

Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE
FLOOD CONTROL ZONE 7 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
HELD MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2017
IN THE HOYTT THEATER AT THE OSHER MARIN JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
200 N. SAN PEDRO ROAD, SAN RAFAEL**

Advisory Board (AB) Members Present

Russ Greenfield (RG)
Jacqueline Garcia (JG)
Alex Kahl (AK)
Roger Kirk (RK)

District Staff (Staff) Present

Tony Williams, Principal Civil Engineer
Liz Lewis, Planning Manager
Laurie Williams, Senior Planner
Jon Liang, Junior Engineer

Advisory Board (AB) Members Absent

Jeffrey Krupnick (JK)

Others:

Damon Connolly, District Supervisor
Susannah Clark, Aide to Supervisor Damon Connolly

RG, JG, and RK arrived and formed a quorum; meeting begun at 6:30 P.M.

Item 1. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

RG motioned to elect JG as Chairperson and RK as Vice-Chairperson.

Action by Board: JG was elected as Chairperson, and RK was elected as Vice-Chairperson.

M/S: RG/RK Ayes: ALL, Nay: NONE

Item 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes: May 17, 2017

Action by Board: Approve minutes as written with no amendments.

M/S: RK/RG Ayes: ALL, Nay: NONE

AK arrived following approval of the meeting minutes.

Item 3. Open Time for Items Not on the Agenda

RG informed that the audience that the AB is here to represent the public.

RG read a letter called "Tax for Santa Venetia levees and flood control pumps" from the Gallinas Watershed Council to staff and the audience. (See attachment for details).

A member of the public read section E.7.1 from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance and suggested staff obtain clarification on whether the improvement of the Timber Reinforced Berm would require all Santa Venetia property owners to carry flood insurance. Staff agreed to reach out to Cal OES for clarification.

RK announced that he had reached out to multiple residents on Vendola Drive regarding signing the County's right-to-enter form granting staff permission to inspect and repair the timber-reinforced berm (TRB). Per RK, many property owners are reluctant to sign this form because they have vegetation growing on this TRB, which staff had encouraged property owners to remove to minimize gopher activities and provide visibility during inspection. Also, if a FEMA grant is awarded for the Santa Venetia Timber-Reinforced Berm Improvement Project, then the right-to-enter permission is even more important.

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Damon Connolly brought up the Resilient by Design challenge; a design competition bringing together a team of engineers, architects, public finance experts, educators, and ecologists to develop designs to address sea level rise on specific sites in the Bay Area. The Rockefeller Foundation will grant \$4.6M, providing each design team with \$250,000. Ten sites will be chosen in the Bay Area to participate in a yearlong process resulting in a final design. Supervisor Connolly will submit Santa Venetia as a potential project site. For further information about this program please visit <http://www.resilientbayarea.org/>.

Item 4. Review of Zone 7 FY2017-18 Budget Previously Recommended by Advisory Board

Staff reviewed the previously recommended budget with AB and agreed to make the following format changes on future budget reports:

- maintain a consistent list of line items,
- add a column for the previously estimated budget to compare with the actuals of the current year spending,
- number each line item, and
- add ERAF to the Revenue Section as a line item.

The purpose of conservative budgeting is to cover unexpected costs and cost increases (including inflation), and to prevent the need to spend additional staff time on revising the budget. What is budgeted does not need to be spent; all remaining budgeted, but unspent, funds at the end of the fiscal year will return to the Zone 7 fund balance.

Item 5. Special Tax Measure-November 2017

The AB discussed whether to recommend that a parcel tax be placed on the November 7, 2017 ballot. A parcel tax needs to be approved by two-thirds of the voters, and at this time, the AB does not think the proposed tax has the required level of support. They recommended postponing a potential tax measure for at least one year. However, the financial needs underlying the proposed tax persist, and the AB will continue to outreach to the community and will continue to seek funding for maintenance and projects to reduce flood risk in Santa Venetia.

Action by Board: Postpone the November 2017 election and continue to exercise the outreach plan.

M/S: JG/RK Ayes: ALL, Nay: NONE

Action by Board: Form a workshop including the entire board to discuss future plans for outreach in Santa Venetia.

M/S: JG/RK Ayes: ALL, Nay: NONE

Item 6. Discussion of Options Regarding Potential Encroachments onto District Drainage Easement on Birch-Mabry Ditch

Staff followed up on requests from the AB at the prior meeting (see the 5/17/17 minutes and 6/19/17 staff report for details). AB requested that staff write a letter to all residents along the Birch-Mabry easement reminding them of the need to keep drainage easements clear, with the intent that this would encourage neighbors to discuss related issues with one another.

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Item 7. Schedule Next Meetings

The AB tentatively scheduled an advisory board meeting for November 15, 2017 to revisit the possible option to bring forward the parcel tax ballot to one of the 2018 election dates, and discuss winter preparedness activities in the zone.

AB recommended staff check for available dates to schedule a workshop meeting to discuss potential outreach activities.

Meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM



GALLINAS WATERSHED COUNCIL

PO Box 4284, San Rafael, CA 94913

June 14, 2017

Supervisor Damon Connolly
3501 Civic Center Dr. Suite 329
San Rafael, CA 94903

RE: Tax for Santa Venetia levies and flood control pumps

Dear Supervisor Connolly:

Gallinas Watershed Council recognizes the great strides that the county has made since beginning a Watershed Program for the Gallinas Creek area. While flood protection for Santa Venetia still needs improvement, things are being done and progress is being made. GWC strongly supports improved flood protection for Santa Venetia, but also needs to point out that dredging does not provide any flood protection benefit.

There remain a number of issues that will act as barriers towards any tax or assessment to carry this necessary work forward. We would like to recommend that Flood Zone 7 staff provide a public response to the following issues before asking the SV neighborhood to support a ballot tax initiative for FZ7.

1) Gallinas Creek dredging spoils

We have heard that Public Works' Roger Leventhal is investigating placing the Gallinas Creek dredging spoils at the SR airport. Roger is reportedly also investigating other locations including McInnis Marsh. We request that the best **public** use be sought for these spoils. GWC believes the best, multi-benefit usage for Gallinas Creek dredge spoils is for the McInnis Marsh restoration project. Saving the spoils for the Marsh project in tandem with the dredging might also result in cost savings for CSA-6 and the County as they proceed with these projects, by avoiding the cost of bringing in materials from further away.

Given the long history of animosity between the airport owner and the neighborhood, and the perceived historical indifference to SV community needs, it is likely that placing spoils at the airport would scuttle any chance of the assessment being passed. We believe this would be seen as a diversion of public funds to a private enterprise, rather than reuse for the greatest public benefit.

*Gallinas Watershed Council is a fiscal project of MarinLink, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
MarinLink's federal tax ID number is 20-0879422.*

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Dredge spoils should go to the McInnis marsh restoration project, which is receiving County and State funding and anticipated to advance to construction design and permitting this year under a State grant.

2) SR Airport property boundaries and levees

The county is maintaining the “beak of the bird” state lands at the airport with a levee that is reported to be higher than the levees protecting Santa Venetia.

The county needs to stand firm and no longer repair the levee on the state lands. The airport can, on their own land, construct an inboard levee that would be connected to their other levees and protect their property. Each time the County fixes the levees at the airport point, it lessens the chance of a flood tax passing in Santa Venetia. If continued maintenance of these levees is undertaken, the County’s practice of performing the work as emergency repairs must be discontinued. Performing regular (or routine) maintenance as emergency repairs to the levees circumvents federal endangered species act regulations. County actions should comply with Federal and State laws as they do in undertaking routine maintenance in tidal creeks throughout the County including Novato Creek, Corte Madera Creek and others.

GWC further requests that the County resolve property boundary issues in Gallinas Baylands. In the past, the airport has claimed property under Gallinas Creek and onto several SV backyards. This issue should be resolved prior to the dredging of Gallinas Creek. A lack of clear property boundaries continues to be a source of conflict between SV and the airport owner, and could hamper dredging efforts.

3) Watershed Assessment District

The county has made some great strides in moving forward in the direction of taking a whole watershed approach to planning. This has resulted in a series of completed studies in the Gallinas Creek area, which were funded by several partners under County’s lead. GWC is grateful for this work, and enthusiastically supports utilizing a watershed approach and integrated management of community infrastructure and natural resources. This is particularly important in Gallinas Baylands now, as the 2016 AND 2017 Jules Evens’ biological surveys indicate that the incremental impacts of development in the baylands have resulted in the loss of California Ridgeway Rail (a Federally listed endangered species) in a portion of the north fork corridor of Gallinas Creek. This corridor connects two vital breeding and nesting marsh habitats. This community of Rails is known to be a critically important source population for San Pablo Bay, and potentially all of San Francisco Bay (Evens, 2017 and many more) and this area is identified as a critical habitat in the USFWS endangered species recovery plan.

We encourage placing all of Marin into a Watershed Assessment District for the benefit of every watershed, which could go a long way towards gaining access to

state and federal funding for community infrastructure improvement and maintenance.

Sincerely,

Russ Greenfield, President