



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-18-104
Meeting 18-33
September 12, 2018

AGENDA ITEM 7

AGENDA ITEM

Revisions to Board Policy 5.01 – *Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition*, Section III (B)
Constituent Memorial Benches

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS *dem*

1. Approve the recommended revisions to Board Policy 5.01 – *Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition*, Section III (B) *Constituent Memorial Benches* as recommended by the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee.
2. Direct the General Manager to identify new bench locations in high use areas and other suitable rest sites for inclusion in the Constituent Bench Program.

SUMMARY

In February 2016, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) Board of Directors (Board) expressed an interest in understanding the best practices of memorial bench programs at other park and open space agencies to inform potential changes to District policies. Public Affairs completed this research and based on the findings, presented several options to the Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) to update Board Policy 5.01, Section III (B) *Constituent Memorial Benches*. Following committee discussion, LFPAC voted to forward policy revisions to the full Board to allow constituents to request the dedication of a District bench in honor (living) or memory (deceased) of a “Significant Supporter” or “Volunteer” for a ten-year term with a \$5,000 donation. LFPAC also recommends refining the eligibility definition for “Volunteer” to be consistent with the requirements for inclusion in the District’s Volunteer Recognition Sign. The proposed policy changes retain Board member authority to honor “Founders,” “Significant Supporters”, and “Volunteers”. The only change to Board-requested bench dedications is an expansion of the program to include honorary benches for living individuals, which formalizes District past practice.

DISCUSSION

Existing District Benches

There are currently a total of 63 benches within District lands – 35 undedicated benches and 28 dedicated benches. The locations of each bench are integrated in the District’s Enterprise GIS system. The District has installed each of these benches in one of three ways:

- **District Rest Benches** – as a visitor amenity identified by staff during a preserve planning process or in response to an operational need.

- **Constituent Memorial Benches** – benches requested by members of the public in memory of significant supporters or volunteers.
- **District Memorial Benches** - benches requested by members of the Board of Directors to honor founders, significant supporters, or volunteers.

Constituent Memorial Benches and Eligibility

Board Policy 5.01, Section III (B) *Constituent Memorial Benches* identifies eligible opportunities for constituents to honor deceased individuals through the dedication of a memorial bench in a natural preserve setting. Memorial benches are also low-intensity visitor amenities that provide the broader public a stable and comfortable place to rest while out enjoying open space.

Board Policy 5.01 currently limits the program to *memorial* benches dedicated to “a *deceased* significant supporter or volunteer” as follows:

B. Constituent Memorial Benches

These are benches which have been requested by constituents in order to honor a member of the public and are funded by the requestors who must pay \$5,000 for the lifetime cost of the bench. LFPAC discusses requests for these benches and decides which requests will be referred to the full Board for a vote. Requests must be in reference to a deceased significant supporter or a volunteer, as defined in the following sections.

"Significant Supporters" shall be defined as individuals or group of individuals who have shown conspicuous or noteworthy support for the District through extraordinary contributions of time and effort to the advancement of the goals, philosophy and mission of the District.

“Volunteers” shall be defined as individuals or groups of individuals who donated their time to the District by working for the District’s docent or volunteer program.

History of Requests

In the past 8 years, the District has formally received 16 memorial bench requests from constituents. One request has met the eligibility requirements under the current policy, which was the commemoration in 2013 of long-time District volunteer and docent Betty Salveter. The District respectfully declined the other 15 requests.

Memorial Bench Research

In response to Board interest for more information related to memorial bench programs, Public Affairs compiled bench policies from East Bay Regional Park District, Santa Clara County Parks, Marin County Parks, County of San Mateo Parks Department, Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation, Boulder County Parks and Open Space, and Jefferson County Open Space. Memorial Bench programs are more common in traditional Park Agencies and less common in Open Space Districts. Both Jefferson County Open Space and Douglas County Open Space discontinued their memorial bench program due to a lack of dedicated staffing to administer the program. Marin County Parks discontinued their memorial bench program and started a Tree Dedication program in 2017. Most park agencies with a memorial bench program implement a 10-year bench dedication timeframe and require a donation of \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Recommended Policy Updates (Attachment 1)

Based on research, best practices, and input from LFPAC, the General Manager recommends updating the policy language under Section III (B) *Constituent Memorial Benches* as summarized below.

- Expand the program to include “honorary” benches to recognize living individuals who meet District eligibility requirements.
- Set a ten (10) year timeframe for each constituent bench dedication, with an option to renew for an additional \$5,000, consistent with industry standard practices.
- Refine the eligibility definition of “Volunteers” as individuals or groups of individuals **who donated a minimum of 250 volunteer hours and 5 years of service**, consistent with the eligibility requirements for inclusion in the Volunteer Recognition Sign.
- Limit the bench location selection for *constituent bench requests* to an established list of District bench sites that meet District operational needs.
- Remove the administrative requirement of depositing donations into a separate interest bearing Memorial Bench Fund account. The administrative burden outweighs the total amount of donations that may be collected.

With the recommended updates, members of the public could request an honorary or memorial bench for a living or deceased significant supporter or volunteer who meets District eligibility requirements. Constituent requestors would be limited to District standard benches, and would select a bench site from a District established list. If the requestor selects an existing undedicated bench, staff would determine whether to replace the bench at the time of dedication. Benches would include a standard plaque and be dedicated for a 10-year term with a \$5,000 donation to offset costs. Requestors would have the option to renew the dedication every 10 years with an accompanying \$5,000 donation. Staff would add information about the *Constituent Memorial Bench* program to the District website, including an online application form. Public Affairs would serve as the main point of contact and review all constituent bench requests. Requests that are administratively declined may be appealed to the General Manager for a second review. LFPAC would review requests that meet eligibility requirements and forward a recommendation to the full Board of Directors, who retain final approval for bench requests.

These proposed policy changes are largely limited to Constituent Bench Requests. Board members would continue to retain the authority to honor "Founders," "Significant Supporters" and “Volunteers” as in the past. The only change is an expansion of the program to include honorary benches for living individuals, which will formalize past District practice.

Consideration of Additional Bench Locations for Inclusion in the Bench Program

Recently, members of the Board have expressed an interest in expanding the number of rest benches in District preserves to further accommodate visitors who may have difficulties walking long distances. If shared by a majority of the Board, the Board may wish to direct the General Manager to identify new bench locations in high use areas and other suitable rest sites for inclusion in the memorial bench program.

FISCAL IMPACT

All costs associated with District benches are budgeted in the General Fund Operating Budget under the Land and Facilities Department. Below are the costs estimates for the program.

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| <p>➤ <i>For an Existing Bench:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total donation: \$5,000 • Total cost for an existing bench: \$1,320 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personalized Plaque: \$320 ○ Shipping Costs: \$150 ○ Plaque installation: \$250 ○ Bench & plaque maintenance: \$600 | <p>➤ <i>For a New Bench:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total donation: \$5,000 • Total cost of a new bench: \$2,420 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New standard bench: \$705 ○ Personalized plaque: \$320 ○ Shipping Costs: \$295 ○ Assembly and installation of the bench and plaque: \$500 ○ Bench & plaque maintenance: \$600 |
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BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

LFPAC reviewed this item on July 17, 2018 (please refer to Attachment 2 for meeting minutes). Directors Harris and Hassett recommended Board approval, with Director Hanko abstaining.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and no environmental review is required.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, the General Manager will direct staff to implement the updated policy.

Attachments:

1. Board Policy 5.01 Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition with recommended updates shown in tracked changes
2. LFPAC draft minutes from July 17, 2018 meeting

Responsible Department Head:
Cydney Bieber, Acting Public Affairs Manager

Author:
Carmen Lau, Public Affairs Specialist I

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Board Policy Manual

Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition	Policy 5.01 Chapter 5 – Historical/Cultural
Effective Date: 8/25/93	Revised Date: 11/13/13 XX/XX/XX
Prior Versions: 8/25/93, 9/14/94, 6/24/98, 9/12/01, 10/8/08, 1/13/10, 10/27/10, <u>11/13/13</u>	

I. SITE NAMING

All District site names and signs should be kept as simple and functional as possible. When a property is acquired, either as an addition to an existing preserve or for the establishment of a new preserve, a name will be recommended in the Preliminary Use and Management Plan. In most cases, "open space preserve" is appropriate as part of the name; however, there may be circumstances when another designation may be used. In some cases, a temporary name may be retained until the next Comprehensive Use and Management Plan review.

A. Open Space Preserves

The name given to each open space preserve should be general enough to remain suitable if the site is enlarged, but specific enough to give its location some significance. Properties added to an open space preserve may not always be contiguous with that preserve.

1. Preserves shall be named after:
 - a) Geographical features of broad, general significance to the preserve;
 - b) Historical persons, cultural names, uses, or events broadly associated with the locale.

2. Preserves shall not be named after any individuals other than historical persons as noted above.

B. Preserve Areas, Trails, Site Improvements, Historic Sites and Unnamed Natural Features

This designation refers to specific locations, land formations, trails, natural and physical features, staging areas and other site improvements, and areas of significance within open space preserves. Recognition of significant land gifts, including "bargain" purchases, will be negotiated at the time of the gift or bargain purchase.

1. Preserve areas, trails, site improvements including benches and bridges, historic sites and previously unnamed natural features shall ordinarily be named after:
 - a) Geographical, botanical or zoological identification;
 - b) Historical persons, uses, or events associated with the site, or persons and organizations listed in Section III: "Special Recognition".

2. Preserve areas, trails, site improvements, historic sites and unnamed natural features may in rare instances be named after a living individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the District, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

II. GIFT RECOGNITION

The purpose of the gift recognition policy is to provide an opportunity for the District to recognize and commend individuals or groups that have made significant contributions of cash, equipment, materials, goods or professional services toward the enhancement of the District, its programs, and its facilities.

A. Unsolicited Cash Gifts:

Up to \$25	Postcard of thanks
\$26 to \$499	Letter signed by General Manager
\$500 to \$1,999	Letter signed by President of the Board
\$2,000 to \$4,999	Letter signed by President of the Board and District gift item (note cards, etc.)
\$5,000 to \$9,999	Letter signed by President of the Board and framed photograph of favorite District preserve
\$10,000 or more	Letter signed by President of the Board and Resolution and framed photograph of District preserve and mention in a District publication*

*These items will be provided only if desired by the donor.

III. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) shall be the committee designated to discuss all requests that meet the criteria of the policy for special recognition, made by members of the Board of Directors or by members of the public, including bench memorials and the naming of bridges, and after deliberation shall ~~decide which requests will be referred~~ forward a recommendation to the full Board for a vote.

The District places benches in its preserves for three distinct purposes:

A. District Rest Benches

These benches provide constituents with a place to rest. District staff places these benches without involving a District committee or the full Board. Regular benches must

be either a backed or a backless standard bench as described in Section V below.

B. Constituent ~~Memorial~~ Bench Dedicationses

These are benches which have been requested by constituents in order to honor or memorialize a member of the public and are funded by the requestors who must pay \$5,000 for ~~the lifetime cost of the bench~~ a 10-year term. Requests must be in reference to a ~~deceased~~ significant supporter or a volunteer, as defined in ~~the following s~~ Section III D belows. Staff forwards and LFPAC discusses requests for these benches that meet the eligibility definitions and forwards a committee recommendation decides which requests will be referred to the full Board for a vote. Requests that are administratively declined because they do not meet the eligibility definitions may be appealed to the General Manager for a second review.

a) Constituent ~~memorial~~ bench dedicationses shall only be selected from and placed in locations that have been pre-determined by the District and /or approved by the Use and Management committee and /or by the full Board of Directors.

b) If a request for special recognition is approved by the Board of Directors, the requestor(s) shall pay for the cost of constructing, installing and maintaining a ~~memorial bench and plaque~~ by contributing \$5,000 ~~to a Memorial Bench Fund~~ to cover the 10-year dedication term ~~lifetime cost~~ of the bench. ~~The District will put this fund into an interest-bearing account which will be used solely for memorial bench construction, installation, repair, and maintenance.~~

c) Bench plaques will be 2 x 6 inches in size.

d) Benches must be one of the two District standard bench designs.

e) Constituent bench dedications will have a term limit of 10 years. After 10 years, the original donor will have the option to contribute an additional \$5,000 donation for each additional 10-year term. Should the original donor decline to renew an existing bench, the bench will be offered to the public for re-dedication.

C. District ~~Memorial~~ Bench Dedicationses

These are benches which are installed by the District in response to requests by members of the Board of Directors to honor ~~deceased~~ "Founders," "Significant Supporters", and "Volunteers".

a) LFPAC can initiate a bench request and refer a decision to the full Board or individual Board members can initiate a bench request which will be referred to LFPAC for discussion before it is referred to the full Board for a final decision. Honorees must be ~~deceased~~ "Founders", "Significant Supporters", and "Volunteers" (per policy Section III D below).

b) For these benches there are no design specification limits or limits on their location. The District will pay for the lifetime cost of the bench.

D. ~~Deceased~~ Founders, Significant Supporters, and Volunteers

"Founders", "Significant Supporters", and "Volunteers" are eligible for special recognition, including memorials.

"Founders" shall be defined as an individual or group of individuals who participated in the formation of the District, or were significant supporters of the formation of the District.

"Significant Supporters" shall be defined as individuals or group of individuals who have shown conspicuous or noteworthy support for the District through extraordinary contributions of time and effort to the advancement of the goals, philosophy and mission of the District.

"Volunteers" shall be defined as individuals or groups of individuals who donated a minimum of 250 volunteer hours and 5 years of service ~~their time~~ to the District by working for the District's docent or volunteer program.

IV. RECOGNITION OF HISTORIC SITES

A. A recognition monument, normally in plaque form, may be considered by the Board if it is in relation to a specific existing building or other remaining structure of significant historic value. In such cases, the plaque will be affixed or in close proximity to the structure itself. If there is no structure, then recognition may be considered for inclusion on District informational materials or trail signage. Such a site, in the absence of a building or structure, will ordinarily not be physically marked except as determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis as part of the Use and Management planning process for the corresponding open space preserve.

Any Board-approved memorial names shall be included in site brochures, maps, or other informational materials.

V. STANDARD BENCH DESIGN SPECIFICATION

A. District Rest Benches and Constituent ~~Memorial Bench~~ Dedicationses, described in III (A) and (B) above, are limited to either of the two following standard bench designs:

Backed bench:

Dumor - Bench 88, recycled plastic slates (color: CEDAR), steel leg supports (color: BLACK, IMBEDDED)
6' or 8' lengths

Backless bench:

Dumor - Bench 103, recycled plastic slates (color: CEDAR), steel leg supports (color: BLACK, IMBEDDED)
103-60PL 6' long, 3 supports

103-80PL 8' long, 3 supports

B. LFPAC can at any point bring designs to the Board that differ from the District's standard bench designs.



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
LEGISLATIVE, FUNDING, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

**Tuesday, July 17, 2018
2:00PM**

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Harris called the meeting of the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee to order at 2:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Cecily Harris, Larry Hassett

Members absent: Nonette Hanko

Staff present: Acting General Manager Ana Ruiz, Acting General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, Acting Assistant General Manager Christine Butterfield, Acting Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Acting Public Affairs Manager Cydney Bieber, Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg, Public Affairs Specialist I Carmen Lau, Public Affairs Assistant Jordan McDaniel

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No speakers present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Hassett moved, and Director Harris seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Hanko absent)

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COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the March 27, 2018 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Director Hassett moved, and Director Harris seconded the motion to approve the March 27, 2018 Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs committee meeting minutes.

Public comment opened at 2:09 p.m.

No speakers present.

Public comment closed at 2:10 p.m.

VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Hanko absent)

2. Consideration of a Memorial Bench for Vince Garrod at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve (R-18-80)

Public Affairs Specialist Carmen Lau provided an overview of Vince Garrod's contributions to the District and shared the proposed location for the bench, the dedication plaque language, and estimated installation and maintenance costs.

Director Hanko arrived at 2:12 p.m.

Director Hanko recognized Vince Garrod's as a significant supporter of the District and expressed support of the idea to honor Vince Garrod with a memorial bench.

Director Hassett was honored to consider the memorial bench request for Vince Garrod.

Public comment opened at 2:15 p.m.

Jan Garrod, third son of Vince Garrod, expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the Board of Directors for considering the installation of a memorial bench for his late father.

Public comment closed at 2:20 p.m.

Motion: Director Hanko moved, and Director Hassett seconded the motion to forward to the full Board of Directors a recommendation to install a memorial bench and plaque in honor of conservationist and significant supporter Vince Garrod atop Nob Hill at Fremont Older Open Space Preserve.

VOTE: 3-0-0

3. Revisions to Board Policy 5.01 – Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition, Section III (B) Constituent Memorial Benches (R-18-83)

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Public Affairs Specialist I Carmen Lau, provided an overview of Board Policy 5.01 – Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition, Section III (B) Constituent Memorial Benches. Ms. Lau reported the number of constituent memorial bench requests from 2010 to 2018 and presented three different options for revisions to the policy.

Director Harris expressed an interest in Option 1, proposed the addition of an “Honorary” category for living constituents, spoke in favor of using a first-come first-served system, supported designating existing benches for constituent memorial bench requests, and cautioned staff about the varying maintenance costs of benches.

Acting Assistant General Manager Brian Malone confirmed the estimated costs in the report are overall accurate; however, costs vary depending on the location and condition of the bench. General Manager Ana Ruiz confirmed the estimated costs are along the same lines as other agencies with similar memorial bench programs.

General Manager Ana Ruiz asked the Board of Directors if there is a desire to continue having eligibility restrictions on constituent-initiated bench requests.

Director Hanko and Director Hassett expressed a strong interest in ensuring that eligible recipients provided substantial contributions to the District. With this inclusion, Director Hassett supported Option 1.

Public comment opened at 3:17 p.m.

No speakers present.

Public comment closed at 3:18 p.m.

Motion: Director Hassett moved, and Director Harris seconded the motion to forward to the full Board of Directors the revised recommendation to approve the following change to Board Policy 5.01 – Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition, under Section III (B) Constituent Memorial Benches: revise the policy language as presented in Option 1 with the inclusion of “Significant Supporter” and “Volunteer” eligibility requirements, clarified “Volunteers” as individuals or groups of individuals who donated a minimum of 250 volunteer hours and 5 years of service to the District, and add a new “Honorary” dedication category that is subject to the same eligibility requirements to also allow bench dedications of living constituents.

VOTE: 2-0-1 (Director Hanko abstained)

4. Briefing on Legislative Engagement Day Schedule (R-18-84)

Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg presented an update on the plans for the August 7, 2018 Legislative Engagement Day in Sacramento.

Director Harris and Director Hassett commented these types of events are productive and valuable to the Board.

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Director Harris suggested the group split up into small groups when visiting the committee chairs.

Mr. Hugg stated additional feedback is welcomed, and staff will incorporate Committee feedback into the event planning.

No committee action required.

5. Consideration of District position on AB 2614 (Carrillo): Outdoor experiences: community access program (as Amended July 3, 2018) (R-18-85)

Governmental Affairs Specialist Joshua Hugg summarized AB 2614 (Carrillo), as amended. Mr. Hugg provided reasoning for the District taking a position on AB 2614.

Director Harris expressed support of the bill and expressed concern about the bill not including a large portion of the population who do not have exposure or access to preserves and do not fit the two criteria in the amendment. Director Harris suggested writing a letter of support with a provision to contain more inclusive definitions which better serve our communities.

General Manager Ana Ruiz clarified AB 2614 specifically looks at disadvantaged and low-income communities, and District staff are actively seeking bills more global in nature to help integrate environmental studies and outdoor education more fully in the education system across California.

Public comment opened at 3:41 p.m.

No speakers present.

Public comment closed at 3:42 p.m.

Motion: Director Hassett moved, Director Harris seconded the motion to forward a recommendation to the full Board of Directors for support of AB 2614 (Carrillo) as amended.

VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Director Harris adjourned the meeting of the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee at 3:42 p.m.

Jordan McDaniel
Public Affairs Administrative Assistant