


**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE	September 4, 2024
TITLE	Review and Recommend Adoption of the 2025 Board Calendar
DIVISION	General Manager's Office
FROM	Dr. Ana M Alvarez, Deputy General Manager Sabrina Landreth, General Manager
APPROVED	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

RECOMMENDATION

Support the General Manager's recommendation to the full Board of Directors to adopt the 2025 Board Calendar at its October 01, 2024, public meeting.

BACKGROUND

On November 7, 2023, the Board of Directors ("Board") of the East Bay Regional Park District ("Park District") adopted a Board calendar for the 2024 calendar year, which served as a fully integrated and comprehensive annual calendar that frames the public meetings of Park District's elected officials. The new practice of adopting an annual calendar is responsive to Board feedback received at the Board's annual retreat on April 14, 2023, which included the following areas of interests:

- Engage in a collaborative process in the formulation of an annual calendar of public meetings of Park District's elected officials.
- Enhance transparency by memorializing calendaring preferences and practices as well as posting an annual Board Calendar in the Park District's website.
- Minimize the rescheduling of meetings by proactively resolving potential scheduling conflicts for prioritized events and meetings.
- Communicate well in advance the Board Committees' standing meeting schedule for the incoming year for Board members' consideration when requesting appointments to those committees.

At the request of General Manager Sabrina Landreth and under the leadership of Board President Elizabeth Echols, staff engaged in an early process to develop a Board calendar for the incoming year designed through a strategic planning framework, as described below.

On June 05, 2024, the planning framework and timelines for the development of the 2025 Board Calendar were discussed by the Board Executive Committee, inclusive of key principles; shared goals formulated from past and contemporaneous discussions with Board Members and staff on two primary topical areas: (1) improving Board meeting management and (2) feedback on the existing

2024 Board Calendar; collaborative decision-making; and meaningful engagement. On June 10, 2024, an informational memorandum on the same was issued to the Board. The proposed 2025 Board Calendar (Attachment A) was developed through meetings with Board President Echols and reviewed by the Executive Team on August 28, 2024.

Planning Framework

- **Key Principles**

The following key principles guided the planning process in support of shared goals, which are reflective of the hallmarks of good government:

1. Engage in a collaborate and inclusive process with key stakeholders.
2. Responsive to feedback in alignment with [Park District values](#).
3. Enhance public access to information at public meetings.
4. Embrace continuous improvement to gain efficiencies in the management of public resources.

- **Goals**

The following four goals describe the intended outcomes from this year's planning process, which embrace best practices in the public sector:

1. Formulation of a calendar of public meetings conducted by Park District's elected officials through a public process in collaboration with key stakeholders.
2. Establishment of a decision-making process to prioritize Park District business in calendaring of meetings and events that require the participation of Park District elected officials and staff.
3. Memorialize through Board action the adoption of a public-facing calendar of elected officials serving the Park District
4. Publication of an adopted calendar as a foundational base for planning of other Park District events that require the participation of its elected officials (e.g. service awards)

- **Collective Decision-Making**

In alignment with key principles and shared goals, the following five-step process shepherds collaborative decision-making to ensure that decision points are not attributed to any single individual but rather considers the collective:

1. Framing the decision through clarifying questions in a survey format to define the problem or need.
2. Gathering relevant information from stakeholders from the survey and discussions
3. Generating alternatives by evaluating the options or alternatives based on key principles and shared goals.
4. Formulating a recommendation with the participation of the Executive Team and Board Executive Committee for consideration and adoption by the full Board of Directors
5. Conducting a review of the intended outcomes (evaluation on effectiveness)

- **Meaningful Engagement**

The planning process was designed to engage Board Members and members of the Executive Team in a meaningful way by listening to their perspectives early and at various stages of the process and through four different consultation channels, as noted below. This process leans into the [Park District values](#) of (1) relationships – recognizing that our greatest strengths lies in the trust, accountability, and teamwork we cultivate with one another; (2) responsiveness – committing to communicate openly, honestly, and reliably; and (3) transparency – acknowledging that we hold the public's trust

through meaningful stakeholder engagement and access to timely and reliable information on decisions and performance.

1. *2025 Board Calendar Survey* - An online survey (Survey) was launched on May 31, 2024, to solicit direct feedback from Board members and members of the Executive Team, intended to gather additional insights and data representative of the groups. It was designed in a collaborative process with Executive Team members around three major areas where potential decision points lie:
 - a. soliciting availability for Special Meetings of the Board of Directors (Study Sessions and Board Site Visits – aka Board Tours)
 - b. exploring legacy interests (evening meetings, summer recess, etc.)
 - c. exploring new pathways to reach shared goals in two areas - Board Standing Committees and annual conferences – by prompting to reimagine the Board Committees' standing schedule to gain efficiency in Board meeting management.

On August 15, 2024, Survey findings were shared with the Board and Executive Team through informational memos, which are described in the Analysis Section of this report.

2. *Informational Memos* –Informational memos served as a reference resource at any specific point in the process. They reported on progress made to ensure that stakeholders were informed and up to date. These memos included contextual information, framing of issue(s), and provided analysis that feed into larger key decision-point(s). They also provided a consultation opportunity for stakeholders in key stages of the planning process by welcoming questions and discussion on interests and/or concerns.
3. *Executive Team Meetings* – At key points in the planning and decision-making process, this item was discussed for consultation and discussion with members of the Executive Team.
4. *Public Meetings* – At key points in the planning and decision-making process, the public has an opportunity to provide feedback since this item has been and will continue to be placed on the agenda for public meetings of the Board Executive Committee and the Full Board of Directors.

ANALYSIS

The proposed 2025 Board Calendar integrates Board of Directors feedback, communicates well in advance the time commitments required from elected officials to fulfill their roles in conducting 86 proposed public meetings and proactively resolves potential scheduling conflicts for three Park District advocacy events consisting of additional meetings over seven days. It adheres to the Board Operating Guidelines and maintains preferred scheduling practices.

Attachment B provides the 2025 Board Calendar at a Glance to visually illustrate the level of Board activity required in 2025, which in total amounts to close to 40% of the entire year – not including fourteen (14) Ward Site Visits with individual Board Members, ten (10) interagency meetings with elected officials; and fifty (50) Local Government meetings with up to two Board Members planned for the coming year.

Additionally, the proposed 2025 Board Calendar does not include professional industry events in 2025 that may be available at the discretion of individual Board Members in support of their role as the legislative body of the East Bay Regional Park District. These events are considered secondary or optional in nature in context of the Board's primary and overall responsibility to conduct the public's business for mission delivery through public meetings of the Board of Directors. Attachment C

provides a listing of these types of non-Park District optional events and identifies scheduling conflicts with the Park District's legislative calendar, which takes priority.

Per the Board Operating Guidelines, scheduling conflicts arising from individual Board Members will be resolved through quorum for meetings of the full Board of Directors; and scheduling conflicts for Board standing committee meetings will be resolved either through the appointed Board Committee Alternate or Board Committee quorum with the participation of two Board Committee members.

In the formulation of a proposed 2025 Board Calendar, Survey findings were incorporated as noted in Table I below. Additionally, and in response to feedback received outside the Survey, the Board Executive Committee and Board Finance Committee standing schedule was swapped.

Table I

No.	Survey Finding	Proposed 2025 Calendar
1	A majority of the Board and the Executive Team favor keeping Regular Board Meetings at the standing time (11:00 a.m. Closed Session + 1:00 p.m. Open Session)	Standing times were kept. No changes.
2	The Board and the Executive Team favor keeping budget meetings at the designated times.	Standing times were kept. No changes.
3	Moving the Board's summer recess to the month of July was strongly favored by the Board and the Executive Team.	Board's summer recess shifted to the month of July.
4	Scheduling conflicts exist in 43% of Board Study Sessions and 60% of Board Tours.	New dates have been identified to resolve scheduling conflicts.
5	While the Executive Team strongly favors moving the Board Committee meetings to Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., the majority of the Board members desires the status quo.	The standing schedule for Board Committees were kept.
6	Three additional opportunities were identified for park industry professionals and elected officials.	These opportunities have been added.

Based on the Survey findings, there is an opportunity to continue exploring the following issues:

1. Shifting the starting time from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for standing Board Committee meetings, consistent with Closed Session in response to traffic concerns expressed by four (4) out of seven (7) Board members. Alternatively, the Board may want to consider adopting an early evening standing schedule for these meetings (e.g. 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.).
2. Increase rotating locations to conduct Full Board of Directors Meetings by considering alternative locations for Special Board Meetings in addition to the one Regular Board Meeting per year at Big Break Visitor's Center.

The additional alternative locations to conduct Regular Board Meetings is not recommended due to the inability to stream meetings live, which will lower the level of service to the public. Additionally, there is a benefit to maintaining a consistent location for these types of meetings to ensure the public is aware of the meeting location.

If there is strong interest to rotate meeting locations in addition to the proposed six meetings for 2025 (one meeting held at Big Break Visitor's Center and five Board Tours), then the locations of the remaining Special Meetings, annual retreat and multiple study sessions, could be considered, which is also responsive to feedback received from the Survey.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - 2025 Board Calendar

Attachment B – 2025 Board Calendar at a Glance

Attachment C – Non-Park District Optional Conferences