



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

### ACTION PLAN AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

Administrative Office  
5050 El Camino Real  
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Riffle called the meeting of the Action Plan and Budget Committee to order at 1:02 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Members present: Craig Gleason, Karen Holman, Curt Riffle

Members absent: None

Staff present: General Manager Ana M. Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk Maria Soria, Acting Deputy District Clerk Loana Lumina-Hsu, Budget & Analysis Manager Rafaela Ocegüera, Visitor Services Manager Matt Anderson, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Engineering & Construction Manager Jay Lin, Information Systems & Technology Manager Casey Hiatt, Human Resources Manager Candice Basnight, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Management Analyst II Lupe Hernandez, Management Analyst II Elissa Martinez, Management Analyst I Jordan McDaniel, Acting Natural Resource Manager/Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Information Technology Program Administrator Owen Sterzl, Senior Planner Gretchen Laustsen, Senior Planner Tina Hugg, Management Analyst II Marion Shaw, Ranger Ryan Augustine, Administrative Assistant Marie Lanka

#### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** Director Gleason moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

District Clerk Maria Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**1. Approve the May 3, 2023 Action Plan and Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**

Public comment opened at 1:04 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 1:04 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Gleason moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to approve the May 3, 2023 Action Plan and Budget Committee meeting minutes.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**2. Continued Overview of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget and Three-Year Capital Improvement and Action Plan (R-23-45)**

Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan continued the staff presentation with an overview of the projects within the Public Access, Education and Outreach program. Of the program's forty-one projects, thirty-four are ongoing initiatives and seven are new projects related to storm damage repairs. Ms. Chan stated staff has reorganized the presentation information such that the projects are listed alphabetically within each preserve and asked the Committee, at the end of the presentation, to comment on whether or not the new informational arrangement is beneficial. Ms. Chan continued to highlight the projects within the program.

Chair Riffle requested and received additional information on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding process.

Chair Riffle suggested adding a PowerPoint slide to the presentation when it is presented to the full Board of Directors (Board) so the Board and public have the background information on the FEMA projects along with any implications.

Director Gleason requested and received additional information on the culvert repairs at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve.

Director Holman inquired why some of the projects do not have a project number listed.

Ms. Chan explained the projects are new for the upcoming fiscal year and a project number is not yet assigned, but the project numbers will be added when the proposed FY23-24 Budget and Three-Year Capital Improvement and Action Plan (CIAP) is presented to the full Board.

Director Holman commented that the White Barn Structural Rehabilitation project has been on the work plan for a couple of years and inquired about the timing of the project.

Engineering and Construction Manager Jay Lin stated the project has been delayed due to a staff vacancy. Mr. Lin reported that bids were just recently opened on May 16, 2023, with three bids were received under the engineers estimate, and the project is moving forward.

Director Holman requested and received additional information on how projects are prioritized and stated that she appreciated how the presentation was organized by preserves.

Chair Riffle expressed his concerns about delaying work on the Fremont Older Parking Area Improvement project as it is one of the top four most heavily visited preserves and inquired how long the work would be delayed.

Ms. Chan stated that the project was delayed in order to free up resources to address the storm damage projects and that the project will only be deferred for one year to FY25.

Director Holman expressed support of the Fremont Older Parking Area Improvement project and inquired if the project could be accelerated.

Mr. Malone clarified that the parking improvements to the Fremont Older Parking area are not intended to add parking capacity and will most likely result in less parking capacity. The project aims to manage the existing use, so that parking is orderly to improve flow.

Director Holman commented that the project will help reduce frustrations and result in an orderly utilization of the parking spaces.

Mr. Malone provided an overview of the projects within the Assets and Organizational Support program.

Director Holman inquired and received information on the potential partners for the Hawthorns Historic Complex Partnership project.

Director Riffle suggested only efficiency improvements should be made to the Preserve Use Permit System and that the new system continue to be easy and straight forward for the public to attain a permit.

Director Riffle stated that on page 138 for the Thornwood Residence Evaluation, the scope of work states that “the content will be populated by the Budget Department” and inquired about the details of the project.

Mr. Malone stated that the language is a placeholder and will be updated for the May 24 Board meeting, and that the purpose of the project is to make repairs to the residence, so it is habitable and ready for leasing.

Director Holman inquired about how the Board can track items such as trails completed, building maintenance, and parking improvements to better understand how the District is progressing in these particular areas.

Mr. Malone stated that the Measure AA Annual Accountability report and the Annual Achievements report are both great resources to attain this type of information.

Public comment opened at 2:33 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:33p.m.

Director Gleason thanked staff for their work on the presentation and also acknowledged this winter was especially hard for staff and thanked staff for the remarkable job of pivoting and reprioritizing projects due to the storm damage.

Director Gleason commented on the Trails Memo that was presented to the Board at the May 10, 2023 meeting. He expressed his gratitude to staff for taking the time to compile the information and clarifying the 200 miles as a vision for the 25 Vision Plan projects. Director Gleason stated it provides a framework to discuss trail projects and a possibility to consider looking at the current trajectories with maybe 31 miles of trail in 9 years, and maybe 10 more coming over the next 3 years. Furthermore, he noted that there are numerous trail projects in the upcoming fiscal year and recognizes that staff is working very hard on these projects. Director Gleason stated that he was not looking to change any plans at this time but is interested in considering whether value could be added to existing trail projects by focusing more on purpose-built trails, and whether there are any locations where the District can creatively employ road retirements and road-to-trail conversions that may be better for the environment and for the public. He also suggested looking at the trajectory of purpose-built trails, which have the greatest public value. Lastly, Director Gleason made a distinction on how trail projects are discussed and provided an example from a recent Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting where the item did not include a discussion on what more can/should be done to add value as part of the proposed new trails. He suggested that staff add more content to future trail discussions and provide additional options for the Board to consider as part of the decision-making process.

Director Gleason commented that organizing the presentation by preserve was very helpful.

Director Holman expressed her appreciation for Director Gleason's remarks on trails, noting that the quality of the trails, their contribution to the visitor experience, and their cost-effectiveness are just as important as the number of miles of trails that have been constructed.

Director Holman expressed her appreciation on how the presentation was organized by preserve and suggested including an explanation of how project priorities were set when the item is presented to the Board.

Director Holman voiced her appreciation for staff's ability to shift focus on addressing the storm damage. She then suggested that it may be beneficial to have the project numbers relate to the preserve for the next year's budget review.

Mr. Malone stated that it would be a major overhaul on how the information is organized and suggested that staff review the programs and organize the information by preserve in the presentation. It would take significant effort for staff to revamp the project numbering system.

Director Holman stated that most of the projects do not have an icon associated with the project and inquired if those would be added before the budget book is presented to the Board of Directors.

Director Holman commented that two icons that could be considered in the future is the addition of a wildlife and habitat icon and a facilities and structures icon.

Mr. Malone stated that if the majority of the Board is interested in adding these icons, then staff would further look into these new icons.

Chair Riffle expressed appreciation for staff's organization, great overview, and level of details on the attachments. After 17 years reviewing the budget and providing feedback over the years, the current Budget book is exactly what he was looking for in a budget document.

Chair Riffle expressed his gratitude to staff and his amazement at how fast staff integrated the storm repair projects into the CIAP, filed for FEMA funding, and deferred some projects in order to add the additional projects.

Chair Riffle requested that a PowerPoint slide regarding the FEMA funding and project lists be added to the Board presentation.

Chair Riffle commented he was impressed with staff on how almost all the Measure AA projects have been worked on in some capacity, and staff's ability to develop such a comprehensive, inclusive, and thorough CIAP.

Director Gleason stated it would be ideal if projects were listed by preserve but would leave it at the discretion of staff to think of how best to provide the information for the next year's budget.

Director Holman supported the idea of having an index that shows all the projects by preserve for tracking ongoing work.

General Manager Ana Ruiz suggested allowing staff to consider a method that provides the desired by-preserve information using current systems to create a reference sheet for understanding what projects are occurring at each preserve. Using indexes, numbers, or a numbering system may be problematic with the District's ERP system.

Director Holman suggested presenting options on how to provide the desired information at the year-end Board Retreat so the full Board can have a discussion.

Chair Riffle clarified with the Committee if it was acceptable for staff to report back at the December Board Retreat. The Committee confirmed.

**Motion:** Director Gleason moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion that the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget and three-year (Fiscal Year 2023-24 to 2025-26) Capital Improvement and Action Plan be presented for consideration by the full Board of Directors.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**3. Annual Review of Fiscal Management Policies for Fiscal Year 2023 (R-23-51)**

Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak provided the staff presentation and reviewed the two proposed amendments to Board Policy 3.07 – *Fund Balance Policy*, and Board Policy 3.08 – *Investment Policy*. Mr. Jaskulak stated there were no changes to Board Policy 3.09 – *Debt Management Policy*, which does need to be affirmed annually.

There were no questions from the Committee.

Public comment opened at 3:19 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 3:19 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Holman moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to forward the policies and the proposed amendments to the full Board of Directors for consideration of their approval and affirmation.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**4. Closure of Completed Measure AA Portfolios #18 South Bay Foothills: Saratoga-to-the-Sea Trail and Wildlife Corridor and #23 Sierra Azul: Mt. Umunhum Public Access and Interpretation Projects and Reallocation of Remaining Portfolio Funds to Portfolio #03 Purisima Creek Redwoods: Purisima-to-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing (R-23-52)**

Mr. Jaskulak provided the staff presentation on closing two Measure AA Portfolios: #18 *South Bay Foothills: Saratoga-to-the-Sea Trail and Wildlife Corridor* and #23 *Sierra Azul: Mt. Umunhum Public Access and Interpretation Projects* and shifting the funds to Portfolio #03 *Purisima Creek Redwoods: Purisima-to-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing*. Mr. Jaskulak stated there are no outstanding or future planned actions or projects needed for MAA Portfolios #18 and #23. All priority actions for both portfolios are complete and a total of \$6,357,920 remains that can be reallocated to Portfolio #03. Portfolio #03 currently has about \$7.6M allocated for projects under the portfolio. The additional funding needs for Portfolio #03 became apparent with the recent purchase of the South Cowell property. The projects being proposed in the FY24 Budget and CIAP have an estimated remaining cost of \$7.7M. The proposed reallocation of \$6.4M would reduce the funding gap to about \$1.3M. Staff would continue to seek outside grant funds to fill the remaining funding gap.

Chair Riffle inquired about the timing for Board consideration of portfolios that may be overspent and whether to pursue additional funding to fill the gap or reconsider costs.

Mr. Jaskulak stated that the first priority is to achieve the goal set within each portfolio, which are tracked in the Measure AA Annual Accountability report. The Board also has an opportunity to provide input when the 5-year Measure AA list is established. In addition, a discussion can be included at the December Board Retreat to provide a portfolio update of what has been completed, what is upcoming, and if funding is needed.

Chair Riffle suggested that he would like to have the visibility and weigh-in if funds need to be shifted at the annual December Retreat.

Public comment opened at 3:34 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 3:34 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Holman moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to confirm, with any changes requested by the Action Plan and Budget Committee, that Measure AA Portfolios #18 South Bay Foothills: Saratoga-to-the-Sea Trail and Wildlife Corridor and #23 Sierra Azul: Mt. Umunhum Public Access and Interpretation Projects are deemed complete and reallocate remaining funds of \$6,357,920 to Portfolio #03 Purisima Creek Redwoods: Purisima-to-Sea Trail, Watershed Protection and Conservation Grazing.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**5. Amend the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Classification and Compensation Plan for Compensation Study Adjustments for Unrepresented Office, Supervisor, and Management Employees (R-23-53)**

Mr. Jaskulak provided the staff presentation, explaining the recent classification study and findings with the recommendation to reassign the Human Resources Manager and Information Systems & Technology Manager from a current salary range of 48 to a new salary range of 51, bringing the salary range for the two department manager positions to be equivalent to that of other department manager positions. Findings also suggest reassigning the Information Technology Technician I from a current salary range of 22 to a new salary range of 24 and reassign the Information Technology Technician II from a current salary range of 27 to a new salary range of 29. Mr. Jaskulak went into detail on how the process was conducted.

Chair Riffle inquired and received information on how to ensure that the District staff is being paid adequately.

Chair Riffle expressed his concerns that when the classification and compensation study was last conducted ten-years ago, the Board expected that similar studies would be conducted periodically every two to three years.

Chair Riffle requested that the Board be updated on the progress of the study through an FYI or presentation.

General Manager Ruiz stated that there are a few more cycles to be done on the study and afterwards, staff may go to the Board with findings on whether the District needs to look at other considerations to remain competitive, and to retain and fill positions.

Director Gleason inquired and received information about the comparators being chosen in 2013 and if the comparators are up to date.

Public comment opened at 3:53 p.m.

Ms. Soria reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 3:53 p.m.

**Motion:** Director Gleason moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to forward a recommendation to the full Board of Directors to adopt a resolution amending the Classification and Compensation Plan based on the findings of a recent Compensation Study to:

1. Reassign the Human Resources Manager and Information Systems & Technology Manager from a current salary range of 48 to a new salary range of 51, which also results in bringing the salary range for the two department manager positions to be equivalent to that of other department manager positions.
2. Reassign the Information Technology Technician I from a current salary range of 22 to a new salary range of 24.
3. Reassign the Information Technology Technician II from a current salary range of 27 to a new salary range of 29.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Action Plan and Budget Committee of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 3:54 p.m.

Maria Soria, MMC  
District Clerk