

NORTH RICHMOND MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Tuesday, April 5, 2022
515 Silver Street, North Richmond, CA 94801

Minutes

Meetings are being conducted at the Multicultural Center, 515 Silver Street, North Richmond, CA, and meetings are accessible (via) Zoom. COVID protocols are still in effect.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. Board members present were: Dr. Henry Clark, Dulce Galicia, Annie King-Meredith, and Princess Robinson. Absent were: Don Gilmore and Beverly Scott.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Annie moved to approve today's agenda, with the correction of the date from 2021 to 2022. Dulce moved to approve with date correction. Dr. Clark 2nd, all are in favor. The motion was made by Annie to accept the minutes. Dulce motioned to accept, and Princess seconds. All are in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cardell Hindler/Richmond Resident; Invites everyone to the weekly meeting of the Richmond Rotary Club, on May 6th. At 12:30 p.m. Guest speakers will be from the City Manager's office- will be speaking on the Local Economic Development Initiative. Lunch is \$25.00 per person.

Lily Rahnema - Chevron Refinery announces, through their collaboration with Castro's Stakeholders and the City's Homeless Task Force, they have committed to covering the salary of a full-time social worker. The position is through the County.

The position is going to focus on people experiencing homelessness in Richmond and in North Richmond. Specifically focusing on the Castro RV encampment. To get the word out there, this will be posted in the comments for this meeting as well.

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PUBLIC COMMENT CONTINUED

Wyatt Ptak, N. R. resident, announces, A Day in the park - at Nichol Park. West Contra Costa churches in the area are hosting this event. On April 16th, there will be a free Easter egg hunt, free hot dogs, and links. There will be gospel performances, hula hoops activities, and a bunch of kid activities during that time.

Linda Woodard, N. Richmond resident: Linda has a question about the construction work that's ongoing - FJW. She is having a problem getting in and out of her driveway. She is also concerned about her safety, due to the rocks and the black netting that they put down. Those items are coming up, and making a hazardous mess, at her house. While walking to and from home, the heels of her shoes are being caught up in the netting.

Tania replied that John Steere came out to our meeting last month. He told us that the project would be completed by the end of March, it's now April. She will follow up with him and report back to the NRMAC.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY REPORTS

Lieutenant Mark Rodriguez/CCC Sheriff's Department: Reporting for the month of March 2022. They are seeing and recovering a lot of stolen vehicles. These vehicles are mostly down by the Castro homeless encampments. A couple of pursuits have come out of the encampments. Some of the vehicles appear to be getting stripped at the encampments. A lot of attention is being focused on that area. A few arrests have been made, this seems to be an ongoing issue.

Dr. Clark asks are you indicating that there are still problems over at the Castro homeless encampment. The answer is yes, and the owners of these recovered vehicles have been contacted.

Latifah Abdullah, N R. resident, asks who takes care of parking enforcement, in N. R. Answer: It is the responsibility of the Community Service Officer. Lt. Rodriguez will ask him to look into it.

Annie asks is someone assigned to go behind the street sweepers and tag illegally parked vehicles. What department is responsible for that? Lt. Rodriguez will follow up with public works.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY REPORTS CONTINUED

Lieutenant Ernest Lucas/RPD: Reporting for the month of March 2022. One of the major issues is the Castro homeless encampment site. They have been responding to stolen vehicles in that area. A number of assaults have taken place and a few pursuits have come out of that particular area. The warming fires have been getting out of control. They have engulfed a few of the RVs that are in the area. Recently fires at the camp were banned.

The RPD is working with the stakeholders in regard to the Castro site. Due to a grant that the City of Richmond received for homelessness, more social services are coming into the Castro area. This will allow the homeless to move into temporary and permanent housing, and help get the homeless people employed.

Princess asked about a recent homicide. The response is that this is an active ongoing investigation and I can't say too much about it. There have been a couple of individuals that are being looked at, based on information that was received from the homicide detective sergeant. They are very close to solving the case.

Dr. Clark says that the Castro Homeless encampment has to go.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION

The NRMAC vacancy and appointment. Lily was asked to vacate her seat, to make room for a representative from Verde School. Lily will continue to work in the community, with CHDc's outreach program.

Martha Miento is the newly selected NRMAC board member. Martha has worked with parent leadership at Verde school. She has assisted with a lot of events and continues to play a big role at the school. Marth leads the PTA at Verde.

Merill Pierce, 4th-grade teacher, Verde School, expresses her support for Martha for stepping into this role. Dulce says that they submitted a letter of support for Martha.

Adam Boisvert/Deputy Director Urban Tilth, says Martha comes out to the garden on a regular basis, giving cooking lessons at the garden.

Annie wants to congratulate Lilly for all of her work in the community. She will surely be missed. Dr. Clark congratulates Lily on all of her work. She has made a big contribution to the community. He acknowledges the fact that Lily did come to visit him, at his home. That was very thoughtful of her. Lily thanks everyone, and will continue to support the N. R. community.

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Tania Pulido speaking on the CCC Fire Department services: Questions were collected from the NRMAC and residents of N. R. The fire chief needs a little bit more time to respond to the questions. So as soon as he finalizes the responses, Tania will send out the info and share it at the next meeting.

Linda Woodard says she spoke to her son, Fire Captain Anthony Woodard, and told him not to follow up, on what Don had asked of him, because it didn't seem like the N. R. residents were too interested in what he was saying. She does not want Anthony to jeopardize his job. So that's why he's not attending the meeting tonight.

The fire department services to N. R. will be put on the next NRMAC meeting.

Dulce says that her understanding is that N. R. will be serviced by the newest station in San Pablo, which would delay response time by a minute. She thinks that this item should be put on the agenda asap, with a response from the fire chief of CCC.

Aaron McAllister, fire chief for CCC Fire Protection. He says that the San Pablo fire station services N. R. and San Pablo. He would like to clarify a couple of things. Their dispatch center dispatches resources based on automatic vehicle locators/GPS locators. The computer does a very quick analysis on the closest unit and they dispatch the closest unit in many cases.

There is a difference in the level of service that's provided by the Richmond fire department and the CCC fire district. San Pablo has paramedics on every apparatus that are able to do advanced life support services. The Richmond fire department does not have that capability. Residents that San Pablo serves should receive advanced life support services whenever possible.

So the computer is programmed to prefer advanced life support resources if the difference is only less than 60 seconds. If it takes more than 60 seconds, they will dispatch the Richmond fire department. San Pablo and Richmond have a good relationship.

They are in the process of assembling the data for the NRMAC and will provide that in written form.

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PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations

Keith Reynolds, Senior Product Manager/West County Wastewater Management:
West County Wastewater Energy Project: Presenting the Clean and Green Project

The project is about a 179 million dollar project, and it is to retrofit the wastewater treatment plant to become a co-generated plant.

The project has been dubbed the Clean and Green Project. The purpose of the project is to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions and to improve operational safety and efficiency. Also to improve the quality of biosolid production that is produced at the water treatment plant.

Right now the process of cleaning wastewater creates a lot of greenhouse gasses. If you aren't prepared as a water treatment plant, you will not be able to capture these gasses, you have to burn them off, and essentially waste them. What this project is seeking to do is to gather those greenhouse gasses and convert them into energy. The plant will become independent and produce its own power/energy.

The first part of the project is to demolish the old digesters. New ones will be built, that are more efficient, larger, and have more gas capacity, and that will produce more gas.

The demolition will start in about two to three weeks. This will last about two to three months. Will have about a year's process to create the new digesters.

As part of the project, upgrades will be made at the Wastewater Management's main office, solar panels will be installed in the parking lot.

The exciting thing about the project is the community outreach. A Community Impact program will be offered at Contra Costa College. This is an intern project that will be centered around CC College. This will give the community and students an opportunity to learn about an industry that very few people know anything about. This would give them experience, and the opportunity to move forward in a career.

There'll be a curriculum integration to local campuses and to high schools and elementary schools. They would go to the schools, to show the students about different science things, how digestive sludge works, how greenhouse gasses are created, and how they are used. There will be lesson plans and actual activities created and they'll be distributed to different schools.

PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations Continued

The last thing is something called a Civic Sparks Fellow. Sparks Fellow is mostly at a master's degree level. These will be paid internships, very competitive. This will be a quality person that will be able to come in and affect the district in an environmental way.

Questions and answers: Annie asks how the internship will be presented. How do people connect to the program? Answer: the internship's going to be mostly at the CC College level. So the age will be 18 and up. Educational, hands-on learning projects, will be centered around high schools, middle and elementary schools.

Annie says over the past that we have had representation from the district, come to N. R. on a regular basis, keeping us abreast of the district's activities. At the moment we do not have any representatives coming to us to report on the operations of the facility.

As a project manager, Mr. Reynolds is more than willing to speak to the NRMAC about any issues that they may have concerns about. Kate Gibbs who is head of (pr) at the district, will probably also be participating in these reports.

Dr. Clark, thanks Mr. Reynolds for the presentation. He is glad to see some modernization at the facility. He asks if Chevron is still involved in the project. The answer is no, this is all W. County.

Latifah asks if the plan coincides with the Living Levee plan. Answer no these are two different plans. Dulce is curious to know if it is possible to adopt a student at Verde school to participate in the program. The answer is they are included in the plans. She also says that the Living Levee plan and the Wastewater Management plan will be happening simultaneously at some point, will they be able to interchange or interact with each other. Mr. Reynolds says that the levee project will happen after their project.

Dr. Clark suggests that Mr. Reynolds contact Lilly at Chevron, pertaining to the STEM project, for support. Lily says she will definitely consider making contact.

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PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations Continued

Paula White, Community Program Manager/Watershed Project/Hope Gardens:

Paula says that it is nice to be here. She is glad that Dulce and Latifah asked some questions about the two different projects, taking place in the same locality. It makes sense to collaborate on these multiple projects.

Hope Gardens Project is in its fourth year. The purpose of the project is to involve N. R. residents in providing a beautiful green space on their street. Really grateful to the mitigation committee for the funding.

The project creates a habitat for pollination, such as butterflies and bees. It also enhances walkability in the neighborhood and encourages people to spend time outdoors. Some N. R. residents have been involved in the actual planting and stipends have been provided. This is an extension of an earlier project where people were recruited to keep their blocks clean. Now it's more about keeping their block green.

To identify homes, participants go out and post and hand out flyers. It has been a really joyful experience to work with the folks in the community. To really plant something that brings a smile to their faces, and it's just a way to be connected with the earth and the community. The gardens are planted in a space/strip that's between the street and the sidewalk.

This year they are going to plant five additional gardens and this will bring the total to twenty hope gardens. Trying to connect the existing gardens to the new gardens.

For two years now, we have been working during the COVID times. This year they are hoping to engage more volunteers. Will also be working with some high school students. The plans are to plant the first garden of the year on April the 8th.

Things have been learned along the way, about which plants do really well. This year they are hoping to have a chance to talk to people face to face. Will be able to share with them in person what kinds of plants they really prefer.

Maintenance will be light gardening. You need to be able to do a little bit of watering, especially during the really hot dry months. After a couple of years, the plants really don't need any more water, they will be well established. Selected plants are drought tolerant, so they should be able to do fine on their own.

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PRESENTATIONS and Proclamations Continued

Each site is prepared prior to planting, by stripping away all the weeds and digging a good two to three inches, so the weeds that are likely to come up are blown in from maybe a neighbor's yard. Mulch is very important to keep the plants healthy and it preserves a lot of water.

So if you have a small space and would like to plant a Hope Garden, give the Watershed Program a call. Reach out to Paula White at (510) 883-6470 or Eunice Quintanilla at (707) 726-2829.

A couple of other projects that are coming up very soon are the Stenciling and Painting projects to improve and enhance safe routes to school. It's to improve the safety of the sidewalk, to make the sidewalks a lot more inviting, colorful and safe.

The cleanup will be on Friday, April 22nd and then the next day there will be a painting day. That same day there is going to be a creek cleanup at Wildcat Creek. Would like

to thank Lily who reached out, to find out whether Chevron volunteers would be able to participate and indeed they can. Paula is grateful for their support.

Lastly, would like to invite people who have any concerns about their tap water quality to reach out to the Watershed program, to get their tap water tested. It's absolutely free and in fact, if you participate, you will be given a \$25.00 Target gift card.

Questions: Dulce asks if there is a map that identifies the current sites of the hope gardens and the projected sites. Paula says that she could make a map, they do have a map of all the trees that they planted in N. R. She will make a map of the hope gardens. Annie has the same question as Dulce.

Jessica from the N. R. Mobile Tool Library is offering the use of tools if needed. Kattie Davis, N. R. resident asks about the water testing program. She asks how do you determine if her water is messed up? What are they prepared to do about it? What can they do to fix it? Paula says, first of all, have the water tested, and see if there is a health risk. The lab results will let you know if there is a health concern.

Paula says that a lot of people have experienced a rusty kind of brownish color in pipes. That often is just iron, which isn't super harmful for people. The brownish color water really doesn't look pleasant to drink.

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OTHER AGENCY/PROGRAM REPORTS

Tania Pullido, District Coordinator/Supervisor John Gioia's Office: Tania says that there are lots of exciting projects going on in N. R. Earth Day which was mentioned earlier. The Safe Routes to School, from Verde School to Shields and Reed. This project is part of a large initiative that she is collaborating with, multiple nonprofits and the County staff, and the City. The collaborative is figuring out how to have safe routes to school.

An order has been approved, more stop signs on Giaramita, Grove, and Silver Streets.

The larger initiative is like how do we make it more pleasant for the children to walk to school and in the community. The County is working on the Active Transportation Grant. This grant would provide for improvements on Market Street.

Tania and others will be collecting surveys at the Earth Day activities, on the 22nd and on the 23rd of April, 2022.

An update on the VEOLIA grant. Tania met with the City, they do have candidates to sit on the required panel. They are still in the process of how we want to distribute the funds. Latifah wants to know what VEOLIA grant is. Tania explained to her.

Doria Robinson, Director/Urban Tilth Farm: Doria would like to update the NRMAC on the farm's activities. They have been really busy. Recently they did a fruit tree giveaway at Verde School. They gave away 150 fruit trees to residents. This was the first year that this was done at the Verde school location.

The free farm stand happens every Thursday, at the FJW location. It's all organic produce from the farm, and from several partner farms. The partner farms are operated by Black Indigenous and Latino people. All certified organic high-quality produce, it's free, just come to the farm stand.

There will be flowers at the farm stand because they are harvesting the flowers. The Festival of Flowers is to be held on Mother's Day. Saturday-May 7th. Construction will be starting at the farm in June. The first building will be going up.

Remember to sign the petition, against the proposed four-story warehouse development, on the vacant property adjacent to the farm. The erection of the building would cut off four hours of direct sunlight at the farm. There is also proposed parking lot with the capacity of one hundred and fifty parking stalls.

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OTHER AGENCY/PROGRAMS REPORTS CONTINUED

Janine Shaheed, Activities Coordinator/Multicultural Senior Center:

The Growing Wiser Senior group will have their annual Easter Breakfast this Saturday. There will also be a fashion show. The tickets are eight dollars.

The center offers an exercise class daily, at 12:30 p.m., shortly after lunch. The food bank continues to serve the center. At this time Janine introduces the new director of Community Building and Engagement, Mr. Daryll Davis.

Mr. Davis introduces himself. He started work last week, replacing Janie Holland. Speaking on his work experience, he was the prior director of an organization entitled Transform, located in Alameda County.

They did work centered around transportation and affordable housing. The organization participated in the Safe Routes to Schools Program.

Mr. Davis continues to give a history of his personal background. He is from New York and has received degrees from several universities. He has coached girls' varsity basketball and is involved in numerous activities in Alameda County.

He thanks everyone for welcoming him into the community.

Victor Jimenz, Community Service Coordinator/CHDC-Mitigation fee-funded:

Announce the upcoming Earth Day event. There will be a drive-thru backpack giveaway, at the Oakland A's ballpark in N.R., from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. Resources and goods from other organizations will be given out also.

The Willie Spears Spring Cleanup is scheduled for April 30th. The time is from eight to twelve-thirty. There will be dumpsters at six different locations. Seniors should get in contact with CHDC to make arrangements for curbside pickups. Flyers have been sent out into the community with the information.

The N. R. Green meeting is tomorrow. The time is 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., location Senior Citizen Building, 515 Silver Street, N. Richmond, CA.

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OTHER AGENCY/PROGRAMS CONTINUED

Dulce Galicia/RichmondLAND: RichmondLAND is a membership-guided organization working on the community land trust model. A membership meeting is scheduled for April 14th.

The organization received a grant from Love Your Block. There are plans to enhance the lawn next to Shields and Reid Park.

Princess Robinson, Project Manager/Cooperation Richmond: Princess gives updates on the monthly co-op cafes that are still happening. They help residents launch a cooperative businesses. Local partnerships are available as well. Resources are also available. She invites everyone to come to the co-op cafe meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Next meeting:
May 3, 2022
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
515 Silver Street, N. Richmond CA 94801