

Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE
FLOOD CONTROL ZONE 1 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
HELD FEBRUARY 5, 2020
AT 922 MACHIN AVENUE, NOVATO**

Board Members (AB) Present

Bill Long (BL) – Chairman
Jim Grossi (JG) – Vice Chairman
Drew McIntyre (DM)
Gary Butler (GB)

District Staff (Staff) Present

Hannah Lee, Senior Engineer
Joanna Dixon, Associate Civil Engineer

Item 1. Approval of Meeting Minutes: February 13, 2019

Action by Board: Approve minutes as written
M/S: DM/JG **Ayes:** All, **Nay:** None, **Abstain:** None

Item 2. Open Time for Items Not on the Agenda

None

Item 3. Old Town Novato Flood Group Update

Vicky Shilzony and Tom Jordan, representing the Old Town Novato Flood Group, presented the initial responses received to date for their second survey of residents within the group's current defined boundary (homes East of S. Novato Blvd., North of Rowland, and South of Diablo Ave.). As they establish themselves as a 501(c) non-profit organization, this information and data will be useful to provide a basis of the group's purpose, documenting previous flooding events and conditions, and useful as they move ahead to apply for grant opportunities and develop conceptual improvement projects.

Cross referencing the available FEMA Flood Insurance claims, records and historical information was suggested as an additional way to document the damages the area has experienced.

Staff indicated that the Hazard Mitigation Grant opportunities now include the incorporated areas of Marin County as eligible locations for the Home Elevation Program, for which homes within the Old Town Novato Flood Group areas are now eligible.

Flood Zone Advisory Board Members, Bill Long and Gary Butler, will continue to meet with Flood Zone Staff and members of the Old Town Group between Advisory Board meetings to collaborate on possible improvement opportunities.

DM inquires which most recent studies of the Old Town Group area have been performed, and staff indicates that there have not been any recent studies since the construction of the Novato Flood Control Project (Phase 1-8) and the Baccaglio Basin/Arroyo Avichi overflow bypass system. Current updates to the hydraulic models are in process with Stetson Engineers to include the Baccaglio Basin/Arroyo Avichi overflow bypass system to the previous Watershed Study models that were developed.

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Item 4. Grant Programs Status

Staff gave a brief status of existing grant applications currently on hold.

Item 5. Project Updates

Staff gave updates per the Staff Report for the active projects – please see Staff Report for more details.

- a) Deer Island Tidal Wetland Restoration- Staff indicated that the professional service contract was awarded to ESA Associates for design of the next phase of the project, which includes 100% design for the work planned in Duckbill and Heron's Beak Pond, and continued work on the Deer Island Basin area alternatives.
- b) HWY 37 Adaptation Planning Grant- Staff reported that the study has been completed and is posted online with any final comments requested by 2/13/20. Last presentations will be made to the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) and the BayWave group later this month.
- c) Simmons Slough Water Management System - Staff reported that the last round of revisions to the final plans and specifications are in process and that we are responding to requests from the environmental regulatory agencies for obtaining permits. Construction is planned to occur this summer season.
- d) Novato Creek Levee Evaluations- Staff reported that the evaluations and reports are completed and are posted online. As expected, the repairs and recommendations are prohibitively costly ranging from \$5 to \$37 million.
- e) Rush Creek Watershed Study is still on hold awaiting additional funding required to authorize the work. TAM has contributed \$25,000, but another \$105,000 is still needed to proceed.
- f) Novato Creek Sediment Removal (2020) – Staff updated the Advisory Board on the cost savings of permitting fees with the Regional Water Board by negotiating the arrangement of sediment placement within Heron's Beak Pond to achieve elevations suitable for wetland vegetation establishment around the perimeter of the interior of Heron's Beak Pond. Permit applications have been submitted and the project is planned to go out to bid and begin construction in July 2020.
- g) Lynwood Pump Station Reconstruction is recommended to be a priority for FY 21-22 due to the continued deteriorating condition of the structure that supports the pumps. The Flood District Zone 1 will likely need to take a loan in order to proceed with the Pump Station Reconstruction as the Simmons Water Management Project and the Novato Sediment Removal Project will have significantly deplete available funds this summer construction season.

Item 6. Operations and Maintenance Update

Staff discussed the process for updating our permit requirements from Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and the Regional Water Quality Control Board for vegetation and sediment maintenance work within the creek corridors, and that the limitations and reporting requirements are prohibitive of completing the extent of work reasonably required by the District. Major maintenance on pumps for Lynwood Pump station exceeded estimates due to significant repairs required for the failed beams supporting the pumps.

Staff shared that the Precipitation and Stream gauge costs are now partly funded by the County of Marin as the data collected is beneficial for all of the County for emergency preparedness, and that a portion of the County's funding support will be for the expansion of the number and location of these gages to more areas within Marin.

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Item 7. Marin County Flood Forecast Model

Staff were unfortunately not available to present in detail on the new flood forecast model work that has occurred, but similar presentations will be made to the other Flood District Advisory Boards, and may be recorded, or rescheduled for a future Zone 1 Advisory Board meeting. BL suggested that these presentations also be shared with the Sanitary District Managers throughout the County as well.

Item 8. Zone 1 FY 2020-21 Budget and Work Plan Review

Staff presented the proposed Zone 1 FY 2020-2021 budget, and the budget notes details.

Staff recommended the need for securing a loan in order to complete construction of both the Simmons Slough Water Management Project and the Novato Creek Sediment Removal Project this summer and to plan for the Lynwood Pump Station Replacement project the following year and indicated that discussions with the County's Department of Finance are in process to secure the required loan. Staff reminded the Advisory Board members that for the Vineyard Creek Project several years ago, a similar loan amount of \$3 million had been obtained and repaid over a 6-year period. BL suggested perhaps a longer loan repayment period would be required, such as over 10 years, in order to continue to have funding available for the 4-year cycle of the Novato Creek Sediment Removal Project.

Several of the Advisory Board members in attendance explained that they were uncomfortable recommending a budget that goes into a negative balance without seeing the long term projections of how the fund balance would recover, and DM requested looking at a revised budget that would show the loan and repayment amounts factored in to achieve a balanced budget before the Advisory Board would make any recommendations.

BL inquires if the Flood Zone 1 might be able to borrow funds from another Flood Zone with a lesser interest repayment option. Staff explained that only Zone 3 was in a financial position to offer a loan, but that it was not likely to convince their Advisory Board members to commit the availability of these funds given the possible need for future projects within their Zone.

JG and DM indicate that the County Board of Supervisors rely on the Advisory Board to review and consider impacts such as the budget, and that without more detailed information they are not in a position to offer a recommendation to the Board.

BL suggests that staff present a balanced budget for this next fiscal year and identify emergency fund request needed that may go to the County Board of Supervisors for consideration.

JG suggests a meeting with the County Board of Supervisors take place to get their input on approval of a budget that goes into the negative, and the process for budget changes beyond the existing schedule for the Department of Finance data entry. The County's Department of Finance manages the revenues Zone 1 receives, and the Board of Supervisors would not consider a proposed budget without the support of the Department of Finance.

Staff explained that the Water Code gives the Flood District the authority to modify the budget at any time during the calendar year and that recommendations made now may be changed in the coming months as actual construction costs are identified and appropriate loan amounts are known.

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BL suggested preparing a budget that will look out for the next 10 years to see how the costs may be balanced over time.

Staff suggests modifying the presented budget by removing the \$3 million from FY 20-21 project construction expenses and \$1.5 million from the current FY budget in an effort to be able to recommend a balanced budget for this next FY as a placeholder until we may meet with the Advisory Board again to review the options.

Action by Board: DM proposed a motion to approve the budget conditionally subject to internal revisions that show a balanced budget over a 10-year repayment timeline.

M/S: BL/GB **Ayes:** DM, BL, GB, **Nay:** JG

Action by Board: BL proposed a motion to meet again in 4-6 weeks to review a revised budget.

M/S: BL/GB **Ayes:** DM, BL, GB, **Nay:** JG

Item 9. City of Novato Storm Drain Master Plan

Staff indicates that the City will bring the new Storm Drain Master Plan before the City Council on February 25, 2020. DM asks what opinion staff has of the new Storm Drain Master Plan? Staff responds that the collaboration between the City and the Flood District is very beneficial in that the Flood District will have access to all of this updated modeling data. The drawback is that the model is a proprietary software and that if any modifications to the modeling are needed, that this will require a professional services agreement contract with a consultant that has the proprietary software in order to make use of the model. BL encourages the District staff to consider the opportunity to comment at the City Council meeting as to the continued collaboration of the City and the Flood District to work towards flood improvements. The Advisory Board members are not available to attend the 2/25 meeting, but the Old Town Novato Flood Group suggests that they may attend and speak on behalf of the Flood District if talking points are provided.

Item 10. Next Meeting Date

Next meeting to review the revised budget is tentatively scheduled for April 8, 2020. A following meeting is also tentatively scheduled for November 5, 2020.