
**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY
Minutes of December 12, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jill MacDonald – Chair
Chris Khoury – Vice Chair
Andrew Hayes
Brian Elliott
Consuelo Martinez
Jenny Maeda
Dustin Fuller

REPRESENTING

City of Solana Beach
Citizens Advisory Committee
County of San Diego Dist. 2, Alt
City of San Diego District 1, Alt
City of Escondido
City of Poway
22nd Agricultural District, Ex Officio

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terra Lawson-Remer
Terry Gaasterland
Marni von Wilpert

REPRESENTING

County of San Diego Dist. 3
City of Del Mar
County of San Diego Dist. 5

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Shawna Anderson
Dewanda Vandermost
Nathan Lacy
Jason Lopez
Wayne Brechtel
Lizzy Bendrick
Udo Wahn
Jeff Carmel
Jeremy Blakespear

REPRESENTING

San Dieguito River Park JPA
San Dieguito River Park JPA, General Counsel
County Parks & Recreation Department
City of Del Mar Lagoon Committee
Friends of San Dieguito River Valley
Citizens Advisory Committee Vice Chair

Introduction and Announcements:

Chair MacDonald convened the meeting at 11:01 a.m. and welcomed all attendees and confirmed a quorum with six board members present.
A special introduction was made for Jason Lopez, long-standing SDRP JPA staff member and Resources & Trails Manager.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair's Statement – No Report

Approval of the Minutes of November 14, 2025

No corrections or additions were noted for the November 14, 2025 minutes. Board Member Alt. Elliott moved to approve the minutes and Board Member Martinez seconded the motion.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott (Alt), Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Hayes (Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Gaasterland, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Executive Director's Report –

Executive Director Anderson reported that the Red Nose Run fundraiser will be held on December 13 in Del Mar, benefiting the San Dieguito River Park JPA and Semper Fi & America's Fund. Sponsored by the Del Mar Foundation, the event includes a festive walk/run with costume contests, and JPA staff will participate and manage a beach water station. Registration is still open, and the event was recently promoted on Fox 5 News.

She reported on a successful annual staff retreat held on December 11 at the Del Mar Powerhouse.

The first Harvest Tea event at Sikes Adobe was successfully hosted, with appreciation expressed to board member Consuelo Martinez for attending. Plans are underway to continue offering both Harvest and Valentine's teas in the future.

The JPA is working with the Escondido Police Department to address late-night parties and vandalism at the Sunset Drive staging area, which have resulted in trash and hazardous waste. The City has increased patrols in the area and prepared a site assessment report with suggestions to deter activities.

Improvements are being implemented by JPA rangers.

An update was provided on the Horse Park Bridge project. The trail detour agreement with HITS has been extended for two years to allow the Agricultural District to complete culvert repairs, which require permits and funding expected to be budgeted in 2027. It is recommended that bridge replacement be delayed until repairs are complete to avoid damage. Grant funding is being pursued by the DAA to accelerate the timeline.

CAC Chair's Report – Vice Chair Chris Khoury reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met on December 5, 2025 and received public comments from Paul Bernstein and Bob Dudley advocating for raising the level of Lake Hodges back to 293 feet. They shared letters from several organizations on the subject. Vice Chair Khoury said the topic would be added to the next CAC meeting agenda and the letters included in both upcoming CAC and JPA agendas.

Khoury reported that Shawna Anderson announced her 2026 retirement to the CAC. and that Jeff Barnouw, current CAC vice chair and former chair, announced he will not seek another CAC term after ten years of service.

The CAC unanimously elected Khoury for his third and final term as Chair subject to JPA Board approval, and Jeremy Blakespear as vice chair for 2026/27.

Jeremy Blakespear was invited to introduce himself to the JPA Board as the newly elected CAC vice chair. Jeremy noted his involvement with the San Dieguito River Park since 2009, including service as Trails Committee chair and volunteer with the mountain bike patrol. He previously worked as a park ranger in Yellowstone and Joshua Tree and expressed his passion for conservation and recreation. Professionally, he is a physician assistant in North County and looks forward to supporting the CAC and park mission.

Public Comment – None

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. FY25-26 Q1 Budget Report

Recommendation: None

Executive Director Anderson reported that first-quarter revenues and expenses are tracking as expected, with no significant concerns. Some variances above 25% were noted but will be monitored. The Coast budget, funded by Southern California Edison, is also on track, and the 2026 Coast budget has been approved by SCE with a slight increase. Director Anderson mentioned that SCE has consistently expressed positive feedback with the JPA's management of the lagoon trails and surroundings. Annual reserve transfers for vehicle and equipment replacement were completed, bringing the reserve balance to approximately \$89,000. Discussion included future vehicle needs, including interest in an EV truck to be stationed at the Lagoon. Chris Khoury pledged \$20,000 toward the purchase of an EV truck, with potential for additional contributions. A cash balance and endowment report was provided, noting strong performance of the Del Mar Foundation's Edison Lagoon Restoration Endowment, now at \$1.5 million, and increases in other endowment funds.

Public Comment - None

2. Approve 2026-27 CAC Chair

Recommendation: Approval of CAC Chair

The Board approved the reappointment of Chris Khoury as Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee, effective January 2026. The motion was made by board member alternate Hayes, seconded by board member Maeda, and passed unanimously by voice vote. Appreciation was expressed for Chris Khoury's leadership in improving CAC attendance and engagement.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott (Alt), Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Hayes (Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Gaasterland, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Public Comment- None

3. 2026 Board Officer Elections and Committee Appointments

Recommendation: Board motion and vote to elect Chair and Vice Chair for 2026 term and appoint board members to serve on ad-hoc committees.

Officer Elections:

Chair MacDonald opened the discussion by expressing willingness to serve a second term and noted that the current Vice Chair, Chris Khoury, was also willing to continue. The Chair invited other nominations or discussion; none were presented. Board members voiced support for the Chair and Vice Chair continuing in their roles.

Board member alternate Elliott motioned to approve re-electing both Chair MacDonald and Vice-Chair Khoury to serve another term. Board member alternate Hayes seconded the motion.

The motion was discussed briefly, with members expressing appreciation for their service. The vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott (Alt), Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Hayes (Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Gaasterland, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Budget Committee Appointments:

The Board reviewed the ad-hoc Budget Committee membership. Current members are Chair MacDonald, and board members LaCava and Martinez. Chair MacDonald stated that board member LaCava requested that he not be reappointed to the committee. Chair MacDonald and Board member Martinez agreed to continue serving. At least one additional member was requested. Members discussed the committee's important role in preparing the next fiscal year budget and reviewing the four-year forecast. Meetings are typically virtual and limited to two or three sessions before May. Due to absent members, the Board agreed to revisit adding a third committee member at the January 2026 meeting.

Board member Martinez moved to appoint herself and Chair MacDonald to the Budget Committee and leave one vacancy to be filled in January: seconded by Chair MacDonald.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott (Alt), Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Hayes (Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Gaasterland, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Officer Appointment Committee:

The Board agreed to re-establish a committee, last active in 2022, to review Policy 95-1 regarding board officer elections for non-elected members or alternates. Volunteers included Board member LaCava, Vice Chair Khoury, and Chair MacDonald.

Board member alternate Hayes moved to appoint all three to the Officer Committee; seconded by board member Martinez.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott (Alt), Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Hayes (Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Gaasterland, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Public Comment- None

4. Appoint Executive Director Recruitment Committee

Recommendation: Appoint Recruitment Committee to initiate and lead a recruitment process to replace retiring Executive Director.

Director Anderson explained that board committees were appointed in the last two instances to direct and implement a recruitment process to fill ED positions with support from JPA General Counsel and Office Manager. The Board discussed forming a recruitment committee to initiate and lead the process of replacing retiring Executive Director Anderson, whose retirement is anticipated in June 2026. Chair MacDonald and Member LaCava (as represented by alternate Elliott) volunteered to serve on the committee. Vice Chair Khoury was recommended to join, and members agreed that a citizen perspective would be valuable. Additional volunteers were welcomed, provided the committee remains below a quorum. The committee will meet early January 2026 to begin planning, with support from General Counsel Wayne Brechtel and the JPA office manager.

Board member Martinez moved to appoint Chair MacDonald, Vice Chair Khoury, and Board member LaCava, and to the Executive Director Recruitment Committee; seconded by board member alternate Hayes.

All in favor.

Yes votes: MacDonald, Elliott (Alt), Maeda, Martinez, Khoury, Hayes (Alt)

No votes: None

Absent: Lawson-Remer, Gaasterland, Von Wilpert

Abstain: None

Public Comment- None

5. Board Meeting Venue

Recommendation: None

The Board discussed options for future meeting locations following positive feedback from the November meeting at Solana Beach City Hall. Members expressed interest in alternating between Solana Beach City Hall and the current venue at the County downtown location, either every other month or every six months, to provide convenience and variety. Key points included:

- Establishing a schedule in advance to avoid confusion and allow members to plan accordingly.
- Avoiding commuting conflicts during the Del Mar Fair and racing season.
- Ensuring availability and timely room reservations at both venues.

Staff confirmed that inquiries have been made regarding availability of Solana Beach council chambers. A proposed schedule, either alternating every other month or every six months, will be developed based on availability and presented at the January 2026 meeting.

Public Comment- None

INFORMATION

6. Project Status Updates

- a) **Osuna Segment of Coast to Crest Trail** – Director Anderson reported that the Osuna Segment has reached 60% design completion, and a construction permit application will be submitted to the City of San Diego in January. A meeting with Development Services leadership is scheduled to ensure a smooth permitting process and avoid delays. The updated engineer's construction cost estimate

places project construction at \$3.4 million, leaving a \$1 million shortfall compared to the previous estimate used in the grant and based on preliminary design. Anderson stated that additional funding will be pursued through state grants, including the Trails and Greenways grant cycle in 2026, and a request for additional contributions from the SDRV Conservancy. Fundraising will also be considered. Construction bidding is anticipated later next year.

- b) **Reach the Beach Fairgrounds Trail** – A meeting with the architect is scheduled next month to refine cost estimates. Grant funding will be divided between the Gateway project and the Del Mar Living Levee trail segment.
- c) **San Dieguito Lagoon Phase II Restoration (aka W-19)** – Easement amendments for access roads are being finalized with General Counsel.
- d) **CTC Trail – East San Pasqual and Sutherland Gaps Project** – Director Anderson reported ongoing work on the trail gap project including stakeholder meetings, CEQA, and other tasks.

5. Coordination Reports (oral)

- a. **San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy** – No report
- b. **Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley** – No report
- c. **Volcan Mountain Foundation** – No report
- d. **San Dieguito Lagoon Committee** - Udo Wahn, newly appointed Chair of the City of Del Mar Lagoon Committee, provided an update. The committee is working toward improving signage to indicate where fishing is allowed or prohibited along the San Dieguito River. Existing signs between Grand Avenue Bridge and adjacent areas are outdated, unclear, and lack information on fines. The committee also recommended encouraging the fairgrounds to install signs on the north side of the river where fishing and clamming are common. Additionally, the state nonprofit MPA Collaborative is considering improvements to lagoon signage statewide, including the Grand Avenue overlook. Fewer complaints have been received recently regarding fishing off the bridge. These issues will be brought to the Del Mar City Council during future goal-setting sessions.

6. Jurisdictional Status Reports –

Chair MacDonald reported that the City of Solana Beach has scheduled a meeting with Surf Cup Sports (now Pioneer Sports) for January 21, with the Mayor, Chair MacDonald, and the City Manager attending. A follow-up report will be provided after the meeting.

Board member Martinez shared updates from recent community events, including participation in the Sikes Artisan Fair Market and planning for Earth Day Escondido, scheduled for Saturday, April 4. The event will feature booths at no cost, food vendors, and a new playground. Organizations are invited to participate, and Arbor Day activities will follow later in April.

Dustin Fuller from the 22nd Agricultural reported in response to Mr. Wahn's report, that new fishing signs will be installed along the river channel in coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Installation is expected shortly if not already completed.

7. Correspondence – None

8. Closed session with Legal Counsel: None

Chair MacDonald adjourned the meeting at 12:03pm

These minutes were approved by Board action on January 16, 2026


Shawna Anderson, Executive Director