

Unapproved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
January 22, 2024

MEMBERS IN PERSON: Tsutsui, Reid, Claxton, Espana, Valenzuela, Dieter, Obringer, Simmons, Henry, Dieter, Mendoza, Claxton, Chang, Peoples, Deschambault, Lopez

MEMBERS REMOTE: None

ABSENT: Mahadevan

STAFF: Padmore, Pfoehler, Holt, Baldinger, Blanchard, Gonzalez, Alvarez, Sanders

BOARD: Director Echols

PUBLIC: Abreau, Skaredoff, Marsh, Farmer

The East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) intends to hold meetings through a hybrid platform of in-person and remote attendance to allow members of the public to participate via remote attendance through the Park District’s virtual platform, Zoom. The Board of Directors and designated staff will, with limited exceptions, participate in-person at the Park District Headquarters (2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, California). Occasionally, members of the Board of Directors may attend remotely pursuant to the Brown Act, as amended by AB 2449.

The January 22, 2024, Park Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held in-person and via video conference. Chair Tsutsui called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

The Park Advisory Committee meeting was video recorded and may be viewed by clicking the following link: [Jan 22, 2024 Park Advisory Committee - East Bay Regional Park District, CA \(swagit.com\)](https://www.swagit.com/jan-22-2024-park-advisory-committee-east-bay-regional-park-district-ca)

1. Roll call

Recording Clerk, Yulie Padmore, conducted a roll call of the PAC members and staff.

Chair Tsutsui moved to alter the agenda by placing announcements at the beginning of the meeting. A roll call vote passed unanimously.

2. Announcements

Deputy General Manager, Dr. Ana M. Alvarez, introduced the Park District’s new Equity Officer, Jose Gonzalez.

Member Bob Simmons announced a free Walnut Creek Watershed Council webinar on the restoration plan which is being hosted by the Contra Costa County library, on February 7, 6-8 pm. Registration is required.

Member Carlyn Obringer announced a matter relevant to the new Regional Park in Concord next to the Naval Weapons Station. There will be a meeting on 2/20/24 at 6:30 pm to hopefully sign the term sheet with the master developer candidate. There will be limited discussion about parks and open space.

Member Mendoza made an announcement regarding Save Mount Diablo’s state of the mountain address on 1/25. Member Obringer will receive an award at the ceremony. There will also be a Two Spirit pow-wow at the Fort Mason center on February 10.

3. Approval of the Minutes (out of order, approved after public comments on items not on the agenda)
Discussion: Chair Tsutsui provided PAC Members the opportunity to provide edits to the November 27, 2023, PAC meeting minutes.

Vote: Member Peoples made a motion to approve the minutes and forward them to the East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors. The motion was seconded by Member Valenzuela. The motion passed unanimously with three abstentions as the members were absent from the November meeting.

4. **Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda** (out of order, heard prior to approval of minutes)
Kelly Abreau commented on public access and environmental, social and governance (ESG). Mount Diablo has a well-known controversy where people on the south side of the mountain put up a fence and block a safe path to the top of the mountain. Access points are seen as inconvenient to those who own estates nearby. Many companies no longer want to discuss ESG because of backlash from investors. Their social goals are now difficult to quantify.

5. **Actions Items** – None

6. **Informational Items**

a. Board Member Comments

East Bay Regional Park District Board President Echols congratulated Neil Tsutsui and Luana Espana on their new roles of Chair and Vice Chair of the Park Advisory committee. She welcomed new Equity Officer, Jose Gonzalez. Echols then provided a verbal update about the Second Century District Plan and the 90th Anniversary of the Park District.

PAC Comments:

Member Claxton inquired as to the date of the Park District “birthday party” to take place in May. Director Echols responded the date has yet to be selected.

Public Comment: None.

b. Presentation(s):

1. Informational Update on the Park District's Second Century District Plan

Brian Holt - Chief of Planning, Trails and GIS, provided an informational update on the Park District's Second Century District Plan including an overview of the history of past Districtwide planning efforts. He provided a framework for the development of a new Second Century District Plan, including a discussion of public engagement and the role of the Park Advisory Committee.

The presentation can be found here: [PAC 012224 District Plan Overview \(primegov.com\)](https://www.primegov.com/PAC-012224-District-Plan-Overview)

PAC Comments:

Members were asked to answer the following 3 questions:

1. What are three major topics that should be addressed in the Second Century District Plan?
2. How will you as a member of the Park Advisory Committee like to be involved in the Second Century District Plan?
3. What organizations and stakeholder groups in your community should be engaged in the Second Century District Plan?

Member Lopez inquired as to the timeframe for workflow and whether there would be subcommittees. Holt responded consultants are expected to come on board in July. The process should wrap up by the end of 2025. Staff are currently having conversations about task force/subcommittees.

Member Dieter recommended answering the questions provided in Holt's presentation one at a time.

Member Reid asks about the purpose of envisioning where the District will be in 100 years, as opposed to the next 10 years. Holt responded it is the intent to take the long view as many of the projects staff currently work on will take decades to complete. The plan may need to be updated moving forward but should be shaped by guiding principles currently being established.

Member Peoples commented the focus is on understanding the coming changes in the community. The Park District needs to understand and plan for change. Holt agreed and commented much of what is included in the 2013 Master Plan still very much guides the District today, but small changes will need to be made.

Member Deschambault commented data would be helpful in shaping the priorities driving the process.

Chair Tsutsui commented there will be many opportunities to weigh-in on this process.

Member Henry inquired how much of the expanded Park District territory is available for public use as opposed to being tied-up in regulatory processes. Holt commented there is a question about how much of that land should actually be open to the public and how much should be protected for resource conservation.

Answers to question 1: What are three major topics that should be addressed in the Second Century District Plan?

Member Lopez: assess how we performed on the last plan; strong legislative/lobby component to address conflict between growth/housing and quality of life; equity, language access and ADA access in parks and programming.

Member Dieter: 2013 Master Plan has great, timeless policies which could be adopted in the new plan; land acquisition should remain a priority; bond/ballot measures only address certain parts of the District.

Member Simmons: equity; population increase/decrease; climate change and invasive species; parks like cities focus on geographic/political boundaries, but watersheds do not respect these boundaries.

Member Mendoza: authentic indigenous engagement and co-management; DEI principles; environmental justice.

Member Claxton: sustainable staffing including levels and DEI; climate resilience: wildfire; 30x30; input from Ohlone people; equitable access, including language and physical ability.

Member Reid: real community ownership of the Park District; community education about the Park District.

Member Henry: land acquisition and trail expansion; trail use policies; equitable access;

Member Peoples: adaptations to physical, social, economic situations, particularly climate change; investment in protecting open space and ecosystems; facilitating involvement of all residents in District activities and decisions, including access to parks.

Member Deschambault: population considerations for both people and other species; importance of speaking for nature; climate considerations/adaptation/triage; environmental justice and equity.

Member Valenzuela: keeping up with the growing population of East Contra Costa County; connecting parks to existing trails to avoid having to drive to parks; ADA access; e-bike management and access on trails.

Member Obringer: financial sustainability for ongoing operations and maintenance; climate change; emphasis on and outreach to populations who do not feel welcome in our parks.

Vice-Chair Espana: climate change; financial stability; equitable access and diversity in users and staffing; technologies evolving over time, today there are e-bikes, but what's the next technology and how are the trails and parks being designed to adapt.

Chair Tsutsui: climate change, part to play as a climate sink; balance between recreation and conservation; access for all residents for a variety of purposes and uses, different parks for different uses i.e., Point Isabel for dog owners.

Answers to Question 2: How will you as a member of the Park Advisory Committee like to be involved in the Second Century District Plan?

Chair Tsutsui: participating in workshops with the public/community group settings; as a subject matter expert.

Vice-Chair Espana: community Affairs and outreach; support for Directors

Member Obringer: community engagement in Contra Costa County and Mayor's Conference.

Member Valenzuela: community engagement in East Contra Costa.

Member Deschambault: willing to serve on subcommittees; engagement efforts; getting youth involved.

Member Peoples: engagement in debate about the important issues and aspects of the plan.

Member Henry: community engagement; involvement in public meetings.

Member Reid: connecting with the horse/equestrian community for input.

Member Claxton: listening sessions for stakeholders in the Fremont area.

Member Mendoza: connecting with indigenous people; input on watersheds.

Member Simmons: participation in conversations for trails and trail use; advocate for watershed health.

Member Dieter: agreed with what most have said; should submit input as formal written comment.

Member Lopez: agreed with what most have said; would like a presentation and conversation at the Alameda Mayor's Conference, and engage directly with cities so that the District is not siloed.

Member Chang: listening sessions; engagement in Berkley.

Answers to Question 3. What organizations and stakeholder groups in your community should be engaged in the Second Century District Plan?

Chair Tsutsui: Bruce Beyaert Trails for Richmond Action Committee (TRAC) a trails advocacy group in Richmond; UC Berkeley Institute for Peoples, Parks and Biodiversity

Member Lopez: outreach to non-traditional groups in a variety of languages with cultural sensitivity taken into account.

Member Dieter: Environmental Roundtable; local groups in Alameda; Bike Walk Alameda; friends of the parks.

Member Mendoza: Local AFSCME 2428; multi-cultural wellness groups; Latino Outdoors; Sogorea Te; Ohlone.

Member Claxton: Ohlone indigenous groups; Fremont, Union City and Newark; Urban Forest Friends.

Member Reid: Metropolitan horseman's association.

Member Henry: Park users that are not part of an organized group; surveys via QR codes.

Member Peoples: Disadvantaged communities; East Bay landowners and ranchers.

Member Deschambault: equestrian community; climate groups; 350 Bay Area, 350 Contra Costa, 1000 Grandmothers; Sunrise Movement; Student Leaders In Action; Pittsburg youth action group; labor; climate corps; Greenbelt Alliance, Sierra Club, etc.

Member Valenzuela: City councils and planning commissions in east Contra Costa County as that's where all the growth is occurring.

Member Obringer: Board of Supervisors in both counties; healthcare plans; school districts and community colleges

Vice-Chair Espana: Girls Inc. of Alameda County and Girls Inc. of City of Alameda; West Oakland Community Collaborative; Oakland libraries and faith groups; Crucible (working with biking groups); Boys and Girls clubs; Eden MAC; My Eden Voice (MEV); Cherryland community association; West Oakland Cultural Action Network; Bay Area Ridge Trail; local land trusts; Higher Ground; Alameda Point Collaborative.

Public Comment:

Scott Bartlebaugh commented as Advocacy Director with Bicycle Trails East Bay. Their group would like to be included as a partner. He suggested other groups be included, such as Rich City Rides in Richmond. 18 youth mountain biking teams in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties should be included for the youth perspective. He asked for a recreation roundtable to be formed, as there's an environmental roundtable, but not a recreation roundtable. He feels recreation has been underrepresented. He then thanked staff and PAC members for a thoughtful presentation and discussion.

Igor Skaredoff applauded the PAC's thoughtful discussion.

Casey Farmer suggested the District involve the Asian Pacific Environmental Network. She noted she included additional community groups in the chat.

c. PAC Member Comments

Member Deschambault commented applications are open for the climate corps fellows. This could be a great opportunity to get a fellow or two to assist with this process.

Member Chang added to Deschambault's suggestion, that the District also look to involve the Cal Public Service Institute.

d. Report from Chair – No report

Chair Tsutsui requested future meeting dates be posted for planning purposes.

7. Adjournment

Chair Tsutsui adjourned the meeting at 6:22 p.m.