



**Ventura County Special
Districts Association**

**VCSDA
MEETING
MINUTES**

*Approved
Minutes*

Approved: _____
Date: _____
Motion: _____
Second: _____

**Tuesday, December 7, 2021
In-Person/Videoconference Via Zoom**

**VENTURA COUNTY
SPECIAL DISTRICTS**

MEMBERS

- Bell Canyon Community Services
- Calleguas Municipal Water
- Camarillo Health Care
- Camrosa Water
- Casitas Municipal Water
- Channel Islands Beach Community Services
- Conejo Recreation & Park
- Hidden Valley Municipal Water
- Ojai Valley Sanitary
- Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor
- Pleasant Valley County Water
- Pleasant Valley Recreation & Parks
- Rancho Simi Recreation & Parks
- Saticoy Sanitary
- Triunfo Water and Sanitation District
- United Water Conservation
- Ventura County Resource Conservation
- Ventura Regional Sanitation
- Ventura River Water
- Ventura Port

The December 7, 2021 meeting of the Ventura County Special District Association was held in person at United Water Conservation District's Boardroom in Oxnard and via Zoom videoconference.

1. and 2. CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE:

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by President Bruce Dandy, who asked Director Elaine Magner to lead everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL: President Dandy
President Dandy welcomed everyone to the meeting and then called roll:

Members in attendance included:

- Richard Levy** and **Eric Wolf** - Bell Canyon Community Services
- Charlotte Holifield**, CSDA
- Raul Avila** - Calleguas Municipal Water
- Martin Daly** and **Kara Ralston** - Camarillo Health Care
- Al Fox** - Camrosa Water
- George Lange** - Conejo Recreation and Park
- Elaine Magner**, **Mark Malloy** and **Mary Otten** - Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park
- Mary Anne Rooney**, **Letitia Austin** and **Michelle Kinnun** - Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor
- Elaine Freeman** and **Kathleen O'Brien** - Rancho Simi Recreation and Park
- Janna Orkney** - Triunfo Water and Sanitation
- Bruce Dandy**, **Zachary Plummer** and **Kris Sofley** - United Water Conservation
- Brian Pendleton** - Ventura Harbor District
- Mike Mishler**

Members of the Public participating in the meeting included:

- David L. Fleisch, chair, Ventura County Civic Alliance
- Kai Luoma, executive officer, Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)

4. Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting of October 5, 2021

Motion to approve the October 5, 2021 Minutes: Elaine Freeman; Second, George Lange. Voice vote: all in favor, unanimous; any opposed, none; any abstaining, none. Motion carries unanimously

5. Guest Speaker - Dave Fleisch, chair of Ventura County Civic Alliance

President Dandy introduced Mr. Fleisch to the room and virtual participants.
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President—Bruce Dandy
Vice President—Al Fox

Treasurer—
Secretary to the Board—Kris Sofley

Mr. Fleisch began by distributing copies of the 2021 State of the Region Report compiled by Ventura County Civic Alliance. He also provided additional copies for those participating virtually and the Clerk said she would mail them out to anyone requesting a copy after the meeting.

Mr. Fleisch also had a powerpoint presentation (see attached slides) highlighting key elements of the 2021 report. He explained that the Ventura County Civic Alliance focused on the three Es—economy, environment and social equity and that the annual report was an unbiased look at the County. He said he had been on the Board of the VCCA for six years and has served as the Chair for the past three years. He told the group that the first report was published in 2003, and that the VCCA has published a report every two years since 2013. The report considers 10 different domains, consistently tracks the same information over time so that you get a very good picture of the current state as well as progression or decline of specific areas within the County.

Mr. Fleisch said that in reviewing key statistics of the County, from 2000 to 2019, the median age has increased by four years and from 2017 to 2019, the County actual experienced negative population growth, the first time in Ventura County's history. He pointed out that, on page 12 of the report, the crop report is from the Ag Commissioner's report and looks at total crop value. The report also looks at Community Engagement, Voter Statistics, Non Profits, the Economy (page 33) which demonstrated an impact from Covid and pointed out that from 2008-2010 a period of "recession" showed unemployment at 11% in the County, and that in April 2020, that number had risen to 14.5%. On page 37 of the report, the County's GDP shows that we haven't fully recovered from the recession (2008-2012). On page 41, visitor spending in Ventura County is up, but primarily in camping, outdoor activities and second home purchases. On page 46, public school enrollment is down as is community college enrollment (page 52). Under Land Use and Housing, Mr. Fleisch said it is "crazy," with housing prices continuing to climb. He said the median home price in Ventura County went from \$455,418 in 2003 to \$840,000 in 2021 and that apartment rentals for an average two-bedroom went up \$1,000 from 2013 to 2021, currently at about \$2500 per month with a 1.37% vacancy rate. He also looked at public safety, social services, homelessness and transportation.

George Lange asked if veterans were included in the homelessness figures and Mr. Fleisch said that they were reported in a separate figure. Kate O'Brien asked if he had a percentage figure, like one-third of homeless are vets. Mr. Fleisch said that depends on how you define homeless, as many people say with other family members or friends or live in their vehicles and don't consider themselves as being homeless in the traditional sense. Kara Ralston asked about food aid and Food Share programs, reporting that her health care district delivered meals and saw a spike in need at 7,000 meals per month, whereas now its around 5,500 meals per month, but there's a hidden hunger among older adults that often goes unreported. Mr. Fleisch said that going forward, those figures will be looked at in more detail so an accurate prediction can be made regarding need. Mary Anne Rooney echoed Kara Ralston's comments, saying the number of families the Harbor District feeds continues to increase. Brian Pendleton asked about the unemployment rate in Ventura County (page 33) state that unemployment was at 6% in September 2021 and was curious as those doing data gathering had any sense as to why Ventura County is lagging behind because Ventura Harbor is trying to find workers and nobody is applying. Mr. Fleisch said that's a great question and responded by saying that employment sectors in Ventura County, the growing sectors anyway, tend to be lower paying jobs. President Dandy said that public agencies and special services areas need help with information to better project needs in the future. Mr. Fleisch said that consistent data can help in predictions, like how water impacts housing development, drought impacts farming and an aging population impacts health care. But that the report is a great way to see what services are or will be needed. He said the VCCA is also working to make the data searchable online and encouraged everyone to help the organization continue the dialogue. Mr. Pendleton thanked Mr. Fleisch for the great presentation and his service to the County.

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President Dandy then introduced Mary Ann Rooney, a commissioner with Port Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor who wanted to discuss drafting a letter on behalf of the VCSDA in opposition to proposed legislation that would alter or amend Government Code Section 56133 regarding cities or districts providing new or extended service outside of its boundaries by contract or agreement only if it first receives written approval from the local agency formation commission (LAFCO). President Dandy then introduced Kai Luoma, executive officer, Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), whom he had invited to the meeting. President Dandy also explained that the drafted legislation was initiated by San Diego and is still being crafted and that Ventura County LAFCo had agreed in concept to the proposed legislation unanimously. President Dandy then asked Commissioner Rooney to offer her comments and suggestions. She introduced Leticia Austin, also from Port Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor who presented information on the proposed legislation and the recommendation that the VCSDA oppose the legislation as Commissioner Rooney and the other Harbor Commissioners were recommending in a letter to CSDA CEO Neil McCormick (see attached letter) Commissioner Rooney said that the current law doesn't need amending, and that LAFCo needs to educate constituents. She also clarified that in March of 2021, when the draft language was first discussed, it was approved in concept only, but after further investigation, she is advocating that CSDA oppose the legislation and not support or co-sponsor LAFCo's position. She shared the Port Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor's letter and encouraged other Districts to send letters of opposition as well.

The membership had a robust discussion regarding the proposed legislation. Mr. Luoma explained that it was the San Diego LAFCo that had requested support from Ventura LAFCo and the California Association of Local Agency Formation Commissions was sponsoring the proposed legislation. There was more discussion regarding the current and/or future impact of the proposed legislation. Kara Ralston said her only issue was having a single point of authority and asked Mr. Luoma if LAFCo has been using one single authority. Commissioner Rooney said that CSDA and legislative representatives said the change is inconsistent with the application of the law that one person making a decision without justification raises serious concerns. She said this is not a clarification of authority but rather an extension of authority. Eric Wolf added that the issue is LAFCo calls the proposed legislation streamlining and adding efficiency but in reality its too much authority in one individual and there's no information on how you could appeal that one person's decision. Elaine Freeman said it is intended to be a centralized decision making process but is not spelled out. You could go to the Commission, but there needs to be a clear appeal process in language and policy. Raul Avila added that it is not good to put sole decision making power in one individual and that he is NOT for this legislation.

Commissioner Rooney made a motion for VCSDA to issue a letter to CSDA opposing the proposed LAFCo legislation; Second, Briand Pendleton. President Dandy said there at 18 member agencies and 11 agencies present for the meeting so each agency will get one vote on the proposed motion to send a letter from the VCSDA to CSDA that will state the chapter's opposition to the proposed legislation. At the end of the vote, six agencies votes yes, send the letter of opposition; four voted to abstain and one member left before voting. Simple majority of six to four in favor of sending a letter of opposition. President Dandy asked Commissioner Rooney if she and her staff would draft a letter for his signature.

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6. Treasurer's Report— Mr. Pendleton stated that he had three sets of reports included in the agenda packet for tonight's meeting, covering the months of September, October and November. He also added that the bookkeeper has prepared the 2019 tax returns and is waiting for acceptance of the N90 form.

7. Reports and Announcements

- CSDA Update - Charlotte Hollifield reported that CSDA is seeking presentation proposals; the GM, Board Secretary and annual conference will all be in person in 2022. All webinar participation is free and 13,023 have participated statewide. Board members handbooks have been revised.

- Legislative Update -Elaine Freeman reported that the legislative committee is pulling proposals together; Katherine Stewart, who was appointed to the Committee a year ago resigns effective January 2022. The position expires the end of 2022 and remains vacant. There will be an announcement in April for anyone interested in applying. CSDA Board election in August. She also reported technical difficulties with the last legislative meeting. She'll receive a proposal at the next committee meeting in January and she'll bring it back to the chapter meeting in February.

- LAFCo Update-Elaine Freeman reported technical difficulties in November that impeded the discussion of the major annexation of Oxnard and Pleasant Valley, systems at the County were not working so the meeting was continued to December 15.. There will be a review of the sphere of influence of Camarillo Health District, in March Bell Canyon service review.

- County Oversight Update - Mike Mishler reported that preliminary review of successor agencies, administration of budgets and find revenue for January, down to the last seven properties. "Last and Final" means no more annual revenue, just make Bond payments and reduce the number of agencies left in the process.

8. New Business/ Member Announcements — Commissioner Rooney reminded everyone of the Santa to the Sea Race on Sunday at 7:30am; Elaine Magner invited everyone to attend the Pleasant Valley Holiday Parade at 10am and Brian Pendleton was promoting the Winter Wonderland at Ventura Harbor and reminded all that the Parade of Lights would take place next week.

9. ADJOURNMENT TO NEXT MEETING—Tuesday, February 1, 2022

President Dandy wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and a safe and happy holiday season and adjourned the meeting at 7:16p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Kris Sofley

Kris Sofley, Secretary to VCSDA