

**MARIN COUNTY COUNCIL OF MAYORS AND COUNCILMEMBERS
MINUTES**

Wednesday, June 23, 2010
San Francisco Yacht Club
98 Beach Road, Belvedere
Hosted by the City of Belvedere –
a Joint Meeting with *Community United*

Members Present

Belvedere: Councilmember elect Siavash Barmand, Sandra Donnell, Jerry Butler, Barbara Morrison, John Telischak
Corte Madera: Carla Condon, Bob Ravasio
Fairfax: Pam Hartwell-Herrero, John Reed
Larkspur: Larry Chu, Kathy Hartzell, Joan Lundstrom, Len Rifkind
Mill Valley: Garry Lion, Shawn Marshall, Stephanie Moulton-Peters
Novato: Denise Athas, Carole Dillon-Knutson, Pat Eklund, Madeline Kellner, Jeanne Macleamy
Ross: Chris Martin
San Anselmo: Kay Coleman, Jeff Kroot, Barbara Thornton
San Rafael: Al Boro, Greg Brockbank, Damon Connolly, Barbara Heller, Marc Levine
Sausalito: Carolyn Ford, Jonathan Leone, Linda Pfeifer, Herb Weiner
Tiburon: Jim Fraser, Alice Fredericks, Jeff Slavitz

Also present were the following City and Town Managers: George Rodericks, Belvedere; David Bracken, Corte Madera; Michael Rock, Fairfax, Wayne Bush, Interim City Manager, Mill Valley; Michael Frank, Novato, Debra Stutsman, San Anselmo; Ken Nordhoff, San Rafael; Adam Politzer, Sausalito, Peggy Curran, Tiburon, as well as MCCMC Secretary/Treasurer Diane Crane Iacopi of Tiburon.

Call to Order: President Jeff Slavitz called the business meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and turned the meeting over the Mayor Barbara Morrison of Belvedere.

Welcome and Introduction of Guests: Mayor Morrison welcomed the membership and the members of the Belvedere City Council, including councilmember-elect, Siavash Barmand. Morrison also welcomed members of the Belvedere City Staff: Robert Epstein, City Attorney; Steve Fracoli, Chief of Police; Rebecca Eastman, Finance Officer; Bob Branz, City Engineer; Lee Braun, Building Official, Pierce MacDonald, Planning Manager, Felicia Wheaton, Associate Planner; Leslie Carpentiers, Deputy City Clerk; and Cathleen Andreucci, Director, Belvedere-Tiburon Joint Recreation Committee; as well as special guests of the City: Bill Smith, Citizen of the Year, Larry Wheat, Finance Committee Chair, and Vera Gertler, Belvedere representative to the Marin County Commission on Aging.

She then introduced the following guests: District 3 Supervisor Charles McGlashan; Aide Leslie Alden; District 1 Supervisor Steve Kinsey; Marin County Administrator Matthew Hymel, MMWD General Manager, Paul Helliker; Superior Court Judge Faye D'Opal; Marin County Representative to the California Senior Legislature, Eleanor Bloch; ABAG President and Mayor of Union City, Mark Green, and guest, Jana Walker of Keenan Associates; League of California Cities North Bay Division representative, Chuck Dalldorf; League of Women Voters representatives Margaret Jones and Patsy White, Marin Mediation Services Chair, Robert Sammis, Marin Mediation Services Manager, Barbara Kob; Sandy Shartzter, Marin County Mediation Services; Alison Gray Kern, Publisher, *The Ark* newspaper; Judith Wilson, Editor, and Teri Roney, reporter; Guest speaker Jared Huffman, member of the California State Assembly, and District Director Jenny Calloway, Dr. Eric McGhee, Public Policy Institute, and Mary Jane Burke, Marin County Superintendent of Schools.

Mayor Morrison welcomed trustees and representatives from the following Marin County School Districts: Dixie, Kentfield, Larkspur, Novato Unified, Ross, Ross Valley, San Rafael, and Sausalito/Marin City; Marin Community College District, Tamalpais Union High School District, and the Marin County Office of Education.

Mayor Morrison said that “the program tonight has been organized by Marin Community United. Marin Community United is a collation of community leaders representing the Marin County Board of Supervisors, Marin County and Marin cities, Marin County’s School Boards and local superintendents who have joined together to advocate for their common interests in ensuring that the essential services meeting the educational, health and safety needs of our citizens are guaranteed.”

Mayor Morrison turned the meeting back over to President Slavitz.

Approval of Minutes: From the meeting held on May 26, 2010

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Committee Reports

- a. SMART – Joan Lundstrom said that flat sales tax revenues had created reduced revenue projections for the coming year (revenues are \$274 million). She said the figures would be updated in the Fall. Lundstrom said there had been discussion at a Larkspur City Council meeting about whether the Larkspur train station should be built in the initial stage on the rail line; she said the Council believes that building the terminus in Larkspur would be of benefit to Central and Southern Marin, as well as to riders from the East Bay. She said that SMART remained committed to a comprehensive plan to integrate transportation hubs for the ferry, airporter, as well as to the bikeway features of the overall project.
- b. Disaster Council – Len Rifkind reported on the last DISCO meeting, including lessons learned from the recent earthquake in Calexico. He spoke about the continued need for disaster preparedness and said the County’s Disaster Coordinator would make a presentation about a new program, “Ready, Set, Go” at an upcoming MCCMC meeting in the Fall. He also distributed copies of his written report.
- c. TAM - Alice Fredericks reported on the budget shortfalls for the crossing guard program; she said that there 125 applicants but funding for only 63 positions. She said that the proposed VLF ballot measure, authorized by SB 83, would raise an estimated \$2 million annually, and could help fund this and other underfunded programs. She said that the revenues from the ballot measure, if adopted, would also go to funding mobility improvements, local streets programs, as well as to create strategies for climate protection.
- d. Legislative Committee – Fredericks said that the Committee had been asked to endorse AB 1443 (“Melody’s Law”). She said that while it was not precisely within the committee’s purview to do so, she was pleased to report that Pat Eklund was bringing the matter before the entire group to ask for its endorsement of this legislation.
- e. Golden Gate Highway Bridge & Transportation District - Al Boro said that Golden Gate Bridge tolls would go up on July 1, 2010, and that carpoolers would begin paying \$3.00 and would need a fast track. He said that bus and ferry services would rise by 5%. He said that a new translink “clipper card” (discount card) would be available for purchase. Boro said that the Bay Bridge would institute a three-tier “congestion pricing” system. He also reported on the resignation of GGHBTD General Manager Kuppersmith on September 1; he said she had taken another position and was moving to Seattle.

- f. League of California Cities – North Bay representative Chuck Dalldorf said that he, too, was taking another position, and this would be his last meeting. He reported that the League’s local taxpayer protection initiative had qualified for the November ballot. Councilmember Fredericks presented him with a gift and thanked him for his service.

Other Reports

- ABAG - Carole Dillon-Knutson introduced ABAG President, Mark Green. She said that Green, Mayor of Union City since 1993, had served on the ABAG Executive Committee since 1994, and had been elected president for the year 2010-2012. Mayor Green said that next year would mark the 50th anniversary of ABAG and that there were a series of celebrations planned. He reported on ABAG’s Sustainable Community program which he said involved the school districts, private businesses and nine Bay Area counties. He said there were also 100 cities “on board” in this partnership who were committed to creating plans that work in their areas, and sharing their successes.
- Marin Mediation Services – Ellie Bloch said that this program, been formed 31 years ago by her and Joannie Becker, had helped cities resolve many issues between citizens over the years and avoid litigation. Advisory Boardmember Bob Sammis reported that the County had recommended no longer funding the program and transferring it instead to the DA’s office. He said that he did not think the DA’s office could handle the additional workload of 2800 inquiries and 800 mediations per year. He said that discussions were on-going about whether Marin Mediation could become a non-profit organization and continue to provide services, however, he said that funding remained the big issue. He said that they would like to explore the possibility of receiving funding from the cities.

Request for Action on Legislation: AB 1443 (Huffman) – “Melody’s Law” (Pat Eklund)
(Action requested is to authorize MCCMC President to send a letter in support of the legislation)

Eklund gave a moving report about the importance and immediacy of this legislation to the City of Novato, and all communities. She thanked Assembly member Huffman for putting forward this bill to help curb repeat DUI offenders by taking away their licenses after the third offense. She said that because the Senate Public Safety Committee would consider the bill the following week, it was critical to obtain endorsements. She said that the California State Sheriff’s Association and other public safety groups had endorsed it. Eklund asked for the support of Community United and MCCMC, specifically, that the members of MCCMC authorize President Slavitz to write a letter in support on behalf of the group.

Councilmember Condon made a motion to authorize President Slavitz to write a letter of support for AB 1443. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Following the motion, Assemblymember Huffman said a few words about AB1433 and how it would work. He noted that Senator Leno supported a different bill, which he said was a weaker bill and would not be as effective as AB1433.

Appointments to Fill Committee Vacancies

- ABAG Executive Board –Two, two-year terms ending June 30, 2010 – Carole Dillon-Knutson, Delegate; Shawn Marshall, Alternate (letter of interest submitted by Carole Dillon-Knutson)

Moved and seconded to reappoint Carole-Dillon-Knutson. Motion passed. There were no nominations for Alternate; position to remain open until filled.

- League of California Cities, North Bay Division – appointment to fill alternate representative to Executive Committee (letter of interest submitted by Madeline Kellner)

Moved and seconded to appoint Madeline Kellner. Motion passed.

Election of President and Vice President

President Slavitz said that the nominations had been made at the May meeting, per the MCCMC by-laws. He also called for nominations from the floor. There were none.

- MCCMC President for the 2010-11 term – *Shawn Marshall, nominee* (letter of interest submitted by Shawn Marshall)

Moved and seconded to appoint Shawn Marshall. Motion passed.

- MCCMC Vice President for the 2010-11 term – *Madeline Kellner, nominee* (letter of interest submitted by Madeline Kellner)

Moved and seconded to appoint Madeline Kellner. Motion passed.

President-elect Marshall thanked Jeff for his excellent leadership over the past year and presented him with a gift. Slavitz said that it truly “took a village” to create the programs and he thanked the membership, as well as Executive Committee member Larry Chu and Secretary/Treasurer Crane Iacopi for their work.

Public Comment: Margaret Jones said she had followed the activities of the Marin Health Care District for a number of years as a member of the League of Women Voters. She said the League had three videos available about the transition of the District from private to public ownership on June 30. She said that the leadership of the new district were well qualified professionals, and that “we all have a stake” in the successful turnover of the hospital on June 30, 2010.

Program: Community United Program: “A Path through the Woods: the California Jobs Budget”
Speaker: California State Assembly member Jared Huffman and Research Fellow Dr. Eric McGhee, Public Policy Institute of California

Marin County Superintendent of Schools Mary Jane Burke and Councilmember Alice Fredericks introduced the program. Ms. Burke talked about the interconnectivity of the schools and local governments—she said “we all want strong, safe communities... and that great things happen when we work together.” She acknowledged the challenges faced by the schools and local governments in light of the economy and state budget crisis. She thanked the 104 elected school board members and leaders from the school districts in Marin who she said worked hard to earn the trust of their communities.

Ms. Fredericks concurred with the Superintendent’s remarks. She said that the speakers would look toward the future in their discussion of the California Jobs Initiative and political reform issues, such as open primaries and re-districting and how that would affect local communities.

Assembly member Huffman first spoke about the State budget. He said the Governor’s May “revise” was “draconian” and would eliminate the entire health and safety network of the state. He talked about the Senator Daryl Steinberg’s budget “realignment” plan to extend tax increases and create an oil severance tax. He also discussed the Assembly’s plan to fulfill funding (and prevent raids on funding) to public schools and local governments, and to continue funding for health care and State parks. He said that there were some outstanding questions concerning constitutionality of the “bottle bill” and oil tax because Prop 58 states that you cannot borrow against tax revenue or have year-end deficits. (He also noted that California was one of a very few oil extraction states that did not have an oil extraction tax). Huffman said that he would work to maintain per pupil funding and keep Prop 98 in place.

In response to a question from Mayor Moulton-Peters as to how to support the State jobs budget, Huffman said recommended sending letters to the Speaker and Speaker Pro Tem. He said it was also important to support it as a statement of values and principles.

In response to a question about unfunded State pension liabilities, Huffman said that four of the State's unions had announced major concessions this week and were willing to institute a two-tier hiring system and possible raise the retirement age for some public safety groups to 55.

Huffman also took questions from the audience about upcoming state "water" legislation, the oil severance tax and the failure of Prop 15.

Dr. McGhee spoke second. He said that the Public Policy Institute was a non-partisan, independent entity that did research on political issues and trends in an objective way. He addressed the issue of "gridlock" at the State level; he said that it was not gridlock per se, because an enormous amount of legislation passes annually, but rather gridlock on budget and fiscal issues, which would require bipartisanship to pass. He opined that broad political reforms were difficult during a period of economic crisis. He said that income inequality (the gap between rich and poor) was growing and that this made for a more volatile political landscape, as well.

McGhee talked more about partisan polarization, and the difficulty of adopting a budget when a supermajority is required by statute (as in California). He said that redistricting (Prop 11) and an open primary (Prop 14) might create more moderate legislatures but noted that he was skeptical of any real reform because there was not a lot of evidence to support this. He said that the divide between democrats and independents who would support higher taxes and education and the conservative voters who "hate" taxes and do not trust "where the money goes", was the real obstacle to changing the supermajority vote. He also noted that there tended to be more polarization in areas of high immigration (like California) and income inequality. He said the legacy of Prop 13 was the strong centralization of the State's finances; he said that some decentralization of this might make a difference. But he also said the danger in fiscal devolution to the local level was the risk of inequality between communities.

McGhee responded to questions from the audience, including a recent Marin IJ article that talked about "blue" counties paying more taxes and "red" counties receiving more of the income. McGhee said that while this was not his area of study, it was not scientifically possible to infer relationships based on this data.

President Slavitz thanked the speakers for their timely topics and for reminding the group of our interconnectivity and the need to continue to "build bridges" of mutual support.

Adjourn: 8:45 pm to the next meeting hosted by the Town of Corte Madera, on September 22, 2010.

Submitted,

Diane Crane Iacopi, Secretary-Treasurer