
**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
Minutes of October 17, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jill MacDonald – Chair
Chris Khoury – Vice Chair
Joe LaCava
Consuelo Martinez
Jenny Maeda
Terry Gaasterland
Dustin Fuller

REPRESENTING

City of Solana Beach
Citizens Advisory Committee
City of San Diego District 1
City of Escondido
City of Poway
City of Del Mar
22nd Agricultural District, Ex Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terra Lawson-Remer
Marni von Wilpert
Joel Anderson

REPRESENTING

County of San Diego Dist. 3
City of San Diego Dist. 5
County of San Diego Dist. 2

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Shawna Anderson
Dewanda Vandermost
Nathan Lacy
Wayne Brechtel
Lizzy Bendrick
Brain Elliot
Zachary MacQuarrie
Neil Meyer
Kristina Leyva
Jeff Carmel
Adi Harshwal
Roja Seelam

REPRESENTING

San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA, General Counsel
County Parks & Recreation Department
City of San Diego District 1
Southwest Strategies Group
CAC Eastern Property Owner
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
Harshwal & Company, LLP
Harshwal & Company, LLP

Introduction and Announcements:

Chair MacDonald convened the meeting at 11:02 a.m. and welcomed the attendees. A roll call was taken and a quorum of six board members were present to begin the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes of September 19, 2025

No corrections or additions were noted for the September 19, 2025 minutes. Board Member LaCava moved to approve the minutes and Board Member Martinez seconded the motion.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, LaCava, Maeda, Martinez, Gaasterland

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, von Wilpert, Anderson

Abstain: Khoury

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Anderson provided updates:

- All-in 4 Change Grant Recipient Ceremony hosted by Harrah's: JPA received an Honorable Mention and \$5,000 grant.
- Upcoming Events: Native Plant Sale at Sikes Adobe (Oct 18) – expecting a large turnout and the Sikes Adobe Harvest Tea (Nov 15–16) – tickets are selling quickly.
- Trail Improvements: New bench and shade structure installed along JPA trail by 22nd Ag District as part of Coastal Commission permit compliance.
- Sign Replacement: Agricultural Preserve sign on Highland Valley Road replaced through City of San Diego and Councilmember Von Wilpert's office.

CAC Chair's Report – Khoury reported that the CAC did not meet in October.

Public Comment – None

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. FY 23-24 Audit Report

Recommendation: Receive and Distribute Third Party Audit Report for Year Ending June 30, 2024

Chair MacDonald welcomed the representatives from Harshwal & Company, LLP, Adi Harshwal and Roja Seelam who presented the following:

- Highlights:
Clean audit opinion (unmodified) for FY 2024; no findings for FY 2024 or FY 2023.
Net position increased 10%, largely due to a 20-acre land donation valued at \$5.5M.
Liquidity ratio: 25; current assets \$5M vs. liabilities \$193K.
Recommendations: Annual physical asset verification; prepare for GASB 101 and 104 standards.
- Discussion: Clarified current vs. non-current assets, valuation of land and improvements, and insurance coverage limits.

Board Member LaCava asked Mr. Harshwal if he were given access to all information he required for the audit, Mr. Harshwal responded that all information was given on a timely basis. Board Member LaCava asked if any of the audit work was not performed due to limitations placed on him by management, and did the audit include any deviation to general accounting practices. Mr. Harshwal replied that no limitations were present, and that management was cooperative, and there were no deviations to the general accounting practices. Board Member LaCava inquired about the financial report of the JPA as compared to other government entities. Mr. Harshwal answered that the financial position was definitely healthy, with a liquidity ratio of 25, current assets close to \$5M vs. liabilities of \$193K, debt to equity ratios with total liabilities of \$2.8M and net position close to \$58M.

Board Member LaCava inquired to Executive Director Anderson if to her knowledge there was any information that should have been disclosed but was not included in the audit and if there were any questions the board should have asked but did not and Director Anderson answered that there was not.

Chair MacDonald motioned to receive and distribute the Third Party Audit Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 and Board Member Martinez seconded the motion.

All in Favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, LaCava, Maeda, Martinez, Gaasterland, Khoury

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, von Wilpert, Anderson

Abstain: None

Public Comment- None

2. **Fairgrounds Master Plan Presentation (Oral)**

Recommendation: None

Dustin Fuller from the 22nd Agricultural District introduced Zachary MacQuarrie from Southwest Strategies Group to present an overview of the Fairgrounds 2050 initiative. The presentation highlighted the following:

1. Background & Vision

The District initiated the Fairgrounds 2050 effort to plan for the long-term future of the Del Mar Fairgrounds and its three parcels: Main Campus, Surf and Turf property, and Horse Park.

In 2024, a Vision Wall engagement at the San Diego County Fair collected community ideas for the property's future, reinforcing a community-led approach rather than developer-driven planning.

2. Guiding Principles

The Board established 13 principles grouped into five categories:

1. Community Focus: Fairgrounds as an asset for and by the community.
2. Purposeful Planning: Operational readiness for emergencies and major events.
3. Accessibility: Improve regional access, traffic, and parking.
4. Environmental Stewardship: Protect sensitive ecosystems (Stevens Creek, lagoon, coast).
5. Financial Sustainability: Maintain self-funding through event revenues.

3. Outreach & Engagement

Phases:

Pink Phase: Visioning (Vision Wall, initial conversations).

Green Phase: Listening sessions and broad outreach (current phase).

Blue Phase: Expert visioning and conceptual planning.

Yellow Phase: Master Site Plan development and CEQA process (Draft and Final EIR).

Efforts to Date:

Countywide presentations to municipalities and regional boards.

Open houses with interactive stations for public input.

Fair ticket survey yielding ~2,000 responses.

Upcoming Open Houses:

San Diego – October 27

San Marcos – October 29

Chula Vista – November 13

Del Mar Fairgrounds – November 18

4. Technical Advisory Coalition

Composed of experts in architecture, environmental quality, coastal resources, and geotechnical engineering.

Conducted site tours and working sessions to identify constraints and opportunities.

Timeline: Advisory report expected by Q1 next year; listening phase targeted for completion by end of year or early next year.

Board Discussion:

Question raised regarding timeline for technical advisory work; Zach confirmed completion anticipated by Q1 next year.

Board acknowledged the unique regulatory standards for the Fairgrounds compared to municipal planning requirements and that any changes and development proposed are subject to Coastal Commission review and approval.

Closing Remarks:

Zach emphasized the 22nd Ag District's commitment to a transparent, community-driven process and welcomed ongoing dialogue.

Public Comment- Neil Meyer, CAC member, inquired about projected sea level rise and if Ag District was contemplating raising the site elevation and if they had taken a position on SANDAG's proposed LOSSAN alignments. Mr. MacQuarrie responded that the Ag District staff are in discussions with SANDAG on their concerns about the north alignment on Fairgrounds property.

3. Polo Fields Deed Restrictions Update (Oral)

Recommendation: None

An oral update was provided by Executive Director Anderson regarding the City of San Diego's proposed removal of deed restrictions on San Diego open space lands known as polo fields east of El Camino Real, currently leased to Surf Cup Sports and adjacent to the Coast to Crest Trail.

Director Anderson reported that the San Diego City Council is scheduled to hear the item regarding removing the deed restrictions at its October 27 meeting.

Director Anderson stated that she is working with Chair MacDonald on a letter to the San Diego Union-Tribune editorial board summarizing key points from the JPA's letter to be submitted soon as authorized by the Board. Publication is at the discretion of the editorial board. Anderson stated that she plans to attend and testify at the hearing.

Public Comment- None

INFORMATION

4. Project Status Updates

- a) **Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail** – Final Engineering work continues with consultants; no new developments reported.

- b) **Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail** – Coordination is ongoing with the City of Del Mar on its Living Levee Plan, while the JPA continues to manage a state grant for trail design and construction, including installation of the Western Monument designed by the Hubbell family. Due to uncertainties regarding alignment and related projects, staff will consult with the granting agency about separating the monument component for construction at an alternative location. To support this effort, the Trails Committee will visit the lagoon in the coming weeks to explore potential sites for the monument.
- c) **San Dieguito Lagoon Phase II Restoration (aka W-19)** –JPA staff received the approved Long-Term Management Plan from SANDAG and will assume responsibility for implementation once mitigation credits are secured and restoration is finalized, which is estimated to occur by 2035. The plan includes payment of an endowment to the JPA estimated at approximately \$6.9 million to fund perpetual management, expected to grow over time similar to the Edison endowment. SANDAG has not yet provided a timeline for the endowment. In preparation, the JPA will need to thoroughly review its responsibilities for both the W-19 and Edison projects.

Discussion:

Board members raised concerns regarding Southern California Edison’s ability to secure mitigation credits and meet resource agency requirements.

Staff reported Edison is working closely with Coastal Commission consultants to resolve outstanding issues and is nearing compliance, though progress remains slow and no mitigation credits have been issued to date

- d) **CTC Trail – East San Pasqual and Sutherland Gaps Project** – Project descriptions have been sent to consultants for review, and the CEQA process has begun. Additionally, the tribal consultation process has been initiated for both projects to ensure compliance and engagement with tribal stakeholders.

5. Coordination Reports (oral)

- a. **San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy** – No report
- b. **Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley** – Kristina Leyva and Jeff Carmel reported the following issues with regard to the Surf Cup leasehold and lack of compliance:
- Unauthorized development on Surf Sports’ backfields (polo fields), including installation of AstroTurf, fencing, electrical conduit, and creation of a commercial gym without city permits or sublease approval. The development is adjacent to the planned Osuna Trail terminus and Coast to Crest Trail alignment.
 - City officials were unaware of the improvements until alerted by the community; discussions are ongoing regarding compliance and potential removal of unauthorized structures.
 - Expressed concern about lack of oversight near environmentally sensitive areas and urged accountability.
 - Requested information on an emergency evacuation plan for the polo fields, citing significant traffic congestion during large events and safety risks in case of fire or dam failure. No plan has been provided despite repeated inquiries since June.
 - Highlighted severe traffic impacts during Surf Cup events, which cause gridlock across surrounding communities, raising safety and evacuation concerns.
 - Encouraged coordination between the 22nd District Agricultural Association and the City regarding future plans for the Polo Fields property to address traffic and emergency access issues.
- c. **Volcan Mountain Foundation** – No report
- d. **San Dieguito Lagoon Committee** - No report

6. Jurisdictional Status Reports –

Chair MacDonald reported that the City of Solana Beach will submit a letter next week opposing removal of the deed restrictions on the Polo Fields/Surf Cup property. The opposition is based on concerns previously discussed during the meeting, including environmental sensitivity, traffic impacts, and compliance issues.

Dustin Fuller from the 22nd Agricultural District provided an update on the wetland restoration project southeast of Jimmy Durante (formerly south overflow lot). Phase 1 and Phase 2 are nearing compliance with Coastal Commission requirements, with only minor issues remaining. To achieve full compliance, additional soil leaching and new plantings will be implemented. Irrigation systems will be reactivated to support this work, and residents or trail users may notice this activity.

7. Correspondence – None

8. Closed session with Legal Counsel:

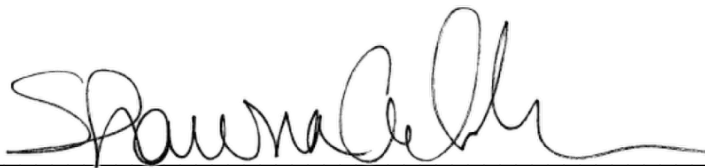
- a. Closed session with legal counsel pursuant to California Government Code Sec. 54956.9(d)(4) regarding potential litigation related to Coast to Crest Trail damage.
- b. Closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1) – Executive Director performance evaluation.

No reportable action was taken.

Board members discussed the upcoming November meeting date and inquired about changing the date to November 14 because several Board members are unavailable to attend the regular November 21 meeting date. Chair MacDonald directed staff to determine quorum and location for a November 14 meeting and confirm final details. Board member Gaasterland offered the Del Mar City Hall as a possible location.

Chair MacDonald adjourned the meeting at 12:45pm

These minutes were approved by board action on November 14, 2025



Shawna Anderson, Executive Director