



SANTA CLARA COUNTY

SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

Meeting Minutes

Santa Clara County Special Districts Association

September 9, 2024

12:00 p.m. -1:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

SCCSDA Vice President Helen Chapman presided over the meeting and called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

Members:

Helen Chapman, Director, Santa Clara Valley Open Space District (Vice President)
Tony Estremera, Director, Valley Water Board of Directors (Treasurer)
Aaron Quigley, Senior Policy Analyst, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)
Wayne Lin, Director, Rancho Rinconada Recreation and Park District
Bill Bosworth, Director, Cupertino Sanitary District
Jo Anne "J" Logan, General Manager, Los Altos Hills County Fire District
Jonathan Cowan, Director of Government & Community Relations, El Camino Healthcare District
Peter Van Dyke, Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District
Brian Glass, Assistant Fire Chief, Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District
Christine West, Executive Director, South Santa Clara Valley Memorial District
Gene Zambetti, Commissioner, Saratoga Fire Protection District
Stephanie Moreno, Executive Director, North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District
Craig Gleason, Director, Midpeninsula Open Space District.

Presenter(s):

Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Senior Resource Management Specialist - Natural Resources,
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Attendees (Non-Voting):

Barbara Keegan, Vice Chair, Valley Water Board of Directors
Neelima Palacherla, Executive Officer, Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Clara County
Yoriko Kishimoto, Director, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Colleen Haley, Public Affairs Field Coordinator, California Special Districts Association

SCCSDA Support Staff:

Genevieve Yip, Office of Government Relations, Valley Water
Roseryn Bhudsabourg, Office of Government Relations, Valley Water
Kalah Williams, Office of Government Relations, Valley Water

2. Public Comment

None.



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3. Presentation on Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Wildland Fire Resiliency Program

Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter presented on Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Wildland Fire Resiliency Program. He reported on the program's objectives, which include protecting and restoring the natural environment, reducing wildland fire risks by actively managing vegetation, incorporating Native American Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) into land management practices, and utilizing an adaptive framework to continuously improve strategies based on monitoring and data analysis.

4. State Legislative Office Updates

None.

5. Business

a. Discussion and Approval of June 3, 2024 Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Director Estremera, seconded by Director Bosworth, and unanimously carried, that the Board approve the June 3, 2024 meeting minutes.

b. Discussion and Approval of Financial Report

It was moved by Director Bosworth, seconded by Director Estremera, and unanimously carried, that the Board approve the quarterly financial report ending on September 6, 2024.

c. Discussion of Proposed Revisions to Current LAFCO Policies

LAFCO Executive Officer Neelima Palacherla reported on the proposed revisions to the current LAFCO policies. She reported that LAFCO's Determination of Exemptions under GC §56133(e) has been loosely enforced and that LAFCO would like to come into better compliance with State regulation to ensure that agencies can't self-exempt themselves from getting the sign off from LAFCO to do work outside of their jurisdiction. North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District Executive Director Stephanie Moreno commented she is attending the meeting as an alternate on behalf of her district and raised concerns regarding Chapter 5 of the LAFCO Policies ("Out-of-Agency Service by Contracts"). She suggested that SCCSDA might consider holding a special meeting/workshop to receive a presentation from LAFCO on the proposed revisions. It was moved by Executive Director Stephanie Moreno, seconded by VTA Senior Policy Analyst Aaron Quigley, and unanimously carried that SCCSDA hold a special meeting/workshop, so SCCSDA can receive a full presentation from LAFCO on the proposed LAFCO policy changes

6. Partner Agency Reports

a. Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Clara County (LAFCO)

LAFCO Executive Officer Neelima Palacherla reported that her only update was on the revisions of the current LAFCO policies, which was covered in the previous item.

b. California Special Districts Association (CSDA)

Colleen Haley, CSDA Public Affairs Field Coordinator, reported on CSDA's Year-End Update, noting that CSDA reviewed 5,562 measures during the 2023-24 Legislative Session, actively tracked 1,531 bills, and maintained priority positions on 195 measures. She also reported that of the 117 bills supported by CSDA, 62 became law. She also reported on CSDA's annual member survey on policy direction and that CSDA is asking districts to complete the survey. She also reported that CSDA has the Board



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Secretary/Clerk Conference in October and Special District Leadership Academy San Rafael in November.

7. Santa Clara County Special District Association Member Reports

Director Logan reported that the Los Altos Hills County Fire District is in the middle of fire season and has made progress on their Firewise USA programs and now has six Firewise USA neighborhoods. Director Logan also reported on the Los Altos Hills County Fire District's hazardous vegetation removal in coordination with residents through their brush chipping and vegetation removal programs. Stephanie Moreno commended Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District on their Wildland Fire Resiliency Program and commented that North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District is starting to work with Fire Safe Council on the West Santa Clara County Fire Resiliency Project. VTA Senior Policy Analyst Aaron Quigley reported that he will be the representative for VTA going forward and that VTA was recently awarded with the Outstanding Public Transportation System award from the American Public Transportation Association. Director Gleason reported that Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is expecting to open new trails at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve in October. Director Estremera reported on Valley Water's latest progress on the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project in Morgan Hill. Vice President Chapman reported that Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority secured \$800,000 in federal money through Congressman Jimmy Panetta's Federal Community Project Fund and Valley Water's Safe, Clean Water Project D3 Trails Grant program, which will be used for accessibility improvements to a trail and other facilities at the Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve in Morgan Hill.

8. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

a. Action Item Review

Valley Water staff will follow up with LAFCO to set up a special meeting/workshop, so SCCSDA can receive a presentation from LAFCO Executive Officer Neelima Palacherla on the proposed LAFCO policy changes and provide their feedback. The workshop was held on September 23, 2024.

b. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m.