

MARIN COUNTY COUNCIL OF MAYORS AND COUNCILMEMBERS
Draft MINUTES

Wednesday, September 22, 2010

Best Western Corte Madera Inn
56 Madera Boulevard
Corte Madera, CA 94925
Hosted by the Town of Corte Madera

Members Present

Belvedere: No members present

Corte Madera: Carla Condon, Diane Furst, Michael Lappert, Alexandra Cock, Bob Ravasio

Fairfax: Pam Hartwell-Herrero, David Weinsoff

Larkspur: Larry Chu, Kathy Hartzell, Dan Hillmer, Joan Lundstrom, Len Rifkind

Mill Valley: Garry Lion, Shawn Marshall, Stephanie Moulton-Peters, Ken Wachtel

Novato: Denise Athas, Carole Dillon-Knutson, Pat Eklund, Madeline Kellner, Jeanne Macleamy

Ross: Chris Martin, R. Ruppert Russell, Carla Small

San Anselmo: Kay Coleman, Tom McInerney, Jeff Kroot, Barbara Thornton

San Rafael: Al Boro, Greg Brockbank, Damon Connolly, Marc Levine

Sausalito: Carolyn Ford, Michael Kelley, Jonathan Leone, Linda Pfeifer

Tiburon: Dick Collins, Jim Fraser, Alice Fredericks, Emmett O'Donnell

Also present were the following City and Town Managers: George Rodericks, Belvedere; David Bracken, Corte Madera; Dan Schwarz, Larkspur; Jim McCann, Mill Valley; Cathy Capriola, Assistant City Manager, Novato; Debra Stutsman, San Anselmo; Ken Nordhoff, San Rafael; Adam Politzer, Sausalito, Peggy Curran, Tiburon; and MCCMC Secretary/Treasurer Diane Crane Iacopi of Tiburon.

Call to Order: President Marshall called the business meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the new MCCMC year. She also welcomed the new council members (R. Ruppert Russell and Carla Small of Ross) and city manager (Jim McCann of Mill Valley) who were attending their first meeting. She noted that San Rafael City Manager Ken Nordhoff had taken a job in Walnut Creek and would be leaving the group in November.

Public Comment:

Representatives from the "Awakening the Dreamer Symposium" distributed a flyer and invited everyone to a workshop on October 30 in Corte Madera. They said the symposium would "explore a new global vision built on sustainability, spiritual fulfillment and social justice," and that local leaders were poised to play a vital role in realizing this vision.

Welcome and Introduction of Guests:

Mayor Condon welcomed the membership and introduced the members of the Corte Madera Town Council (all present) and Staff: Twin Cities Police Chief Todd Cusimano, Retired Chief Phil Green, Town Clerk Chris Green, Director of Emergency Services Roger Sprehn, Director of Administrative Services George Warman, and Director of Recreation and Leisure Services Mario Fiorentini. She also welcomed the following guests: Sausalito Finance Director, Charles Francis, Larkspur Finance Director, Amy Koenig, League of Women Voters representatives, Patsy White and Margaret Jones, Marin County Administrator, Matthew Hymel, Marin County Supervisor, Steve Kinsey, MMWD board member Cynthia Kohler, and Maureen Daly, guest of Councilmember Lappert.

Mayor Condon turned the meeting back over to President Marshall.

Approval of Minutes: From the meeting held on June 23 26, 2010

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes. Motion passed by acclamation.

Agenda and Meeting Format for 2010-11: President Marshall

Marshall said she had received positive feedback about the changes made last year by President Slavitz and would continue them into the coming year. She said that everyone seemed to appreciate the earlier adjournment time. Marshall also said that she would talk more about some new ideas with regard to seating and survey cards at upcoming meetings.

Approval of Budget for FY 2010-11:

In her report, President Marshall proposed a budget that included a one-time reduction in fees paid by member cities, the expansion of the MCCMC Secretary's services from nine to twelve months, and improvements to the MCCMC website. She thanked Secretary Crane Iacopi and past President Larry Chu for their work on the budget and for reconciling past financial statements over the summer.

Moved and seconded to approve the budget. Motion passed by acclamation.

Committee Reports

- a. Golden Gate Highway Bridge & Transportation District - Al Boro announced that Dennis Mulligan, a GGHBTB engineer for nine years, and former Cal/Trans employee, had been appointed as general manager. He said the GGHBTB budget shortfall had been reduced from \$132 million over five years, starting last year, to \$89 million and that the Board continued to work on further reductions. Boro said that May 2011 represented the 75th anniversary of the bridge and that the Board was about to enter into an agreement with the Golden Gate Park Conservancy on the planning of a celebration. He said it would not include a "bridge walk" this time. Finally, Boro reported that the district had received a \$5 million grant from MTC to begin work on a suicide barrier.
- b. League of California Cities – Nancy Hall Bennett, newly appointed Manager of Regional Affairs for the North Bay Division, introduced herself to the group and reported on the League's annual conference. She announced that Greg Brockbank had been elected Second Vice President of the League, and that Alice Fredericks had been re-elected to the Board as a state-wide Director. She also said that Pat Eklund was also elected to the Board from the League's Department of Mayors and Councilmembers, and that the Northern Division was well represented by other appointments to League Committees: Pat Eklund, Environmental Quality Committee, Alice Fredericks, Transportation, and Kay Coleman, Community Services. She said that the passage of Proposition 22 continued to be the singular focus of the League to enable cities to count on, and keep, money for transportation projects.
- c. Legislative Committee – Alice Fredericks said that the Committee would consider taking a position on several propositions at its upcoming meeting: a) support of the League's Proposition 22, b) opposition to Proposition 23 (suspension of AB 32); and c) opposition to Proposition 26, which would restrict the ability of local governments to collect fees by redefining "taxes". She also said the Committee would consider support of Measure B, placed on the ballot by the Transportation Authority of Marin, which would to allow local jurisdictions to raise money for local projects through a \$10 vehicle license fee. She said there was a website for the measure, BforMarin.org.
- d. TAM - Alice Fredericks reported on the status of the Central Marin Ferry Connection Multi-Use Path project. She said the initial study had been prepared and a mitigated

negative declaration had been adopted by TAM. She said that CalTrans was continuing its environmental impact review. On another issue, she said that TAM was working on standardizing data for greenhouse gas emissions inventories which would be useful information to share with other agencies who were also trying to quantify this data.

- e. SMART – Joan Lundstrom said that SMART had received six bid proposals for nine, three-car trains, both in the light and heavy DMU categories, which were being evaluated by SMART staff. She said that SMART had applied for \$17.6 million grant to construct a 44-mile section of the proposed bicycle/pedestrian pathway from San Rafael to Windsor. She noted that this was a highly competitive grant with 10,000 applications expected for the federal funding. Lundstrom said a public workshop was scheduled on November 6 that would provide the Board with input into key upcoming decisions on the scope and size of the initial project, based on actual Measure Q sales tax receipts and an updated sales tax forecast. She said a “final” vote was scheduled for the December 15 Board meeting. She welcomed input from MCCMC members on what they thought a “start up” train system between Marin and Sonoma Counties should look like based on existing funds.
- f. Marin County Homeless Policy Committee – Item deferred to next month.

Other Reports

- David Weinsoff spoke about his representation as a plaintiff’s attorney for people who were facing foreclosure on their homes. He said that the federal programs adopted to assist people with foreclosures were not working well. He said that local jurisdictions had the power of leverage with the banks by threatening to withdraw their funds on behalf of their constituents who were facing foreclosure, if the banks were not willing to cooperate on the renegotiation of their home loans. He said he would like to see MCCMC take a position to become involved in order to affect public policy in this area.

Program: “Pretend Pensions: Just How Much are California’s Public Employee Retirement funds Underwater? And where does Marin fall?”

Speaker: Joe Nation, former Assemblyman; Professor and Director of Graduate Student Practicum, Stanford University

Mayor Condon introduced Joe Nation. She thanked the membership for having representatives from all 11 cities at the meeting to hear a discussion of this important topic.

In his PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Nation described the public pension funding shortfall and research methodology used by the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research study he had chaired. The study attempted to answer the questions of “how we got here?” and “what’s next?” He said that California’s public pensions (CalPERS, CalSTRS, and UCRS) were \$500 billion underwater, according to another study, prepared by the Governor’s office. He said that several other pension funds, including Marin County’s, were also in trouble. Nation said that acknowledging the shortfall and doing something about it was a way to preserve pensions in the future.

Mr. Nation said that GASB legislation did not properly address these issues and that an agency’s obligations should be based on more conservative, risk-free discount rates, not the current rating system used by CalPERS and other funds. He said that SB 400, passed in 1999, helped to create the funding problem, in addition to the current economic downturn. He said that legislating to have the taxpayers pay for the shortfall was untenable and that one solution was to have employees contribute greater percentages to their retirement.

Mr. Nation responded to questions and said that a way to “dig out” would be to involve the community and stakeholders. He said that “minor” fixes will not work, and that agencies should

plan for the long term, avoid contribution holidays and issuing debt, where possible. He also recommended not spreading asset losses over long periods of time (which CalPERS had done).

Councilmember Larry Chu commented that the current pension system would be bankrupt by 2026 unless something was done. He said that he was following this issue and had been "blogging" about it with other interested parties. He invited the membership to create a formal group to study the issue and said that he would approach the Mayors Select Committee about how to organize it.

President Marshall thanked Mr. Nation for his presentation on this timely topic.

Adjourn: 8:50 pm to the next meeting hosted by the Town of Fairfax, on October 27, 2010.

Submitted,

Diane Crane Iacopi, Secretary-Treasurer