



Ventura County Special Districts Association

VCSDA MEETING MINUTES

Approved

Date: 4/4/2023
Motion: Brian Pendleton
Second: Elaine Magner

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

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 February 7, 2023 meeting of the Ventura County Special District Association was held in person at The Channel Islands Yacht Club. No virtual participation was available for this meeting.

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:46p.m. President Dandy asked UWCD Vice President and Channel Islands Yacht Club host Sheldon Berger to lead the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of the Agenda: No changes to the agenda, motion to approve the agenda and second; voice vote: all in favor, none opposed. Motion carries unanimously.

4. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS/ROLL CALL: President Dandy

President Dandy welcomed everyone to the meeting and then asked that each District report an item of "good news" in response to the roll call:

Members in attendance included: (13 of 20 Districts participating)

Bell Canyon Community Services: Richard Levey, Peter Machuga, Greg McHugh, Michael Robkin, Eric Wolf, Dennis Zine

Calleguas Municipal Water: Raul Avila, Jacque McMillan, Thibault Robert, Scott Quady

Camarillo Health Care: Kara Ralston, Sonia Amezcua, Brandie Thomas

Camrosa Water: Andrew Nelson, Tony Stafford

Casitas Municipal Water: Pete Kaiser

Channel Islands Beach Community Services: Peter Martinez

Conejo Recreation and Park: Jim Friedl, Charles Huffer, George and Judy Lange, Doug Nickles

Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor: Jess Ramirez, Paul Zitron

Pleasant Valley Recreation and Parks: Bob Kelley, Jordan Roberts, Elaine Magner, Mark Malloy, Mary Otten

Rancho Simi Recreation and Parks: Dan Paranick, Elaine Freeman, Katie O'Brien, Frank Scarelli, Theresa Pennington, Wayne Nakaoka, Douglas Duran, Miquel Chavez, Zach Miller, Jennifer Santos, Sandee Covone

Saticoy Sanitation: James and Maria Acosta

United Water Conservation District: Sheldon Berger, Bruce Dandy, Mohammed Hasan, Daniel Naumann, Mauricio Guardado, Kris Sofley

Ventura Port District: Brian Pendleton

Members of the Public participating in the meeting included:

Ventura County Sheriff Jim Fryhoff

California Special Districts Association's (CSDA) Charlotte Holifield

LAFCo Executive Director Kai Luoma

Channel Islands Yacht Club Commodore Lisa Medlen

John Medlen

President—Kara Ralston
Vice President—Jacque McMillan

Treasurer—Brian Pendleton
Secretary to the Board—Brandie Thomas

At approximately 6pm, President Dandy invited everyone to enjoy the buffet and said the meeting would resume with Guest Speaker Ventura County Sheriff Jim Fryhoff shortly.

5. President Dandy introduced the members to recently elected **Ventura County Sheriff Jim Fryhoff**.

Before beginning his address, Channel Islands Yacht Club Commodore Lisa Medlen presented Sheriff Fryhoff with a Channel Islands Yacht Club cap and expressed her and the Club's appreciation for all that the Ventura County Sheriff's Department does to keep the residents of the Oxnard Harbor safe.

Sherriff Fryhoff told the members how he first became a Deputy in 1990, working in the Ventura County jail, before being moved to patrols in Ojai for four and a half years, during which time he was named Officer of the Year. In 1996, his partner was murdered in an officer involved shooting and as traumatic as that situation was, Sheriff Fryhoff credits that experience with shaping his mindset. He explained that he believes that 99.5 percent of the community is comprised of good people and that law enforcement needs to focus on serving the best interest of the community, something that he has dedicated himself to for the past 32 years.

He explained that his decision to run for election to Sheriff was encouraged by his wife. He said he knew that there were many challenges and things needed to be fixed, but was thinking about retiring, when his wife advised him to "fix the problem." Running against his boss in the recent election, he was proud to be endorsed by so many of his colleagues and won the election by a sizable margin.

While Sherriff Fryhoff believes that Ventura County is relatively safe as far as violent crimes go, most of the problems come from outside of the county. He stated that organized retail theft, a growing problem, is typically perpetrated by groups from Los Angeles and Long Beach, and since theft under \$100,000 is a misdemeanor, many District Attorney's don't want to prosecute these cases when perpetrators are apprehended. He also said that catalytic converter thefts are another challenge, and most of these crimes are conducted by people from Los Angeles and Kern counties. Fentanyl, the majority of these drugs on the street come from Mexico and are sold online, so there is no relationship between the drug dealer and the people buying the drugs, which makes it harder to control. And lastly, the growing problem with homelessness. Sheriff Fryhoff said that Ventura County has good safety nets and most people can get support services right away, providing they do not have drug or mental health issues. He reinforced that while homelessness is not a crime, it often leads to petty crimes and arrests.

Sherriff Fryhoff spoke about AB109 Assembly Bill 109 (AB 109), known as realignment, is a measure passed by California voters in 2011 that diverts defendants convicted of less serious felonies to serve their time in local county jail rather than in state prison. Sheriff Fryhoff explained how this pushes County jail inmates onto the street and the need to legislate other areas so that Ventura County doesn't get stuck dealing with felons from Santa Barbara and Los Angeles counties.

Sherriff Fryhoff concluded by stating that he likes to be busy, that he has plans to fix many of the challenges currently being faced by the County Sherriff's office, including employee retention as presently, only about 30 percent of employees will make it to 20 years and the County needs that level of experience in its law enforcement team. He also invited people to email him with questions or suggestions and reminded the membership that he plans on being very busy.

Sherriff Fryhoff was asked if different communities within the County have different mindsets about

About the Sherriff's Department. Sherriff Fryhoff said that different communities have different needs and different expectations, but that his officers, whether they are in Oxnard, Simi or Thousand Oaks, demonstrate the same level of professionalism and commitment to doing the right thing, providing quality law enforcement and reducing public safety risks by making quality arrests and issuing citations.

President Dandy thanked Sherriff Fryhoff for his time, insights and observations.

6. Approval of Minutes from October 4, 2022 Meeting

Motion to approve the Minutes from October 4, 2022, Brian Pendleton; Second, Elaine Freeman. Voice vote: all in favor, none opposed. Motion carries unanimously.

7. Nomination Committee Report and 8. Election of Officers for 2023-2025 term—Kara Ralston

Camarillo Health District's Kara Ralston reported that Ventura Port's Brian Pendleton agreed to serve a second term as VCSDA Treasurer. Motion to re-elect Brian Pendleton as Treasurer, Elaine Magner; Second, Elaine Freeman. Voice vote: all in favor; none opposed. Mr. Pendleton was re-elected to a second term as VCSDA Treasurer.

Ms. Ralston then reported that Calleguas Municipal Water's Director Jacque McMillan was interested in serving as VCSDA's Vice President. Motion to elect Jacque McMillan as VCSDA Vice President, Kate O'Brien; Second, Jesse Ramirez. Voice vote: all in favor, none opposed. Ms. McMillan was elected to a first term as VCSDA Vice President.

Ms. Ralston then said she would be interested in serving as VCSDA president on the condition that all meetings during her presidency are held at Camarillo Health Care District's offices and that members acknowledge that there is no IT/technology. If another venue can help with dinner and technology, she would be amenable to those arrangements as well. Motion to elect Kara Ralston as VCSDA President, Elaine Freeman; Second, Kate O'Brien. Voice vote: all in favor, none opposed. Ms. Ralston was elected to a first term as VCSDA President.

9. LAFCo Update— Elaine Freeman

Elaine Freeman reported that Calleguas Municipal Water's Director **Raul Avila** was elected as the new special district representative to LAFCo. Ms. Freeman was retiring after 12 years on the LAFCo board and thanked everyone for their support over the years. Mr. Avila said that he would keep an open mind and was always available if anyone wanted to speak with him. It was also reported that Kai Luoma, LAFCo Ventura County's executive director would be attending VCSDA meetings in the future to provide reports and updates on LAFCo activities.

10. Recognition and Awards—Elaine Magner and Elaine Freeman

Elaine Magner and Elaine Freeman, the VCSDA Awards Committee, recited the many accomplishments and contributions of Conejo Recreation and Park Director Chuck Huffer that led to his being named VCSDA Director of the Year. Both Elaines that made similar remarks about the leadership and vision of United Water Conservation District's General Manager Mauricio Guardado, who was presented with the VCSDA General Manager of the Year award. Mr. Huffer said it was a great honor and thanked everyone for their support. Mr. Guardado said he was humbled by the award and credited his Board and his staff for their work and support in collaborating with so many different agencies, elected officials and partners in continuing efforts to deliver water sustainability.

11. Treasurer's Report—Brian Pendleton

Mr. Pendleton directed the membership to the financial reports in the meeting packet. He also stated that one of his conditions regarding accepting the Treasurer position was the hiring of an independent third party bookkeeper. Heyman Consulting standardized the VCSDA reporting system, established a PO Box for the chapter to receive mail and payments consistently and eliminated the need to update addresses every couple of years. He also was pleased that Heyman filed all the Chapter annual tax returns and reinstated the VCSDA's non-profit status. He said he was happy to continue to serve the Chapter and commented that it was great to work with President Dandy and Kris as secretary.

12. Reports and Announcements

- CSDA Report - Elaine Magner (Coastal Network Board Member)

Ms. Magner asked the membership to let her know about issues that were important to them and that she was looking forward to continuing to represent the membership in Monterey.

- CSDA Update - Charlotte Holifield

Ms. Holifield reported that February was Take Action month and encouraged members to reach out to legislators and let them know how you feel about specific legislation. She also encouraged members to get involved in the Special District Leadership Academy, attend CSDA Legislative Days and other events. She said that some 800 bills have been introduced to the State legislature and she expects another 1600 more and encouraged everyone to get involved.

- Other Announcements

President Dandy thanked the membership and stated that the last two years have been very enjoyable for him and thanked everyone for the great turnout at tonight's meeting. He also said that he hopes everyone will continue to participate.

13. New Business/ Member Announcements

Elaine Magner reminded members of the Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District's Poker Tournament on March 16 at the Cantara Cellars/Flat Fish Brewing Co. located at 126 N. Wood Road, #104 Camarillo, CA 93010. Proceeds from the event benefit the purchase of ADA playground equipment.

For more information, visit: <https://visitcamarillo.com/events/play-for-the-parks-poker-tournament/>

President Dandy adjourned the meeting at 7:46p.m. to the next VCSDA meeting on **April 4, 2023.**

Respectfully submitted

Kris Sofley

Kris Sofley, former Secretary to VCSDA