



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT PARK  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 28, 2025**

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<b>DATE</b>	April 28, 2025
<b>TITLE</b>	Approval of the Minutes for the Board Park Advisory Committee Meeting March 24, 2025
<b>DIVISION</b>	General Manager's Office
<b>FROM</b>	Elsa Grandvoinet, Recording Clerk

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend approval of the minutes for the Park Advisory Committee Meeting of March 24, 2025.

**COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The March 24, 2025 Park Advisory Committee meeting was held in-person and via video conference pursuant to the Brown Act, as amended by AB 2449.

Members of the public can watch the meeting on the Park District's website here:

<https://www.ebparks.org/calendar/public-meetings>

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

**I. Roll Call**

Clerk Elsa Grandvoinet conducted a roll call. Present were the following Members and staff:

Members

Present: Scott Bartlebaugh, James Chang, Susie Claxton, Irene Dieter, Casey Farmer, Corina Lopez, Dev Mahadevan, Francis Mendoza, Bob Peoples, Bob Reid, Bob Simmons, Ed Valenzuela

Remote

Attendees: Dennisha Marsh, Carlyn Obringer

Members

Absent: Roland Williams, Paul Detjens, Bruce Henry

Staff:

Erich Pfuehler, Max Korten, Lisa Baldinger, Sean Dougan, Brian Holt, Elsa Grandvoinet

Board:

Director John Mercurio

Vice Chair Francis Mendoza read the Land Acknowledgment Statement. Mendoza also noted the meeting took place in Huchiu, on the ancestral, unceded, and contemporary land of the Chochenyo-Ohlone.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

a. February 24, 2025 – Park Advisory Committee Minutes

Member Irene Dieter noted the minutes from the February 24, 2025 PAC meeting were not attached to the meeting packet and thus the minutes will be moved for approval at the April 28, 2025 PAC meeting.

3. **Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda**

The Committee received two comments from members of the public, with the subjects reading: *Request for Environmental Hazard Study on Alum Muds Deposits* and *Public Comment on Agenda Items 5b1 and 2*.

Both public comments were distributed to the Park Advisory Committee Members ahead of the meeting.

4. **Action Items**

None.

5. **Informational Items**

a. **Board Member Comments**

Board Member John Mercurio highlighted the importance and value of trails. He encouraged the District to build more trails annually. Director Mercurio also noted Earth Day is coming up, on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and encouraged PAC members to volunteer and celebrate.

b. **Presentations**

1. **District Plan – Project Update and Next Steps**

Division Lead of Planning, Trails, Cultural Resources, and GIS Brian Holt provided a presentation on the next steps for the District Plan. He requested feedback from the Committee on best strategies for community engagement. As of today, the District has completed background data analysis, development of engagement plans, baseline mapping, and crafting of internal engagement toolkits. The project is now entering Phase 2 in which staff will begin community engagement efforts.

A toolkit will be developed for the Board and the Park Advisory Committee so members can engage members of the public for input on the District Plan. Similar information will also be available at Interpretive Programs, Visitor Centers, Libraries, and Community Centers. There will be an online survey available until July 31, 2025 which will be shared broadly including across social media.

Member Corina Lopez proposed the District make presentations at the Contra Costa and Alameda County Mayor's Conferences, as well as at Parks and Recreation Commissions across East Bay cities. She also recommended reaching out to the Friends of the San Leandro Creek and other creek alliance organizations, as well as groups focused on individuals of all abilities. Additionally, Member Lopez suggested utilizing local newspapers to engage with demographics that may not interact with the District online, on social media, or through local government meetings.

Member Ed Valenzuela recommended including District Plan materials as part of the Big Break tabling at the Brentwood Farmer's Market in May and June. Member Valenzuela described the event as very well attended with a good representation of the Brentwood community.

Member Bob Peoples suggested the San Ramon Art and Wind Festival would be a good opportunity to meet with the community, adding the District will already be tabling at the event.

Member Bob Simmons noted presentations at local libraries may be valuable considering they host many events. Member Simmons also emphasized outreach to local hiking groups and watershed councils, such as the Walnut Creek Watershed Council and connected friends groups.

Member Carlyn Obringer suggested Friends of Concord Creeks and presentations at the Concord Farmer's Market, which typically attracts around 5,000 attendees. Member Obringer also mentioned the Walk and Talk event she and Director John Mercurio will be hosting on April 12<sup>th</sup> at Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50 as a potential community engagement opportunity.

Member Scott Bartlebaugh mentioned the Contra Costa and Alameda County Special Districts Associations would be a valuable addition. He also mentioned the Crockett Sugartown Festival in July and Rich City Rides in Richmond, as well as middle school mountain biking teams. Member Bartlebaugh also suggested it may be useful to reach out to other local resource districts.

Vice Chair Francis Mendoza recommended the Bicycle Trails of the East Bay Council.

Member James Chang proposed engaging at Berkeley Farmer's Markets and the Berkeley or Oakland Flee Markets, particularly the Oakland Flee Market at the Coliseum. Member Chang also highlighted Oakland Pride, Solano Stroll, and Juneteenth in Berkeley as popular gathering events which would be great opportunities for public engagement. Member Chang offered to attend local events and gather input on behalf of the District. In response, it was shared park staff will provide a packet of information on the District Plan upon request so members can distribute and collect input from the community at such events.

Member Dennisha Marsh recommended First Fridays and car shows which bring a lot of families out and would provide a great opportunity to collect input. Member Marsh also noted she is a part of the Library Commission and would be happy to assist if needed.

Member Casey Farmer suggested the Girl and Boy Scouts, Neighborhood Associations, groups that have recently attended parks as part of field trips, Oakland Goes Outdoors, and other youth engagement groups. Member Farmer also questioned if the Park District was planning on providing stipends to such organizations for their work in engaging the community on behalf of the Park District. Holt responded the District is still considering this proposal as part of the outreach strategy.

Member Dieter emphasized outreaching in person versus online, as well as at City Council meetings and Town Halls.

### **Public Comment**

Norman La Force noted the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife should be engaged on the District Plan. The health of wildlife should be considered in the District Plan engagement process.

## **2. Trails Program Overview**

Trails Program Manager Sean Dougan and Deputy General Manager Max Korten presented an overview of the District's Trails Program. The current mileage of trails in East Bay Parks is now 1,330. Staff explained many of these trails were historically fire roads or ranch roads created before environmental considerations were taken into account, which means there is a lot of work the District can do to improve them. Goals for the future of the Trails Program include developing strategic connections, maintaining a sustainable system, reducing environmental impact, protecting natural and cultural resources, and improving visitor safety, experience and access.

Key strategies for implementation of these goals include trail crew growth, workforce development, interdivisional collaboration, community engagement, and incorporation of science and data.

Dougan reviewed specific projects the Park District has been working on and the results of those efforts.

Vice Chair Mendoza asked what techniques are used to evaluate wildlife crossings in District parks. Dougan pointed to the Stewardship Division for more information. Korten noted the Park District is a core member of the East Bay Stewardship Network which is centered on tracking plant and wildlife health in the region, specifically through their project *NatureCheck*.

Member Valenzuela asked if Deer Valley Park is included in the trails program. Korten noted the Roddy Ranch development project is a part of ongoing planning efforts for that area. The project still requires funding and design.

Member Dev Mahadevan asked if paved trails are more time and resource intensive, specifically the paved trail in Lake Chabot Regional Park. The maintenance project work list includes that trail.

Member Peoples agreed that workforce development is very important. He also noted the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (CCRCD) is providing funding for training to currently unhoused people in the community so they can develop skills in land management. It may be an opportunity to partner with the Park District.

Member Bartlebaugh asked about the trail prioritization process. Max Korten responded requests are sent to the small trails maintenance team for smaller maintenance needs. They are completed dependent on availability of permits and funding, while larger maintenance is included in the Capital Improvements Project system. CIPs use a prioritization matrix which takes many factors into consideration, as well as availability of permitting, design, and funding. The Board, Committees, and public also have a hand in expressing priorities. Dougan noted project completion is more dependent on permit and funding availability than prioritization per say.

Member Obringer asked if there is an update on the Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50. Korten explained the South of Bailey Road portion of the park is now in planning and design. The planning team will be presenting to the Board Executive Committee soon about the schedule for opening that park and others, which is currently likely projected to be another five years.

Member Simmons noted he is the President of the Orinda Hiking Club and the organization donates annually to the Regional Park Foundation for trail maintenance. Member Simmons also asked if staff have any sense of when the Bay Ridge Trail may be completed and what key gaps should be considered. Dougan noted there are sections of the Bay Ridge Trail that will require land acquisition from private owners and may be very difficult if not impossible to connect, specifically near the 680 corridor, to the South between Mission Peak and Vargas. Gaps up by Kennedy Grove and between the almond farm property, through John Muir Land Trust lands to Crockett Hills, as well as Rancho Pinole owned by East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), will be difficult and may take around 20 years to complete.

Member Chang expressed the importance of publicizing the District's work to the community and showcasing the efforts staff put into beautifying and developing the parklands.

Member Claxton asked if there is a centralized location to learn more about trail conditions, elevation profiles, shading, etc. Dougan and Korten pointed to AllTrails, which includes some EBRPD trails, but not all. Additionally, the Geographic Information System (GIS) team have been working on digitally mapping elevation models of trails and parks. This tool may be posted to the Park District website in the future, but is currently in the early development phase.

Member Lopez mentioned including multi-lingual signage across the Park District, specifically trail information about required abilities before individuals proceed to start walking or hiking on a trail.

### **Public Comment**

Norman La Force commented the Park District should boost maintenance of trails balanced with opening new trails. La Force also commented the proposal for the Flow Trail in Wildcat Canyon is in violation of the Park District's Master Plan.

c. **Chair Announcements**

None.

6. **Announcements**

Member Valenzuela announced that All Abilities Day, held on March 4<sup>th</sup> at Big Break Regional Shoreline, was a very successful event that attracted over 1,000 attendees. Member Valenzuela also announced the Brentwood Day of Service will be held on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Member Peoples noted the Contra Costa urban limit line will expire next year and is interested in seeing a presentation brought before the PAC on the subject.

Member Farmer also proposed a presentation on the Albany Bulb and environmental contamination cleanup.

Vice Chair Mendoza noted there is an opening on the PAC for the Ward 5 seat.

7. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Mendoza declared the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsa Grandvoinet, Legislative Assistant