

DRAFT



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council
Minutes
Regular Meeting

June 08, 2023 05:30 PM

Monte Rio Elementary School Library, 20700 Foothill Dr, Monte Rio, CA 95462 and via Zoom:
<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/97078696015?pwd=anRsRkczQ1NrbFkyaXNwSGVmakZFUT09>
<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

Chair - Rio Nido Representative Pip Marquez de la Plata • Vice Chair - Forestville Representative Lisa Nahmanson • Guerneville Representative Joe Rogoff • Guerneville Representative Nic Pereira • Pocket Canyon & Greater So Guerneville Representative Betsy Van Dyke • Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative Cynthia Strecker • Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls • Hacienda Representative Vicki Clewes • Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes • Forestville Alternate Lucy Hardcastle • Monte Rio / Villa Grande Alternate Patty Thayer • Guerneville Alternate Kathy Dahl

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Chair - Rio Nido Representative Pip Marquez de la Plata.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Lead by Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes

B. Roll Call

Present: Chair - Rio Nido Representative Pip Marquez de la Plata, Pocket Canyon & Greater So Guerneville Representative Betsy Van Dyke, Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls, Hacienda Representative Vicki Clewes, Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes, Forestville Alternate Lucy Hardcastle, Monte Rio / Villa Grande Alternate Patty Thayer, Guerneville Alternate Kathy Dahl

Absent: Vice Chair - Forestville Representative Lisa Nahmanson, Guerneville Representative Joe Rogoff, Guerneville Representative Nic Pereira, Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative Cynthia Strecker

Staff Present: Debbie Ramirez, Elise Weiland, Amy Cohen, Lupe Catalan, Leo Chyi (remote) and Mark Ayala

2. Approval of Agenda, Chair Pip Marquez de la Plata Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes motioned to approve. A second was made by Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls.

The motion passed with the following vote:

8 In Favor 0 Opposed
 Abstained Absent

3. Statement of Conflict of Interest

There were none.

4. Consent Agenda

A. May 11, 2023 Minutes Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative Mike Nicholls motioned to approve. A second was made by Forestville Representative Vesta Copestakes.

The motion passed with the following vote:

5 In Favor Opposed
3 Abstained Absent

Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vicki Clewes, and Kathy Dahl abstained from the vote as they did not attend the last meeting.

5. Council Member Comment: on Matters not listed on the agenda

Vicki Clewes noted the formation of a new adhoc to create a land acknowledgement and asked for it to be added to the reports section of the next meeting's agenda.

Vesta Copestakes asked if the contents of the meeting could be documented and shared with the public more quickly. After discussion, it was decided that the draft minutes could be published sooner than past practice, which has been with the publication of the subsequent meeting packet.

Mike Nicholls asked the MAC to take a moment of silence in honor of Ross Bickford, former Superintendent of Monte Rio School District, who passed away on June 2.

6. Public Comments

Support was expressed for Vesta's suggestion to share the minutes sooner with the public.

Dan Fein made a comment regarding the consolidation of the Fire Departments. The Monte Rio Fire Department is starting to integrate with Gold Ridge Fire Department in preparation for a future consolidation.

Jacque with the Forestville Skate Spot expressed gratitude to District 5 for supporting the skate, music, and art event for Tyre Nicholls. The event was very successful.

Ryan Miller asked for an update on the Dutch Bill Creek Bridge on Main Street in Monte Rio.

7. Supervisor Lynda Hopkins

Supervisor Hopkins was unable to attend the meeting, so Field Representative Elise Weiland gave the report instead.

Elise Weiland started with a roads report, noting that the bidding for the Moscow Road Project closed on June 5th and is moving forward on time. The Main Street / Dutch Bill Creek Bridge is a FEMA project, so unfortunately will be moving slowly.

The next meeting for the Governance study was moved to July 15th, and will be recorded. The first stage of this process was community input about what issues the community wanted addressed, and we are now in the second stage where a consultant lays out options available to address these issues. She noted that the process of educating/engaging the public in the governance study will not end after the July 15th meeting, and invited people to invite District 5 to organization meetings to do outreach and education about the governance study.

Elise Weiland also provided an update on the Russian River Confluence. She attended the inaugural meeting of the Russian River Water Forum. She mentioned that a prominent threat to the Russian River is the Potter Valley Project. These dams have changed the flow of the Russian River by diverting water from the Eel River into the Russian River, and have been mismanaged by PG&E, so won't be able to continue functioning as they have been. If no action is taken, the Russian River will no longer receive water from the Eel River and the flow will revert to the way it was before the dams were created. The water forum is working to address this problem with the Russian River Confluence, and large community involvement will be needed as well to troubleshoot this successfully.

Vesta Copestakes asked if Lake Sonoma and Mendocino would continue to receive water from the Eel River in this situation, to which Elise responded that they would not. Betsy Van Dyke asked if anyone else could take responsibility for the dams. Elise responded that no one will because they are very expensive, and noted that she will do more of a deep dive into this later. Mike Nicholls noted that the Potter valley water rights situation further complicates the issue.

Vicki Clewes asked if it would be possible to have the communications committee work with District 5 to do outreach about the MAC and the governance study together.

Patty Thayer noted that, since the bridge closures, traffic down Bohemian highway has increased, and condition of the road has deteriorated. She stated that, given the bridge construction will be a long process, the condition of this road should be watched. Patty Thayer also asked how updates on the timing of the Moscow Road construction would be provided, and Elise responded that SoCo PI will provide updates as the project progresses.

Public comment was made asking if there is still consideration of installing a one way light for the bridge. Elise responded that there is, but they would need to get a permit to do vegetation trimming first, so the process has been slowed. Additionally, she noted that the light could cause traffic backups, and so they weren't sure whether it would be best to postpone installing the light or even forgo the idea altogether. Public comment was also made suggesting the possibility of hiring a flagger instead.

Another member of the public asked if the construction of the Main Street bridge will affect the Monte Rio bridge at all. Elise responded that it would not, as the two projects are entirely independent of each other.

Elise also added that the hill slide on WestSide Road has been taken as a FEMA Project.

Leo Chyi provided an update that Budget Hearings start on Tuesday, so all non-budget items will be covered on Monday this week.

Pip Marquez de la Plata asked about an item about the Pavement Preservation Program (PPP). Leo Chyi said that the recommended action for this item was to approve SoCo PI's recommendations to increase the funding the PPP receives from general funds, and that more detail can be found in the attachments for the board agenda item.

8. How to report road issues, traffic issues, abandoned vehicles, and more

See [video](#) for the presentation given by Mark Ayala from Sonoma County Information Systems Department.

Pip Marquez de la Plata asked what different kinds of things you can report on SoCo connect. Mark Ayala responded that you can report issues of code enforcement, abandoned vehicles, roadway, line of sight, slides, vegetation overgrowth, and signs. The program is currently a pilot and so has a more limited scope as it is mainly focusing on two departments for the time being.

Mike Nicholls asked if reports from the old system got transferred to the new ones. Mark replied that only open data was transferred. You can see these reports from further back by changing the filters on your app.

Pip Marquez de la Plata asked if there was an effort by the County to publicize the system. Mark answered that there was one initially, but was unsure if there is one ongoing.

Vesta Copestakes noted that she has gotten many questions from community members about how to get their roads on the PPP list. She asked if repeated requests on SoCo Connect would help push up the road's priority. Elise responded that repeated requests would not help as they prioritized roads based on severity. Elise noted that reporting was still important, but reporting in excess would not be helpful, and if no response was received after reporting on SoCo Connect contacting District 5 or the maintenance department would be the next step.

Vicki Clewes noted that it was difficult to show the severity of potholes accurately in photos.

Vesta Copestakes noted that SoCo Connect would not help with debris from homeless encampments, and asked how to get help with this. Elise responded that homeless encampment cleanups near all tributaries and the Russian River are managed by Russian Riverkeeper not SoCo Connect.

Public comment was made raising concern over fallen trees and a bridge. Vesta recommended reporting the issue to SoCo connect.

9. Committee and Staff Reports

A. Communications Ad Hoc, Report from Chair Joe Rogoff

Vicki Clewes provided an update on the Communications Committee. They have been focusing on increasing the MACs visibility in the community. They developed an event calendar with community events, and would like more participation from all MAC members in attending these events and adding upcoming events in the community that they are aware of. Vicki Clewes noted that outreach has been very effective at the events they've attended so far. She added that they are close to getting business cards for the MAC reps and alternates with an email address that would funnel back to the reps/alternates from a specific locality. Field Representative Debbie Ramirez presented a draft email list to the representatives. Betsy Van Dyke added that it would have been nice to have people from different districts at these events to answer public questions/comments. Patty Thayer added to the sentiment that these events have been very successful and community members have been happy to talk about their concerns. She also noted that the next outreach they were focused on was through the press. Vicki Clewes added that they are also working on expanding their outreach to Spanish speaking communities. Mike Nicholls asked for an update on the timing of the creation of name tags for reps/alternates, and the response was that they're on their way. Pip Marquez de la Plata asked if the committee could send reminders before events. Elise Weiland asked how individual MAC representatives have increased their outreach to their communities since the committee was formed. Vesta Copestakes replied that she has increased the accessibility of the information she posts on social media and posts on her personal accounts as well. MAC members have also posted some things physically on bulletin boards, however Betsy Van Dyke noted that there aren't many

bulletin boards out there. Mike Nicholls added that if there was an easily printable document with a QR code on it, it would be easier and more effective to post. Vesta Copestakes added that something more concise than the full agenda would be easier to share as well.

B. Community Clean Up Ad Hoc, Report from Chair Lisa Nahmanson

Vicki Clewes also provided an update on the Community Cleanup Ad Hoc. They have hosted successful large dump days, and are able to help other communities to host similar events. They are also looking at doing smaller cleanups and neighborhood cleanups. Lucy Hardcastle said that she noticed that there are many families teaching their children about the importance of this kind of work at the smaller community cleanups. Vesta Copestakes asked if the cleanup committee could do a cleanup for Park 'n Rides. Elise noted that Park 'n Rides was managed by the SCTA (Sonoma County Transit Authority), and will share contact information.

C. Pocket Canyon area renaming ad hoc, Report from Chair Betsy Van Dyke

Betsy Van Dyke provided an update on the Pocket Canyon Renaming Ad Hoc. They are looking into the possibility of doing a poll to finish up by the next meeting.

D. Staff report from Elise Weiland, including enhanced summer parking enforcement.

Elise Weiland gave a brief report that they have restarted the parking enforcement program and are looking for a list of problem areas. Vesta Copestakes asked if signs can be posted in these areas publicizing the shuttle as an option for the public to decrease parking issues.

10. Adjournment

On a motion from Betsy Van Dyke and second from Kathy Dahl, Chair Marquez de la Plata adjourned the meeting at 7:17 PM