



Livermore Area
Recreation and Park District
An independent special district

**LIVERMORE AREA RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

DRAFT MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

7:00 P.M.

NOTICE: Coronavirus COVID-19

In accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov. Code 54950 – 54963), as amended by Assembly Bill 361 (2021), members of the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Board of Directors and staff participated in this meeting via teleconference (Zoom). In the interest of maintaining proper social distancing, members of the public also participated in this meeting electronically.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Directors Jan Palajac, Philip Pierpont,
Vice Chair James Boswell, Chair Maryalice Faltings

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Director David Furst

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Mathew Fuzie, Fred Haldeman, Jeffrey Schneider, Jill Kirk,
David Weisgerber, Michelle Kleman, Christine Cardosi,
Julie Dreher, Linda VanBuskirk,

DISTRICT COUNSEL: Rod Attebery and Tom Terpstra, Jr. with Neumiller &
Beardslee

OTHERS PRESENT: Conni Naylor, Mary Ann Hannon, and Michael White

1. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Faltings called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All Directors were present via Zoom, except Director Furst who was on vacation. Chair Faltings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

3. CONSENT ITEMS

- 3.1 Resolution No. 2761 determining to conduct meetings of the LARPD Board of Directors using teleconferencing pursuant to Government Code 54953 as amended by AB 361;
- 3.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 31, 2022
- 3.3 General Manager's Update to the Board of Directors on Issues and Projects – September 2022.

Item 3.2 Pulled:

GM Fuzie asked to have the Draft Minutes of August 31, 2022 pulled for corrections. The Revised Draft Minutes will be brought back to the next Board Meeting reflecting suggested revisions from Director Palajac to paragraphs 4.1 LARPD's ROLE IN THE ARTS COMMUNITY and paragraph 7 MATTERS INITIATED/ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE DIRECTORS.

MOTION:

Moved by Director Pierpont, seconded by Director Palajac, approved the Consent Agenda, as amended, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: *Directors Boswell, Palajac, Pierpont, and Chair Faltings (4)*
NOES: *None (0)*
ABSTENTIONS: *None (0)*
ABSENT: *Furst (1)*

4. PRESENTATION

4.1 SYCAMORE GROVE BURNED OAK STUDY

Community Services Supervisor (CSS) David Weisgerber introduced LARPD Open Space volunteers Michael White, Maryann Hannon and Conni Naylor, plus LARPD's Open Space Interpreter Christine Cardosi, who shared findings and photos from their two-year study monitoring five oak trees burned during the fire in upper Sycamore Grove Park in August 2020. The Open Space Volunteers spent nearly 300 hours on the Burned Oak Project which met the goal of engaging and educating volunteers about valley oak recovery from a wildfire.

Board Members commented that the level of detail in the Burned Oak presentation was outstanding and thanked the Open Space Volunteers for their time and efforts.

- It was suggested that GM Fuzie facilitate submittal of this project for an award to one or more of the state organization(s) that LARPD belongs to.

This was information only and no Board action was taken

5. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

5.1 HEALTH BENEFITS CONTRIBUTION

GM Fuzie presented a verbal report which highlighted additional information received from Alameda County regarding increasing health benefit costs and how that will affect LARPD employees moving forward. The County recently reported that an increase in health benefit costs will take effect as of February 2023. In tracking health benefits contributions since 2019, the Employer

Contribution was 78% of the cost of Kaiser + Family (which is the most chosen benefit type among our Employees.) In 2020 there was a modest increase of \$45, and then no increase during COVID. Currently (2022) the Employer Contribution is at 72%. If we do nothing to affect that, the Employer Contribution will go down to 67%, as confirmed by Business Services Manager, Jeffrey Schneider, resulting in an 8% increase in Employee costs.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Staff recommends that prior to Open Enrollment (beginning the last week in November) the Board approve the Employer Contribution so that a package may be presented to Employees to understand what their costs will be in conjunction with what the Employer contribution will be. The 75% happens to coincide with what it would take for the District to be able to tell its Employees during Open Enrollment that their contribution for health is not going to change – because the District has absorbed the increase in premiums on their behalf.
- Staff recommends that the District set a methodology, and adopt a standard, for its budgeting tool which is 75% of Kaiser + Family for all benefitted Employees. This will have a sweeping effect on the Employees, but not have a huge financial effect on Employer contributions. The overall fiscal effect for this year is small at \$54k; For next year, it would be a little over \$100k as we are planning now.
- Staff recommends the Board approve a 75% benchmark methodology for our budget purposes.
- This will be useful for Employee recruitment and retention. Seventy-five percent (75%) will put the District within the largest nationwide percentage of what other districts are offering: 44 of the surveyed districts, the largest number by far, are within the 70-79% range.
- To meet our timeline for Open Enrollment, this item was reviewed and discussed by the Personnel Committee on September 13, 2022, and the Personnel Committee recommended consideration and approval by the full Board.

Director Boswell spoke on behalf of the Personnel Committee stating that this is driving an improved version of retention of Employees that currently exist, and the recruitment of future Employees. There is a cost associated with EEs that leave the organization. There is also a cost associated with recruitment as well. The positive that comes out of that is based on a cost benefit. Related the that, the amounts discussed during the Personnel Committee meeting for next year is approximately \$128k, as confirmed by BSM Schneider. The amount for the remainder of this year is a portion thereof at \$54k. The money is well-spent. That 75% makes a significant difference on the recruiting side. Chair Faltings concurred that this makes sense. (She attended the Personnel Committee meeting as an alternate for Director Furst.)

DIRECTOR COMMENTS/QUESTIONS INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

- How do you memorialize it? *The Board would give us direction. We would put it in the minutes. It would be part of our budgeting tool and part of our recruitment and retention tools and every year we would identify it as the methodology we are using for our contributions and the Board can choose to*

accept that or not in the future. This will be an operating policy for the Finance Department to ensure that they conform to the 75%. It changes this from a fixed dollar amount or having to analyze this every year to a fixed percentage which makes it significantly easier to calculate and it also is easier to use in literature for recruitment and retention purposes.

- *How will Employees know that that is what LARPD is doing? Communication will originate from the Human Resources Department. Human Resources Officer (HRO) Michelle Kleman added that explaining total compensation is important for Employees to understand. Our plan for this coming year is to explain how the percentage of health benefits contribution impacts the total compensation plan of working at LARPD.*
- *Consensus was shared in favor of predictable, measurable mechanisms like this that give clarity of expectation.*
- *Is this established by a resolution or an operational policy tool? If for some reason we want to change it/raise it, how will that happen later? This will be identified in the budget process as 75% will be the methodology for setting our Employer contribution, which then will affect the Employees' contribution. As such, the Board will have the ability to address that. This will further be used in LARPD's recruitment and retention tools as part of our ongoing discussions with Employees as a part of the total compensation package.*

Chair Faltings opened public comment. There were no public comments. Chair Faltings closed the public comment period.

DIRECTION:

General Counsel Rod Attebery asked whether anybody disagrees with setting the policy at 75% for budget purposes. No objections were heard/expressed.

Chair Faltings announced that the four Board members present have agreed to implement the Health Benefit Contribution at 75% for budget purposes.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS (No Action Required)

6.1 GENERAL FINANCIAL UPDATE

General Manager Fuzie reported that Staff is doing an excellent job. The District is healthy and performing better than hoped for. BSM Schneider echoed GM Fuzie's comments and reported that the District's preliminary financials through August are significantly favorable versus Budget in all areas: Revenue, Salary and Benefits, and Services and Supplies, led by results in our Community Services organization that are favorable across the board. Of note is that our water expenses have been below Budget as well. Preliminary data in support of this presentation will be sent to the Board and final numbers will be provided to the Finance Committee and the Board later this month.

GM Fuzie added that being conservative in our budgeting has been a benefit to the District throughout the COVID pandemic. This methodology will continue as we move forward.

The Board of Directors had no further comments or questions. This was information only and no Board action was taken.

6.2 COVID-19 PROGRAM UPDATES

Human Resources Officer (HRO) Michelle Kleman reported that there has not been an influx of COVID cases in our employee population since Back to School took place, although there are currently three employees excluded from the workforce due to COVID. Although the cases are from the ESS group, this does not qualify as an outbreak, and in fact, COVID has impacted every aspect of the District in some fashion. The District continues to manage COVID well. The state of California has extended COVID sick leave through the end of December.

Community Services Manager Jill Kirk reported on the success of free swim lessons at May Nissen Swim Center provided to the kids of Junction and Marilyn Avenue Elementary School sites made possible by the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program (formerly known as BELIEVES). Additional funding from the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) which is strictly for afterschool enrichment programs, gave LARPD the ability to collaborate with the school district ASES staff and the Livermore Aquacowboys swim team (LAC) to provide swim lessons for the kids. Swim lessons will take place twice a week for six weeks. After that, Recreation staff and Ranger staff will provide additional programming. This is a great example of collaboration and service to the community.

The Board of Directors had no further comments or questions. This was information only and no Board action was taken.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Director Boswell reported his attendance, along with Director Faltings (alternate for Director Furst), at the September 13, 2022 Personnel Committee meeting. The Agenda was included in the Board packet. The primary focus of the meeting was a recruitment update from the HR Department plus discussion about the health benefits contribution, which the Board discussed and approved this evening. At the request of Director Boswell, GM Fuzie added that we are adding staff at service delivery positions. We are advertising for several of those positions in Youth Services, Recreation and Parks - specifically to take care of our sports fields, road work and to generally fill out the staff there.
- b) Director Furst will be asked to report on his attendance at the September 7, 2022 Chamber of Commerce Business Alliance meeting at the next Board meeting, once he returns from vacation.
- c) Chair Faltings reported her attendance at the September 12, 2022 meeting of the LARPD Foundation. For the first time in 2 ½ years, the meeting was held in person. She reported that the Foundation has some new members: Connie Campbell, Dave Muela, and Tara Stevulak, plus two additional people have submitted applications to become Trustees of the Foundation: Mike Ralph and the former City Manager, Marc Roberts. These two applications will be voted on at an upcoming meeting. The Treasurer's report indicated the Foundation is very healthy, with upwards of \$86k and the foundation is very healthy. They have upwards of \$86k total income for FY 21/22.
- d) Chair Faltings reported her attendance at the September 14, 2022 Alameda County Special Districts Association (ACSDA) meeting. She met ACSDA's new President, Ryan Clausnitzer, who is also the General Manager of the Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District. This meeting was hosted by StopWaste. Chair Faltings invited

fellow Board Members to join a future ACSDA meeting as they are very interesting and provide an opportunity to learn about other special districts in Alameda County. The next meeting will be held on November 9, 2022, hosted by EBMUD.

8. MATTERS INITIATED/ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE DIRECTORS

- a) Chair Faltings announced that Board policy states that upon returning from seminars, workshops conferences, etc., where expenses are reimbursed by the District, Director are required to provide a brief report to other Board members and/or staff at a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors. Chair Faltings reported her attendance, along with Director Furst and GM Fuzie, at Alameda County Supervisor David Haubert's presentation entitled "The County's Role in a Strong Economy" at the September 8, 2022 Livermore Valley Chamber of Commerce (LVCC) Wine Country Luncheon.

9. MATTERS INITIATED/ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE GENERAL MANAGER

GM Fuzie made the following announcements:

- a) The California Association for Park & Recreation Indemnity (CAPRI) is holding its Board of Directors Election for 2022 on November 1, 2022. Nominations are due September 30, 2022. To be eligible to serve on the CAPRI Board of Directors, you must be a Board Member for a member agency or a management employee of a member agency. At this time, CAPRI is calling for nominations for three seats on this year's ballot. The current seats up for election are based upon CAPRI Contribution Tiers and include Directors in the Upper 1/3 Tier, Middle 1/3 Tier and Lower 1/3 Tier. (LARPD is in the Upper 1/3 Tier.) All qualified individuals interested and willing to serve should submit a *Letter of Interest* no longer than one page outlining their interest and qualifications for the CAPRI Board of Directors. The Letter of Interest must be received by CAPRI by **September 30, 2022** to be considered for nomination and placement on the Ballot. Those interested in sending in a nomination should send their Letter of Interest to CAPRI via email to Matt Duarte.

GM Fuzie will consider running. Chair Faltings added that over the years LARPD has always been in the forefront of participation statewide in the various organizations and she urged GM Fuzie keep the LARPD name out there in front of everybody.

- b) Tomorrow evening, Thursday, September 15, 2022, the Livermore Chamber of Commerce along with the Livermore Vine will host a Candidates Forum at the Robert Livermore Community Center (RLCC). It is free and open to the public. This forum is for the candidates for Livermore Mayor and the Livermore City Council, and will run from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Cresta Blanca Room.

10. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

APPROVED,

Maryalice Summers Faltings
Chair, Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Mathew L. Fuzie
General Manager and
Ex-officio Clerk to the Board of Directors

/lvb