

MARK WEST CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes, May 11, 2022, 6:00 pm
Hybrid Meeting
Video Available Send request to MarkWestCAC@gmail.com

A) Call to Order: Chair Fies called to order, the regular meeting of Mark West Citizens Advisory Council at 6:00 pm.

1. Roll Call

Members present: Chair Karen Fies, Willie Lamberson (via Zoom), Heidi Would, Stephanie Bisordi, Brad Sherwood
Others present: Jen Mendoza, Field Representative Representing Supervisor James Gore, 4th District, County of Sonoma; Aggie Maggio, Secretary, Mark West Citizens Advisory Council (MWCAC)

2. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Bisordi, second by Would, the minutes of the regular MWCAC meeting, April 13, 2022, were approved. The motion carried on a voice vote. (4-0-1) Sherwood abstained. He was not at that meeting.

B) Presentations: Action Items

Procedure: 1. Presentation 2. Questions by council members 3. Questions/comments from the public

1. Conversation, Continue-Blue Book - Chair Karen Fies

Jen Mendoza explained the beginnings of the MWCAC, created by the BOS. They decided to have five council members, an odd number, in order to avoid ties. Customarily there is a board and elections. The MWCAC is a group created, without being attached to an entity, so they went with an appointment model vs. an election model. If it ever becomes a CSD, it would hold elections to the board. People can get involved or appointed to the Council by coming to meetings, or just join the community to work on things/issues.

Boundaries

- Chair Fies would like a discussion leading to a decision as to whether or not the Council wants to expand the boundaries and/or membership.
- Mendoza met with Shelly Bianchi-Williamson a Sonoma County employee who does GIS mapping, who has usable maps that can be zoomed in and out. She's helped other MACs determine where to put boundaries. The boundaries are now that of Cal Am Water. A discussion of boundary expansion should be if, how, and why a boundary is one way vs others?
- The original boundaries don't allow the Council to deal with issues for a larger area, that affect residents represented by the Council.
- It is best to use existing boundaries, such as those of fire districts, water districts, etc. Basically, using areas that have most fire/water shed type area similarities creates the most cohesiveness.
- Boundaries discussed by Jen with Shelly, were: north > Shiloh Road, west > Laughlin & River Rds. south > Santa Rosa City Limits (Kaiser, Old Redwood) and east > Franz Valley School Road.

Council Member Comments:

- Lamberson:
 - We should include airport. It affects the Council area, air traffic, etc.
 - Move out to Slusser Rd. It's only a little way and includes some houses west of the airport.
 - Suggested creating a subcommittee to create a map.
- Sherwood:
 - Agreed on the airport and Slusser Rd. The school district is affected by what happens around the airport. Multi-family housing etc. It should be a discussion item.
 - Community Services District is also a good option.
- Would: Assuming any new members would be from new boundary areas? Response - Mendoza: Yes, in theory; but it could depend on how it's set up.
- Chair Fies: Cal Am fees funding would only be available to Cal Am customers.
- Mendoza: A Community Services District (CSD) gives local control to the local money, making it easier to get funding. It's community authority with capacity to spend money. It's up to the community whether the Council remains alongside of a CSD, is replaced by it, or morphs into a CSD.

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- requires a tax on the community to fund a CSD community (tax exchanges)
- sometimes a stipend for work would be paid to the CSD board members. It's a community decision.
- It is a long-term discussion.

Questions from Attendee Catherine Dodd: (via chat)

- How do these boundaries overlap with the fire district? That would allow us to focus on safety.
- Can a CSD add a hotel tax? Potentially a casino tax?
- Responses - Mendoza:
 - Boundaries should overlap, using existing ones as much as possible; most likely fire or school district.
 - Hotel tax, meaning Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) is charged. Healdsburg, as a city, decided to have their own TOT, so the tax goes to the city, not to the County. In theory, if there are hotels in the area, they could be taxed, but the funding would go to the County since we are in an unincorporated area, not the CSD. Casinos are not taxed. However, negotiations are possible.
 - However, about the suggestion to bring the Airport Specific Area into the MWCAC; she doesn't think that would be allowed, as all of the Supervisors make decisions about what happens at the airport. And it is a development area. She doesn't think anybody would want to change that.

On a motion by Lamberson, second by Sherwood, the Council voted to submit to the BOS, a change the Blue Book, to expand the boundaries of the MWCAC. The motion carried on a voice vote. (5-0)
(Motion #1)

There was a second motion not to expand the Council membership. With no second, the motion died.
(Motion #2)

A motion was put forth by Would, seconded by Bisordi, to submit to the BOS a change to the Blue Book to expand the membership the MWCAC, if the boundaries are expanded. The motion carried on a voice vote. (3-2)
(Motion #3)

Council Members Comments:

- Sherwood: Would like to see what boundaries will be expanded before expanding membership.
- Would: It should be clear how the financial aspect of the Neighborhood Improvement Funds would be managed, if boundaries were expanded beyond the Cal Am boundaries. Response - Chair Fies: No impact. The funds would still be available only to those residents within the Cal Am boundaries.
- Lamberson: MAC is a voluntary advisory to BOS. A CSD is an elected board. It has to be elected because there are monies involved to provide services. He recommends shelving the CSD discussion for now.

Attendees Comments:

- Catherine Dodd: (via chat) She supports an expanded membership; more volunteers and more representation.
- Lori Barber: It could be a problem if boundaries are expanded and some people don't have representation.
- Mike Landon: (via chat) Many neighbors have no idea the CAC exists.

Would like to get community input (via Zoom?); maybe at the end of June or early July. Needs more outreach. Possible for the Chamber to help with this? Flyers at Molsberry's? Social Media?

There will be a discussion about outreach next month. Bisordi, Would, Lamberson and Catherine Dodd will create an ad hoc committee and work with Jen Mendoza to further discuss the issue, plan some kind of community meeting (possibly midsummer) and report to Council next month.

C) Presentations of Referrals from Permit Sonoma: ACTION ITEM None

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Consideration of proposed projects will proceed as follows: 1. Presentation by project applicant 2. Questions by Councilmembers 3. Questions and comments from the public 4. Response by applicant, if required 5. Comments by Council members 6. Resolution, ACTION, if indicated.

D) Council Member Announcements/Information/Discussions/Disclosures: Information only, unless stated

1. Council Member Lamberson:

- He would like Wikiup Drive, along the golf course to be added to the unmet needs list. It is hazardous; no sidewalk. He met there, with Transportation and Public Works (TPW), Mendoza and Mike Landon. Landon presented hard facts (number of cars and pedestrians, etc.). Their conclusion: A curb and gutters are too expensive. A vehicle lane, bike lane and four feet of asphalt would work. Waiting to hear back from TPW.
- Response - Mendoza: The County is currently figuring out what to put where, on the schedule. She thinks the non-burned area is due for re-pavement; not sure. The dream was to have this be part of that repave and be more than a shoulder with a paint line; also some traffic barriers, to identify the edge of the road.

Attendee Comments:

- Catherine Dodd: (via chat) asking the same for Carriage Lane. Response - Mendoza and Dodd will walk it.
- Lori Barber: Suggested something more natural vs. hard surfaces.

Council Member Comments:

- Would: Paved an area on Carriage Lane in front of her home. It gets used by heavy equipment operators and cars parking on it, causing people to still walk on the street. Something more natural like crushed granite might work better, to identify the space as a walkway.
- Mendoza: The drainage ditch is right on the edge of the road and right up against residential property on the other side. The County is discussing where to put the walkway.

2. Sherwood:

- A controlled grass burn is planned for June 10, at the old Hilton Hotel location, on Fountain Grove.
- The largest and most complex prescribed burn in the County history at Lake Sonoma is planned for June 10, through the 13th (about 600 acres); one in June and one in August/September.
- Some comments were made that it would be better to use goats and sheep for this area and others.

E) Subcommittee Reports & Discussions: ACTION ITEM

1. Neighborhood Improvement Funding Program (NIFP) Subcommittee (Fies/Sherwood)

The committee made some minor changes (cleanup to the language) on the application, at the MWCAC meeting last month.

2. Rebuild/Fire Mitigation Subcommittee (Sherwood/Fies)

- Mark West Estates HOA received around \$30,000, from a County grant, to cover vegetation management in the creek and community park. The Council had suggested they seek that funding.
- Sherwood suggested the Council get an update as to what is happening around vegetation management.
- He would like to have reports of who is getting warnings to manage their vegetation and shame those who are not doing so. And to know who is dealing with those property owners who are being neglectful.
- There is so much more to be done and so much more money out there. For instance, the BRIC grant (Building Resilient infrastructure and Communities). What is happening with that?
- Fies will be meeting with Lynn Garric on Monday to look at the MW Creek watershed and fire prevention efforts.
- Larkfield Resiliency Fund is coordinating through the County for a free emergency kit for the community. Will find out more. Catherine Dodd suggested that a form entitled "List of Medications" be included in the kits.

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3. Wikiup Open Space (Lamberson/Would) **None**

4. Sonoma County General Plan for Mark West Area (Lamberson/Would)

Permit Sonoma is organized, with a game plan, and figuring out how they are going to get monies for staff for the General Plan work.

5. Community Services District (CSD) Subcommittee (Sherwood/Lamberson) **None**

F) Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items:

1. Catherine Dodd thanked all the Council members.

G) Pending Items: Updates when available

1. Utilities & Water – Margaret DiGenova

- Doing good locally with the drought. Can still improve. Some Northern CA restrictions are now filtering down to Southern CA.
- Cal Am is looking for 20% conservation. Use the tools; all available at office. They will deliver. Biggest use of water is outdoor irrigation systems. Remember rebates, encourage people to conserve and report wastes.
- Question: Are there ordinances banning lawns on new construction? Response - Sherwood: Some local jurisdictions can have ordinances that prohibit lawns. They can require landscape plans with permit applications. The County of Sonoma does not have a ban on lawns.

2. "HAWK" light in front of Larkfield Shopping Center - Mendoza: Waiting on parts to arrive.

3. Porta Potties in Fulton – Stephanie Bisordi

Stephanie and Roni Berg talked to the Homes 4 The Homeless group; will present to the Council, hopefully next month. They own a business in Fulton and may allow a porta potty on their property.

H) Correspondence: Information Only **None**

I) Future Agenda Items: Potential projects and/or suggestions for future MWCAC meetings

1. Possibility of an update on the COPE program in Wikiup (TBD)
2. Possible speaker on home hardening and vegetation management (TBD)
3. Possible community clean up? Maybe in partnership with the Chamber. (TBD)
4. List of unmet needs projects for Larkfield/Mark West/Wikiup (Presentation: Sherwood/Lamberson) (TBD)
5. Conversation Continue-Blue Book: Follow up on boundaries and membership; update from the ad hoc committee (June)
6. Discussion about the impact of the possibility of a Casino on Shiloh Rd. on Mark West area (TBD)
7. Presentation: Homes 4 The Homeless (possibly in June)

J) Adjournment: ACTION ITEM

There being no other business to discuss, on a motion by Sherwood, seconded by Would, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm. (5-0)

Approved Date:

Chair

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MWCAC MEETINGS: 6:00 PM—SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

Hybrid Meetings until further notice

Mark West School District Office, The Learning Center, 305 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa

(NOTE: Location or time may change due to anticipated greater community participation.)

Be sure to check the MWCAC website for meeting agenda, location & time

sonomacounty.ca.gov/Mark-West-Citizens-Advisory-Council

<https://markwestcac.org>

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