

CONTRA COSTA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT
TRUSTEE WORKSHOP
MINUTES NO. 24-2

A Trustee Workshop of the Board of Trustees of the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District was held on Saturday, February 3, 2024, at the Sonesta Select Hotel at 2250 Contra Costa Blvd., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

TRUSTEES PRESENT Peter Pay, Vice President, San Ramon
Daniel Pellegrini, Secretary, Martinez
Richard Ainsley, Pittsburg
Perry Carlston, Concord
Jim Dolgonas, El Cerrito
Chris Dupin, Richmond
Wade Finlinson, Antioch
James Frankenfield, Moraga
Eric Hinzal, Clayton
Jennifer Hogan, Pleasant Hill
Michael Krieg, Oakley
Kevin Marker, Orinda
Vinoy Mereddy, Brentwood

TRUSTEES ABSENT Warren Clayton, Pinole
Chris Cowen, Contra Costa County
Randall Diamond, Danville
James Pinckney, Contra Costa County
Damian Wong, Hercules
Darryl Young, President, Contra Costa County

VACANCIES Lafayette
San Pablo
Walnut Creek

OTHERS PRESENT Paula Macedo, General Manager; Stacy Stark, Human Resources
and Administration Manager; Christine Widger, Customer Service
Specialist
Chris Sliz and MJ Brown, Regional Government Services

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Vice President Pay called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Roll Call: A roll call indicated that thirteen Trustees were present, six Trustees were absent, and there are three vacancies.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **PUBLIC INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** – None

3. **2024 TRUSTEE WORKSHOP** – Chris Sliz and MJ Brown, from Regional Government Services facilitated this session. Materials provided are enclosed.

4. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

I certify the above minutes were approved as read or corrected at a meeting of the Board held on March 11, 2024.

Ayes: 14
Noes: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 6

Daniel Pellegrini
2024 Secretary, Board of Trustees



Board Workshop
9am – 3pm
Welcome!

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Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District



Welcome & Purpose of the Day



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Today's Agenda

- Warm up Activity
- The Brown Act
- The Role of Board and Staff
- Board Norms
- Succession Planning
- Wrap Up




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Ground Rules

- One person speaking at a time
- Focus on the agenda
- Cell phones on vibrate
- Be candid
- Share the airtime – balanced communications




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Warm Up (in pairs)

- 1. What sparked your interest in becoming a Board member?**




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Warm Up (in pairs)

- 1. What sparked your interest in becoming a Board member?**
- 2. What is your favorite past-time?**




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Warm Up (in pairs)

1. What sparked your interest in becoming a Board member?
2. What is your favorite past-time?
3. What special skill or talent do you bring to the Board?




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Warm Up (in pairs)

1. What sparked your interest in becoming a Board member?
2. What is your favorite past-time?
3. What special skill or talent do you bring to the Board?
4. What kind of trouble did you get into as a teenager that your parents never found out about?



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Warm Up (in pairs)

1. What sparked your interest in becoming a Board member?
2. What is your favorite past-time?
3. What special skill or talent do you bring to the Board?
4. What kind of trouble did you get into as a teenager that your parents never found out about?
5. What is the most important thing to you, to accomplish today?



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Interview Themes



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Ralph M. Brown Act



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Board Responsibilities

Staff Responsibilities

BOARD	STAFF
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on the “<u>what</u>”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on the “<u>how</u>”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation



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Board and Staff Responsibilities

BOARD	STAFF
Policy Decisions	Operational Decisions
Strategic Direction	Day-to-day
Hiring, supporting and evaluating the GM	Personnel Decisions regarding staff
Set agency priorities	Determine operational priorities
Maintains fiscal responsibility	To work within the budget established by the Board
Adopt policies re: labor	Implement policies
Give direction as a group	Implements Board (group) direction

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The Risk of Micro-Management




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Decision-making - Who Owns the Decision?

The need: Buy a new vehicle

What is the Board's Role?




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***Decision-making -
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: Buy a new vehicle

What is the Board's Role?
Authorize purchase (correct procurement, tied to budget)




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***Decision-making
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: Buy a new vehicle

What is Staff's Role?




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***Decision-making -
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: Buy a new vehicle

What is the Staff's Role?
Identify and purchase the vehicle (make, model, meets intent of specific need)




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***Decision-making -
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: A new deferred comp administrator

What is the Staff's Role?




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***Decision-making -
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: A new deferred comp administrator

What is the Staff's Role?
Analyze providers and select the new administrator




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***Decision-making -
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: A new deferred comp administrator

What is the Board's Role?




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***Decision-making -
Who Owns the Decision?***

The need: A new deferred comp administrator


What is the Board's Role?
Ask questions, authorize payment if it meets the District's needs



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***Board and Staff
Interaction***




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***Board and Staff Interaction
Best Practices***

- Refrain from sharing opinions or making Board commitments to staff
- Problem with a staff member? Discuss with the GM
- Members of the Union are members of the public and have a right to address the Board in open meetings



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***Building Your Relationship
With Staff
(in and out of Board meetings)***


- Show appreciation for good work
- Avoid public criticism
- Treat staff respectfully
- Get to know and trust key staff



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Board Norms




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Board Norms


- Unspoken standards of conduct
- Standards of behavior the Board expects from one another
- Can include:
 - ✓ Patterns of communication
 - ✓ Meeting preparation
 - ✓ Decision-making
- Most effective when articulated and agreed upon



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Succession Planning




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Succession Planning

- When highly experienced members move to other positions there is a loss of:
 - ✓ Knowledge about the District
 - ✓ Corporate history
 - ✓ Best practices
- Succession planning is the process of developing the knowledge and talent of new members



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Take-Aways & Wrap Up



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CCMVCD Board Member Feedback Themes

1. How well do people know each other? Prevailing answer: Not well at all.
2. Strengths: good intentions, people care, want to be there. Some people have been there a while and have deep knowledge. There is a lot of respect for Paula and the staff.
3. Weaknesses: While there is diversity in experiences, there is a lack of gender diversity, some people contributing and some not, lack of understanding of Board role and what agency does (and don't read packet or come prepared)
4. Board Dynamics: Some do not speak up and just vote, maybe don't feel able to chime in, and louder voices prevail
5. Board Norms: Some wait for more seasoned directors to opine, newer members don't talk
6. Board vs. staff role: answers don't reveal a big problem in this area – counsel re-centers conversation, Paula provides a lot of info in staff reports, some talk at length and begin to get in weeds
7. Collaboration: no large complaints here, but sounds like collaboration happens mostly in committee meetings
8. Desired changes: different people talking, nobody monopolizing conversation, everyone should read their packet before meeting
9. Desired outcomes: know each other better, know what the committees do, Brown Act primer, what's appropriate for Board vs. staff, more balanced communication and less monopolization

The Ralph M. Brown Act:

- ✓ “Brown Act”
- ✓ “Open & Public”
- ✓ “The People’s Business”
- ✓ “Transparent Gov”

The Constitution of California declares that meetings and writings of governing officials of public agencies be open and public. Why?

- It’s fair, ethical, and transparent: public attendance creates an environment to prevent making deals in secret.
- Local governments and agencies belong to the people

The Basis of the Brown Act:

... boards and other public agencies exist to aid in the conduct of the people’s business...the people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is and isn’t good for the people to know to know.

The express purpose of the Brown Act is to ensure that local government agencies conduct the public’s business openly and publicly.

Who: Governing body, whether elected or appointed Standing committees (but not ad hoc committees) – when there is a majority of members (quorum)

What:

Open meetings

...that the public is aware of (and can see the agenda)

...that the public can attend and comment

When:

All meetings – Regular Meetings, Special Meetings, Emergency Meetings, Closed Sessions

Where:

In the room, online (Zoom)

Why:

Listening, discussing, carefully considering, deliberating or making decisions on any matter falling within the jurisdiction of the governing body.

To make decisions through a unified commitment or agreement by most members to arrive at a positive or negative conclusion.

Closed Sessions: remember, everyone in the room is a person with public sensibilities. If it wouldn’t be okay in open session, don’t say it in closed session. Only be as casual in closed session as you would be in open session

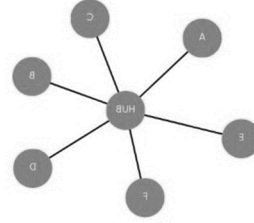
Brown Act violations:

- Actions/votes taken may be invalidated
- Governing body has 30 days to “cure” – otherwise could go to litigation
- Agency may be compelled to reimburse the complainant’s legal fees
- Agency may be ordered to tape all subsequent meetings
- Best practice: voluntarily resolve the violation

BROWN ACT REMINDERS

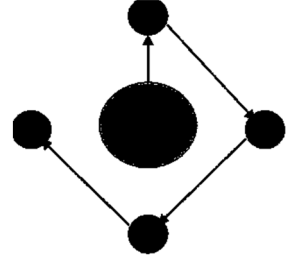
Serial Meetings – two kinds

Hub and Spoke: Staff should serve as a hub of communication



Serial or “Daisy Chain”

Avoid serial meetings by sending items to staff for distribution. If you receive an email from the public that was sent to all Board members (or a quorum of Board members) avoid “reply all.”



Staying on topic within a meeting

Stay on topic. Diverting to a topic off the agenda can lead to problems (“discussion of item not on the agenda.” This happens sometimes during public comment!

Placing an item on an agenda

During a Board meeting - at the end of each meeting there is time, i.e.: "This time is reserved for Board members and/or staff to identify matters for future Board meetings." If wishing to place on the next agenda and can't wait until the Board meeting, write to the Board Chair and the GM.

Responding to the public/social media

On FB, NextDoor, Instagram, anywhere online: be careful when making remarks, including emojis (happy faces, thumbs down, etc.)

Exceptions to “Contacts”

- Individual contacts between Board member and public
- Conferences, “majority to attend a conference or similar gathering open to the public that addresses issues of general interest to the public or to public agencies of the type represented by the legislative body”
- Community meetings, “The third exception allows a legislative body majority to attend an open and publicized meeting held by another organization to address a topic of local community concern.” - e.g., Chamber of Commerce meetings
- Standing Committee meetings – more than the standing committee members can be there but non-committee members can only be there as “observers” (can’t speak)
- Social events, e.g., a local high school football game

2024 Guide to Brown Act: <http://tinyurl.com/wjzju7j>

Brown Act

Small Group Scenarios

1. You would like to have a robust discussion with the rest of the Board about the purchase of drones for pesticide application. You want to call others to find out how they feel about it. What does the Brown Act tell you about what you can/can't do? How do you get the topic on the agenda?
2. The district went through an RFP process to hire a consultant to manage a project. Discussion about who to hire, occurred at the last meeting. In today's meeting, the Board item is financial – to adopt a budget for the consultant. During discussion of the item, one Board member changed the topic to the RFP process because he thought the parameters should be broader. What does the Brown Act tell you about what the Board can/can't do in this moment? How should the Board respond to the change of topic?
3. Several Board members received an email message from a local group called "Beyond Pesticides," advocating for a less toxic method of controlling mosquitos. The author of the email has asked Board members for their opinion on a new pesticide. What does the Brown Act say about how you should respond?
4. During an open meeting, a Board member has an issue with regard to a presentation from the public. Instead of questioning the presenter, you pull out your cell phone to text a few other Board members during the meeting to share your opinion. What does the Brown Act say about texting other Board members? How else could you communicate your opinion of the presentation?
5. After Board meetings, several Board members like to go to a local coffee shop to debrief and share opinions on what's happening at the District. What does the Brown Act say about informal gatherings? What is another way the group could debrief?

Roles in Decision-Making

In the following situations, identify the role of Board and the role of Staff in the decision-making process.

- Who recommends?
 - Who makes the final decision?
 - Who takes action to implement the decision?
1. A new labor contract
 - Who recommends terms and conditions in the contract?
 - Who makes the final decision on adopting the contract?
 - Who takes action to implement the new contract?
 2. A new vehicle check-out procedure
 - Who recommends the procedure?
 - Who makes the final decision on adopting the policy?
 - Who takes action to implement the new policy?
 3. A new employee disciplinary procedure
 - Who recommends the policy?
 - Who makes the final decision on adopting the policy?
 - Who takes action to implement the new policy?
 4. Paying previously authorized expenditures for uniforms
 - Who recommends payment?
 - Who makes the final decision on payment?
 - Who takes action to implement payment?
 5. Mid-year budget changes
 - Who recommends changes?
 - Who makes the final decision on changes?
 - Who takes action to implement changes?