

DRAFT



Parks Measure M Citizens Oversight Committee Draft Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, September 26, 2023
500 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Sonoma County Regional Parks
2300 County Center Dr.
La Plaza-A Building, Rm. 212
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
and virtually via Zoom

- 1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement** – Melanie Parker, Deputy Director of Sonoma County Regional Parks took note of the following Land Acknowledgement Statement:

“The County of Sonoma recognizes that we are on the ancestral lands of the Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo who are the original caretakers of this area. We respectfully acknowledge the Indigenous peoples who have been stewarding and maintaining relationship on this land as knowledge keepers for millennia. The County of Sonoma is dedicated to understanding and educating the public about historical and ongoing connections between land conservation and social inequities. This includes the histories of genocide, forced removal and displacement, and broken promises with Indigenous peoples as a part of American history. Indigenous people are not just in our histories. We strive to optimize Indigenous voices to share their own history, as to not perpetuate another form of being silenced. While recognizing the past, we honor the resiliency of Native people still in their ancestral territories in relationship with their land and culture. This acknowledgement does not take the place of authentic relationships with Indigenous communities but serves as a gesture in respect to the land we are on.”

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting started at 5:03 p.m. Chair Meredith Rennie called the meeting to order.

Committee Members Present: Meredith Rennie, Carol Eber, Leslie Graves, Justin Lindenberg, and Chris Borr.

Committee Members Absent: John Mills

Committee Seats Vacant: There is one “at large” appointment vacant on the Committee.

Staff Present: Bert Whitaker, Director; Melanie Parker, Deputy Director; Robert Gonzalez, Fiscal and Administrative Officer.

All Committee Members and staff introduced themselves.

2. Comments from the Public – Public may address the Committee on matters that are not on the agenda

Members of the public wishing to suggest an item for a future Committee agenda may do so during this Public Comment period. The Ralph M. Brown Act (the State local agency open meeting law) prohibits the Committee from acting on any matter that is not on the agenda. Speakers are limited to three minutes each, however, the Commission Chair may adjust the time limit in light of the number of anticipated speakers.

Chair Meredith Rennie called for any comment from the public. There was none.

Committee Member Leslie Graves reported that she received a comment from the public over social media. She said the commenter asked for an accessibility ramp at Doran Beach. She noted that while there are wheelchairs available at Doran Beach, there is no ramp for greater accessibility.

3. Approval of the Minutes – of the June 6, 2023 meeting of the Parks Measure M Citizens Oversight Committee meeting.

VOTED to approve the minutes of the, June 6, 2023 meeting, as follows:

MOTION:	Committee Member Chris Borr	AYES: 5	ABSTAIN: 0
SECOND:	Committee Member Meredith Rennie	ABSENT: 1	VACANT: 1

4. Review of the Quarterly Revenue Report; Presentation by Robert Gonzalez, Administrative Services Officer.

- Robert Gonzalez conveyed the Quarterly Revenue Report, noting that this report is for the fourth quarter. He stated that the total amount for the third quarter coming into the County is 3.6 million in revenue, of which 2.4 million goes to Sonoma County for parks, and 1.2 million is disbursed to the nine cities in the county. He said expenses of approximately four thousand dollars was spent on the Auditor’s report. An estimated 11 million dollars was received in interest as well.

Committee Member Chris Borr asked why a column entitled ‘previously disbursed’ appeared on the report, and what that means. Robert Gonzalez explained that the data in that column represents an adjustment to reflect revenue previously unaccounted for.

Chair Meredith Rennie asked for any public comment on this item. There was none.

5. Affirmation by Cities and County of Sonoma of Adopted Budgets for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Maintenance of Effort Requirements (Action Item)

Ashley Wilson, representing Cotati, reported that all funding received has been used by the City of Cotati to remodel Kotate Park. She said that future funds will be used for Putnam Park.

Hector Galvan, representing Cloverdale, reported that Measure M funds in Cloverdale were mainly dedicated to parks maintenance projects and staffing. He noted that the maintenance projects include playground repair and vegetation management. He reported that the budget of Measure M funds was slightly lower than last year due to impact fees for the projects paid for.

Committee Member Carol Eber congratulated Hector Galvan and the City of Cloverdale for the increase in the parks' budgets in Cloverdale. Committee Member Justin Lindenberg noted that Cloverdale led the cities in the county with their baseline budget of Measure M funds.

Drew Halter, representing Petaluma, reported that Measure M funds have been used for catalyzing park improvements by leveraging even more funding. He noted that some of the capital projects include Petaluma's all-weather sports field, a new skate park design, an outdoor pool that will be re-plastered, and the re-design and renovation of Kenilworth Park.

Mark Themig, representing Healdsburg, reported that 1.7 million will be used from an overall budget to establish a bon reserve to sell about 30 million dollars in bonds for future park construction projects. He said that just under a half million dollars will be used to implement a deferred maintenance program that the city hopes to grow over time. He said that Measure M funds are largely going towards one of the City's long-term projects, which is Fitch Mountain.

Scott Wilkinson, representing Santa Rosa, reported that Measure M has enabled the city to tackle deferred maintenance projects as well as continuing to gear up a number of capital improvement projects. He said a system-wide condition assessment report was recently completed that outlined the city's park need. He reported that coms capital improvement projects going forward are Jacobs Park, Rincon Valley Community Park, Jennings Park and improvements at Howarth Park and Galvin Community Park.

Kari Svanstrom, representing the City of Sebastopol, reported this year and in the coming year Sebastopol will use Measure M funds to fill the gap for funding Ives Park pathways, as well as a trail connection that will run from the Youth Annex near the Laguna down to Highway 12. She also reported that Sebastopol is now working with California Urban Stream Partnerships to submit a state grant application for stream restoration. She added that an additional project is a new sculpture garden which will require further design and funding.

Olivia Lemen, representing the Town of Windsor, reported that Measure M has enabled the Town to move projects forward, including a major renovation of the town's senior recreation center. She said bids came back much higher than anticipated for construction work, and Measure M has helped fill those gaps. She said additional projects for future years include a focus on more pickleball courts.

Bert Whitaker, representing Sonoma County Regional Parks, reported that Measure M funds have helped leverage funding in many different ways, including when state or federal grants fall short, or when inflation costs put projects over a certain budgeted amount. He reported that Maxwell Farms improvements are about eighty percent complete, and Larson Park will be undergoing significant redevelopment as well. He said other projects include improving gathering areas at several parks.

Cindy Bagley, representing Rohnert Park, reported that Measure M funds have played a significant part in their maintenance and construction projects, as well as nearly all community events. She added that an additional full-time position will be funded from Measure M and stated that Measure M has also been able to fill budget gaps for capital improvement projects. She said one example of Measure M funds playing a critical role was in paying for sport lighting which had gone out and enabled sport teams to continue their season.

Chair Meredith Rennie asked if using Measure M moneys towards a bond measure, such as that in Healdsburg, is permissible.

Mark Themig, representing Healdsburg, responded that the Measure M money is going directly towards the Fitch Mountain project, and not towards the bond measure.

Chair Meredith Rennie asked if there is any public comment on this item. There was none.

VOTED to affirm the adopted budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024 maintenance of effort requirements as presented:

MOTION:	Chair Member Meredith Rennie	AYES: 5	ABSTAIN: 0
SECOND:	Committee Member Carol Eber	ABSENT: 1	VACANT: 1

Chair Meredith Rennie asked if the Committee may have input in what the agreed upon procedures are for the annual audit, including the criteria for maintenance of effort requirements.

Administrative Services Officer II Robert Gonzalez responded that he will be meeting with the auditor to determine the agreed upon procedures and that he would consult with the auditor concerning the possibility for Committee input.

6. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kathleen Culhane, Executive Assistant
Sonoma County Regional Parks

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