marin County Board of Supervisors Member Introduction and Discussion of Current Topics – Stephanie Moulton-Peters, District 3 Southern Marin**

President Heather Abrams introduced Supervisor Moulton-Peters. Supervisor Moulton-Peters thanked the Board for the invitation to attend the meeting and congratulated the group on their collaborative efforts. She gave a brief background of her experience that brought her into the County Supervisor role 9 months ago after being a Mill Valley City Council Member for 12 years. Before the City Council, she served on the Mill Valley Emergency Preparedness Commission for 6 years. The commission was originally a committee, and they were able to make it a permanent commission within the City Government. She noted her appreciation to Lew Kious for serving on the County Disaster Council and is encouraged that he will be able to bring his influence on the group, by focusing on areas of public education.

She noted her professional background is environmental regulatory compliance working over 10 years with PG&E to bring the gas and electric operations in line with air, water, and solid and toxic waste regulations. She is familiar with NPDES stormwater permits, solid and hazardous waste management and recycling and reducing air emissions. She continues to keep an eye on these areas in her current position. She also served as a volunteer with the Safe Routes to School. She noted that her involvement led her to eventually run the Board of the Transportation Authority of Marin, which finances transportation in Marin County. She noted that she will probably participate on the Board again next year. Supervisor Moulton-Peters expressed her appreciation and she noted that the districts include several small cities and towns, JPAs and Special Districts. She wants to do more gatherings to keep in touch with everyone.

Some of the issues she is spending time on in her District and county wide include:

- the revitalization of the public housing at Golden Gate Village in Marin City at a cost of at least \$90 million dollars through HUD, which has made progress.
- Anchor-outs in Richardson Bay and the recent settlement with the BCDC, to begin moving within 5 years into marinas or onto land and restore the eel grass in the bay. She knows SASM and Alto are directly involved for the health of the bay.
- Supervisor Rodoni, who is involved in the North Bay Water District has been discussing an idea about a “One Water” idea for the County. She wants to continue exploring the ideas and at some point, soon, convene a meeting with all interested parties and better utilize all resources.
- Aware that tight budgets amid increasing regulatory requirements pose challenges to Special Districts. Roy Given, County Treasurer is offering to provide finance training to maximize funds. They would like to have input for training and information sharing.
- County redistricting process needs to be completed by year-end. The areas that usually have movement is West Marin and the Novato area.
- Marin City is exploring incorporation as its own city and is working with LAFCo on that. They will begin an initial look at the feasibility of that soon.
- Housing element process is taking on in all the cities in the County of Marin and she expects that Special Districts may be involved in some elements of growth and demands for services. The process will be ongoing through next summer.
- County parks will be bringing the renewal of County Parks Tax for renewal next November on the ballot to maintain the operations of parks, vegetation management, restoration, and acquisition of agricultural assets. The tax is currently polling very high.

Supervisor Moulton-Peters opened the discussion for questions for her or her staff:

Lew Kious asked about the Marin City incorporation and asked about her sense of what direction it may go. Supervisor Moulton-Peters noted that it is not clear that they would be successful given the smaller population and noted that after Prop. 13 it is very difficult for entities to finance city services. She is supportive of the effort and the communities desire to be self-governing. She Asked Director Kious, who also serves on the LAFCo Board, if he had information on the community group that formed to help with the exploration and feasibility. Director Kious noted that he was aware of the effort and the steps involved. He then deferred to LAFCo Director Jason Fried to answer her questions. Jason Friend summarized the process of discussion with the community group and the local CSD's involved, what services they were looking for, what are key, what are optional, what boundaries are they looking at and then the next step would be an RFP to explore property values and how to identify if it is feasible. Director Murray mentioned that Contra Cost County and North Richmond faced a similar desire to incorporate the area and the LAFCo for that area went through and may have some ideas to share.

Director Murray thanked Supervisor Moulton-Peters for attending and noted that Las Gallinas recycles water and asked if there was interest in providing recycled water for fire protection for open space areas or to neighboring districts that do not have accessible water service. General discussion about permits, regulations, and health restrictions and how to navigate the challenges that can be addressed.

Member Cathryn Hilliard thanks Supervisor Moulton-Peters for being accessible. She concurred with the interest of exploring uses for recycled water and will talk with her Chief to get more information about use of recycled water. She noted the Waterboards control over usage and encouraged action now, not wait and bring into the discussion the housing issues, accessibility to water. She strongly encourages regional cooperation to address all areas of concern.

Director Hansell thanked Supervisor Moulton-Peters for attending and offering the finance training and asked about grant support? Noted that in the East Bay he received assistance for FEMA applications and found it was invaluable. She responded that she would like to have a discussion with him about resources and she felt that the County could help with Grant Writing. He also spoke about interface with County Finance and County DPW and the difficulties about accessing information about projects. He noted that in general the planning and building process does not serve the public needs.

Nancy Shapiro also spoke about how permitting process is difficult and does not serve the public. She also discussed the bridge from Strawberry to Tiburon, has been closed for almost a year. The bridge borders the land of the Strawberry Recreation District, but the responsibility for maintenance falls to the Greenwood Bay Condominium Association. It seems like BCDC held up the project unnecessarily and the window is narrowing for construction. The public is getting frustrated, and they need assistance in moving the project forward. Supervisor Moulton-Peters noted she is on the Board of BCDC and is familiar with the project and will follow-up with Nancy.

CSDA representative Colleen Haley noted Communications sent to the County CAO about District Funding for COVID related costs. The application process will be coming out soon for COVID related funding and there is a short window for the application. The County has transfer authority from ARP funds to transfer monies to finish infrastructure projects or other projects that cannot be completed due to impacts of the pandemic. Supervisor Moulton-Peters agreed the funding is worth pursuing.

President Abrams thanked Supervisor Moulton-Peters for her time and asked if we should invite Supervisor Rodoni to our next meeting? Supervisor Moulton-Peters encouraged engagement with him since discussion about water issues would be timely. Director Kious offered to contact him about scheduling his attendance at the next meeting.

## 5. Informational Items

1. California Special District Association Update – Colleen Haley  
Ryan Clausnitzer, CSDA Board President the next 2 years and Board member of the Alameda County Chapter Special District Association. The conference was successful and they have had a lot of great feedback. She also reported on the two upcoming conferences in Lake Tahoe for the Special District Leadership Academy on the 26th and the Board Secretary Conference in Garden Grove.

The CSDA Take Action Brief (TAB) will include the updates about the SWRCB arrearages losses have closed with 55% applying. There is also the State funding allocated for Special Districts to cover losses due to the pandemic and there are resources for application help. She encouraged applications since they worked hard to get the funding and if they show an over ask of the \$100 million allotted for Special Districts, they can return to the legislature for future funding needs for Special Districts. Director Hansell asked if there was an update on the Brown Act extension. Colleen responded that they are still accepting letters of support for the extension, a template letter is available on the CSDA website. She does not have information about an extension. She also noted that grant writers for grant funding is offered through the National Special Districts Coalition possibly at a discount. Director Murray noted that at the CSDA conference there was recognition of the efforts of California Special Districts rolling up with the National Special Districts group to promote Special Districts and to get a focus on the Federal level to be recognized as a local government and there will be changes in the future.

2. Member Round Robin:

Jason Fried noted the LAFCo activity has already been discussed and he has nothing further to add.

Cathryn Hilliard reported that there is an evacuation drill in Mill Valley on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a request for people to get in traffic, and there is an ongoing public information outreach program for emergencies, NRG and helping each other, helping your neighbors. Southern Marin Fire has a new website, highlighted chipper days and continued preparedness.

Heather Abrams reported the SMFD and the County Sheriff conducted a small drill for Tam Valley and it was informative, noting the large amount of traffic each afternoon and how to anticipate that plan on leaving early if you are ordered to evacuate and noted that closed access roads would not be opened for evacuations. It was also noted that in an evacuation once you leave, you will not be able to return until the area is opened.

Director Kious left the meeting at 4:05 pm

6. Board Requests:

- a. Future meeting date: December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. An invitation will be extended to Supervisor Rodoni and an email will be sent out with the date and location.

7. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 4:11 pm

Attest: /s/  
Shelley Redding, Board Secretary

Date 1/26/22