



Ventura County Special Districts Association

*Approved
Minutes*

VCSDA MEETING MINUTES Tuesday, October 5,

Approved:
Date: December 7, 2021
Motion: Freeman
Second: Lange

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 October 5, 2021 meeting of the Ventura County Special District Association was held in person at Rancho Simi Recreation and Park Headquarters in Simi Valley and via videoconference.

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:49 pm by President Bruce Dandy, who asked Vice President Al Fox 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 call roll.

Members in attendance included:

Richard Levy, Eric Wolf and Dennis P. Zine - Bell Canyon Community Services
Raul Avila and Andres Santamaria - Calleguas Municipal Water
Martin Daly and Kara Ralston - Camarillo Health Care
Al Fox and Cindy Fox - Camrosa Water
Brian Brennan - Casitas Municipal Water
James Friedl, Charles Huffer, Nellie Kerr Cusworth, Doug Nickles and George Lange - Conejo Recreation and Park
Bev Dransfeldt, Elaine Magner, and Mark Malloy - Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park
Michelle Kinnun - Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor
Sandee Covone, Elaine Freeman, Lee Martin, Kathleen O'Brien and Dan Paranick - Rancho Simi Recreation and Park
Leon Shapiro - Triunfo Water and Sanitation
Bruce Dandy, Zachary Plummer and Kris Sofley - United Water Conservation
Todd Mitchell and Brian Pendleton - Ventura Harbor District
Bruce Kuebler - Ventura River Water
Mike Mishler

Members of the Public participating in the meeting included:

CSDA's Member Services Director **Cassandra Strawn** and Finance and Administration Director **Rick Wood**

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

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

President—Bruce Dandy
Vice President—Al Fox

Treasurer—
Secretary to the Board—Kris Sofley

President Dandy asked the membership if the Treasurer's Report could immediately follow the Minutes and then, after the Treasurer gives his report, the meeting's guest speaker Dan Paranick will provide his presentation, followed by a CSDA Report from Cassandra Strawn and Rick Wood. All in favor; none opposed.

6. Treasurer's Report— President Dandy introduced the VCSDA's Treasurer Brian Pendleton. Mr. Pendleton called the membership's attention to the P&L reports and Balance Sheets including in the meeting packet for the months of July and August. Mr. Pendleton also addressed the chapter's current IRS tax exempt status stating that Mark Malloy had applied for tax ID and exempt status in 2019. However, no one has filed tax returns for the chapter for the past three years (2019, 2020, 2021) so the chapter's tax exempt status was revoked. Shalene Hayman, the bookkeeper working with the Treasurer, has reviewed the financial records and reported that she has a timeline that includes the conversion to Quickbooks and bank records back to 2019. The IRS sent a notice that the chapter is three years delinquent in tax filings, but she refutes that as 2021 isn't delinquent. She has requested the IRS examine the situation and check with the Secretary of State. She added that she would work on filing tax returns for 2019 and 2020 and ask the IRS for an abatement of any penalties and reinstatement of the chapter's exempt status. She added that there is no extension for 2020 required, as she will file before the due date of November 2020. That will bring the chapter on track for 2021. She closed by saying that she will be providing financial reports for the six meetings, putting all the pieces together and get the chapter back in good standing.

Mr. Pendleton asked if there were any questions for Ms. Hayman. Richard Levey of Bell Canyon asked if the chapter had over \$50,000 in gross revenue annually. Mr. Pendleton said revenue is generated from the \$150 per year dues as whatever money is collected for the dinner meetings goes right back out to the caterer. He added that there was a scholarship provided to the CSDA and the chapter currently has \$17,000 in the bank. Mr. Levy stated that if the gross is under that \$50,000 mark annually, then it is not required to file 990 tax returns, just an annual "postcard" filing—the Attorney General form I90 filed for the federal and state. Mr. Pendleton said that didn't happen and there is some confusion on timing, but Ms. Hayman is piecing together the books and once this is resolved, it should be easier to maintain going forward. Ms. Hayman added the I90 or EZ form is good if over \$25,000. Elaine Magner asked about the 501 status and Mr. Pendleton said it was his understanding that the correct chapter status is 501c6, according to the CSDA chapter guide and books.

George Lange said he thought the tax ID number was discovered to be incorrect, so a new ID number was applied for and that everyone has been working together for the past five years to get all of this squared away. Mr. Pendleton said that it looks like that was in 2019 but the postcards weren't filed, which is what triggered the notice from the IRS. Ms. Hayman reiterated that she will send a letter and file all the returns at the same time and that we're doing our best to put ourselves back where we should be.

President Dandy asked if there were any other questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. None were offered. Then President Dandy asked if the membership had any knowledge as to whether or not the chapter paid honorarium's to speakers and what the appropriate process would be for that. He also asked about the process for requesting scholarships for the CSDA Foundation, for example. Ms. Magner said that the Special District's Leadership Foundation Scholarship program will accept money at any time, especially just before the annual conference. And if timed to coincide with the Conference, then the chapter can make an official presentation at the annual conference, perhaps spurring other chapters and districts to do the same.

7. Reports and Announcements

Rick Wood, CSDA's finance and administration director, said that the CSDA Conference generates the bulk of scholarship funds and that's a great time to be recognized as there are over 600 members in attendance which creates a great "peer pressure" opportunity.

Vice President Fox suggested doing 50/50 drawings at meetings, where half of the money collected goes to the winning ticket holder and the other half could be used for scholarship funding. Elaine Freeman said that someone should review the bylaws just to be sure that would be permissible. Dennis Zine said it is a game of luck not of chance. President Dandy said he liked the 50/50 raffle idea and asked Ms. Freeman to check the bylaws. President Dandy said that the economist from Cal Lutheran who had been invited to speak at this meeting requested a \$500 honorarium, and thanked Mr. Paranick for stepping forward to provide a presentation on short notice. Mr. Zine said there are plenty of people, especially elected officials, the Sheriff of Ventura County, et cetera, who are willing to speak at chapter meetings and he personally felt it was inappropriate to ask for an honorarium from this kind of agency. Mr. Lange supported Mr. Zine's comments, stating that GMs from all of the Special Districts have stories to tell and that by rotating among the Districts, the GMs could serve as both host and speaker, providing a wealth of information.

President Dandy thanked everyone for their feedback and guidance and expressed his appreciation.

President Dandy then said that as the VCSDA's first meeting as "Chapter of the Year," he wanted to call out Conejo Recreation and Park's James Friedl, recipient of the Ralph Heim Public Outreach & Advocacy Award. President Dandy then introduced the guest speaker, Dan Paranick, district manager for Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, the host of tonight's meeting.

5. Guest Speaker - Dan Paranick, district manager, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
The theme of Mr. Paranick's presentation was the commonality that exists between all of the various special districts. He said that in today's complex environment, there are lots of moving parts whether you are a recreation and park district, a water district, community services district, sanitation district or health district..the mission is simple. He then showed a number of slides depicting all of the various activities that Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District has been involved with, including a number of "Go Green" capital projects, and that in response to the 33 new housing bills, and the court challenges spurred by those new bills, the Rancho Simi administrative team is rewriting policies and educating folks. He explained that people are the most important aspect to his organization, and that people are always coming and going, again, emphasizing the moving parts. The Rancho Simi Board, as example, has long term members like Elaine Freeman and Kate O'Brien as well as three new electeds. Fifty percent of the executive staff is new, 87 full time employees and 520 part-time employees within the year, as well as some 600 volunteers. Mr. Paranick mentioned that one of the biggest challenges is keeping programs staffed and recruiting part time staff. He also discussed the drop in revenue because of COVID and the pressure to keep up in a constantly changing environment. He did say that the property tax growth over the past 14 years has been robust, and that is in contrast to the typical seven year cycle. He added that 70 percent of operation costs are from property taxes and 30 percent are from user fees.

Mr. Paranick then talked about the mission of Rancho Simi to develop parks. He stated that the District has 8,000 acres of open space, 80 miles of trails, as well as fire abatement trails, too. He also talked about the earning of the District's golf course, which was the only user fee revenue to increase during COVID. Typically, the golf course averages 70,000 rounds of golf per year, but during COVID, it was more than 90,000 rounds of golf. The District also has a 50 meter swimming pool and teaches some 3,300 classes per year to the public, including classes offered at its Senior Center, Before and After School programs and recreation and sports programs. And there is an

additional two special community events each month on average. There are Park Rangers, which supplement that police department, two full time and eight to 10 part time “ambassadors” that help the police department keep the parks safe, and continuous improvement projects and maintenance. Rancho Simi was awarded grant funding which paid for its bike trail along the flood control wash and turned what could have been an eyesore into an amenity. There is also a skate park, and in 18 months to two years from now, a multiuse high end state-of-the-art 28,000 square foot activity center.

In wrapping up, he encouraged the membership to hold on to history but continue to change and that all the moving parts may add to the complexity, but get your electeds, GM, executive team and workers collaborating.

7. Reports and Announcements

- CSDA Report - Elaine Magner (Coastal Network Board Member) Ms. Magner thanked Ms. Strawn and Mr. Wood for helping at tonight’s meeting. Ms. Magner said she just wanted to plug the Special District’s Leadership Foundation scholarships program and the CSDA Committees, which, if you are interested in getting involved, submit an application to Elaine Freeman. She said you can attend meetings via zoom and that it’s a lot of fun and very good for professional development.

- CSDA Update—Cassandra Strawn provided a brief update on COVID relief webinars, which are available on demand now and applications for funding closes on October 18. She also said there were new resources in member services and value added benefits and encouraged everyone to visit the CSDA website

- Legislative Update-Elaine Freeman said that she had provided the legislative report to Kris to distribute to the membership and mentioned AB 361, AB602, AB571 and AB1584 which ties into SB9, all of which have impacts on special districts.

- LAFCO Update—Elaine Freeman also addressed the situation with LAFCO and Bell Canyon, which was addressed at the last meeting too. She said she was very disappointed in the Executive Director’s report and how it was presented. She suggested looking into a reorganization of LAFCo and wondered if there wasn’t a better solution. Eric Wolf from Bell Canyon made some remarks about that District’s situation with LAFCO, and encouraged others to keep an eye on the situation.

- County Oversight Update - Mike Mishler reported the October 27 annual review process for City Budgets and he will present more information at the December meeting.

- Other Announcements—Cassandra Strawn reminded everyone about the election deadline of November 12 and voting online notifications emailed out to main contacts at each district.

8. New Business/ Member Announcements

President Dandy reminded everyone about UWCD’s Water Sustainability Summit on Thursday, October 14 from 1pm to 5pm. Free of charge and accessible via Zoom. He thanked Mr. Paranic for hosting the meeting and bid everyone goodnight., adjourning the meeting at 7:35p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted



Kris Sofley, Secretary to VCSDA