



## Minutes of the General Meeting

January 15, 2023, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Any Questions: MarshCreekDems@gmail.com

- I Call to Order and Introductions** (New members, Dignitaries) Meeting called to order at 4:05 pm.
- A. The January meeting was held both at our regular Brentwood Community Center meeting room and on Zoom for the convenience of those unable to attend in person. **Masking was optional (but recommended)**. Our next meeting will be on February 19, 2023 at the same time and location.
- II Minutes of November Meeting**
- A. Motion to Adopt Minutes: Motion LS 2<sup>nd</sup> JE
- B. Because our December meeting was the annual holiday party and no business was conducted, there were December minutes to be approved.
- III Agenda Review**
- A. Any changes to the agenda: None
- B. Motion to Adopt Agenda: Motion MT 2<sup>nd</sup> JE
- IV Shannon Skinner – President**
- A. General update.
- B. Election of 2023 MCDC officers was held at the end of this meeting and was conducted by Valerie Thurston. Members were encouraged to stay and vote.
- V Yolanda Mendrek – Vice President** (Yolanda was absent, so Shannon outlined coming presentations.)
- A. Update on Future Presentations:
1. February Speaker: Marivel Mendoza-Matheu will speak on Hijas del Campo (Daughters of the Field), of which she was a founder, about the organization and its work with local farm workers.
  2. (Proposed) We hope to have a speaker who is knowledgeable about the January 6 committee reports. (Congressman Garamendi or his staff member?)
  3. (Proposed) We hope to have a speaker on the make-up of the new Congress and what we can anticipate given the new Speaker and the far-right's influence over Congressional activities. (Journalist, Constitutional law professor or attorney?)
  4. (Proposed) Speaker on women's choice issues and impact of *Dobbs* decision in other states. (Speaker is pending.)
  5. (Proposed) Update on important issues in our public schools, including lack of depth in courses on civics.
  6. Suggestions from members?
- B. **Introduction of today's speakers:**
1. **Colin Coffey, Ward 7 Director of the East Bay Regional Park District.**  
[Note from Secretary: Colin's talk was so full of interesting and important information that my note-taking skills weren't quite up to the task. Rather than relying on the information given below, please contact EBRPD for specific information about the parks. Elinor Bell

pointed out that the Brentwood Public Library can provide you with a free three-fold maps of the park system.] Colin gave a fascinating and informative presentation about what's happening within the East Bay Regional Park District, as well as what's in the works for the future. Given all the rain we've been having, most of the parks are completely closed for the safety of the public. Parks that are open or partially open include Big Break, Black Diamond (partial), and Morgan Territory (although the entrance is closed). Members were surprised and impressed to learn that the East Bay Regional Park District is the largest public park district in the U.S. that is regulated by an independent park board. Set up in 1934, it is not governed by counties or other local authorities, which ensures that the funds it receives are dedicated to preserving and improving the park district. Having a \$400,000,000 annual budget funded entirely by dedicated property taxes and funds from other governmental funding and other grants, the District employs 1,000 employees and serves 3,000,000 residents. Current plans call for adding 40 new employees this year; last year, 35 employees were added. Importantly, the District is financially strong, and its pension plan is well funded, unlike many public plans throughout the state and country.

The long-range plan of the District calls for continuing purchases of land and the establishment of a vast wilderness area extending from the Concord area past Brentwood; ultimately, there are plans to have hiking trails that extend all the way into the Sierras. This plan is being undertaken in conjunction with the East Contra Costa Habitat Conservancy.

One park currently being developed is the Deer Valley Regional Park, which will extend all the way down to Marsh Creek Road. The Roddy Ranch Golf Course will be developed as a walk-in park, easily accessible from Balfour Road. The Marsh Creek Trail, which has already been extended significantly, will eventually go from John Marsh Road to Concord. Other projects include the Jersey Island campground and trails, the Vasco Caves (although there is limited access because of ceremonial use by native Americans who held the land before it was taken by white people), restoration of a marsh at Nunn Ranch, improvements at Contra Loma, and expanded availability of swimming pools at public high schools during hours when students are not present.

The development and opening of the John Marsh home and park has been planned and funded; however, progress has been slowed because of governmental inertia. Colin has developed a letter that groups or individuals can send to political officials to encourage that the project proceed without further bureaucratic delay, and he encouraged us to raise this issue with our elected representatives.

2. **Balerio Reyes**, former aide to retired Congressman Jerry McNerney, and his business partner, **Mitchell Oster**, spoke on their newly formed political consulting firm. A pdf version of their presentation, detailing all their consulting services, is attached as part of these minutes.

## **VI Membership – Elinor Bell, the new Chair of our Membership Committee**

- A. **Current Membership – 106 Members at end of 2022. Six new members since then!**
  1. Ways to join — Credit card at <https://www.marshcreekdems.org/all-products> or Venmo MarshCreekDems (3416) or Check sent to Thuy DaoJensen/MCDC, P.O. Box 521, Brentwood, CA 94513
- B. Renewing Members become Members in Good Standing and may vote as soon as dues are paid.

- C. New members become Members in Good Standing and may vote 30 days after their dues are paid.
- D. Don't forget: You must be a Member in Good Standing to run for MCDC office or to vote in the MCDC election of officers or candidate endorsements.

**VII Voter Outreach – Linda Smith**

- A. Update on Farmers' Market – The MCDC Farmer's Market table will return in March, weather permitting.

**VIII Swing Left Director – Doug McClelland**

- A. Doug will be retiring as Swing Left Director, and we are seeking someone to take on the role.

**IX Issues and Legislation Committee – Bill Nusbaum**

- A. Meetings are held via Zoom on the first Saturday of the month at 11:30 am. The next meeting will be on Feb. 4, 11:30, on Zoom.
- B. Issues the Committee is in planning mode but has been working on (1) the sorry state of our public healthcare system and what can be done to improve it, and (2) the impact of climate change on the availability and quality of water in California, for both personal and agricultural use.
- C. We are also continuing our study of how we can help to enhance the teaching of civics in our public schools.

**X Publications and Social Media – Carolina Villaseca**

- A. We are continually posting important items on Facebook regarding news and calls to action. Send any call to action to Carolina at [marshcreekdems@gmail.com](mailto:marshcreekdems@gmail.com). **Check our Facebook page often for our frequent updates, and post your comments and “likes” whenever you can!**

**XI Precinct Update – Carolina Villaseca**

- A. Carolina's precinct update report and her report on communications is attached.

**XII DPCCC District 3 Update – Carolina Villaseca**

- A. Carolina serves as the DPCCC District 3 Director, and her January report is attached.

**XIII Treasurer's Report – Thuy DaoJensen (5 minutes)**

**Marsh Creek Dems Treasurer's Financial Statement  
December 5, 2022 - January 7, 2023**

Date	Description of INCOME	Amount
	<b>BALANCE as of December 5, 2022:</b>	<b>\$ 2,558.94</b>
5-Dec-2022	SQUARE deposit of (1) membership dues	\$19.12
7-Dec-2022	CHECK deposit of (2) membership dues	\$40.00
8-Dec-2022	CHECK deposit for (2) membership dues and donation	\$250.00
19-Dec-2022	CHECK deposit for (1) membership dues	\$20.00
	<b>Total INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 2,888.06</b>
Check #	Description of EXPENSES	Amount
1076	Plaque from American Trophies and Awards	\$160.45
	<b>Total EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 160.45</b>

**XIV Secretary’s Report – Connie Harden**

- A. The minutes of the November meeting are available on the MCDC website.
- B. **Book recommendations:** *Formidable: American Women and the Fight for Equality – 1920-2020*, Elisabeth Griffith (Pegasus Books, 2022), described by Hillary Clinton as “an essential history of the struggle by both black and white women to achieve their equal rights.” Also: *The January 6 Report - Findings from the Select Committee to Investigate the Attack on the U.S. Capitol, With Reporting, Analysis and Visuals by the New York Times* (The New York Times, 2023). And, just released: *The Riders Come Out at Night: Brutality, Corruption and Cover-Up in Oakland*, Ali Winston and Darwin BondGraham (Simon & Schuster, 2023). Described by the New York Times as a case study of corruption and reform within the Oakland Police Department.

**XV Election of officers for 2023 – Valerie Thurston**

- A. Candidates: The following candidates for the indicated offices were elected unanimously.
  - 1. President: Shannon Skinner
  - 2. Vice President: Carolina Villaseca
  - 3. Treasurer: Thuy DaoJensen
  - 4. Secretary: Connie Harden

**XVI For the Good of the Order (comments/suggestions)**

- A. Awarding of door prize, induction cooking device, and one copy each of the three books recommended today by Connie.
- B. Zoom chats take place at 10 am on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month.
- C. Report by Elected Officials and members in attendance: Brentwood City Council Member Jovita Mendoza, Antioch City Council Member Monica Wilson, and member Ian Cohen spoke. Ian noted that a Lunar New Year celebration will be held in downtown Brentwood.

**XVII Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

## DPCCC District 3 Director's January Report

Presented by M. Carolina Villaseca

- 1) Councilmember Tamisha Torres-Walker won her re-election by not 3 but 4 votes! Thank you to Chuck Carpenter, Sue Hamill and Edi Birsan who went to be observers on her behalf.
- 2) Councilmember Susannah Meyer was voted in as Vice Mayor of Brentwood City Council. We will continue to support Councilmember Jovita Mendoza and Suzannah Meyer during their continuing terms, and we will work to find a candidate to challenge Joel Bryant for mayor.
- 3) Trustee Dr. Jag Lathan was voted in as Vice President of the Antioch School Board. We need to support Antonio Hernandez from now until his re-election in 2024. We have an opportunity to seat 2 more Democrats.
- 4) Trustee Stephanie Rogers-Williams was voted in as president and Trustee. Dr. Thuy DaoJensen as clerk of the Brentwood Union School Board. Both Trustee Rogers-Williams and Trustee DaoJensen are up for re-election in 2024.
- 5) Trustee Yolanda Mendrek was named President and Trustee. Dr. Tamela Hawley was named Clerk of the Liberty Union High School Board. Both Trustees will be up for re-election in 2024.
- 6) Anissa Williams has rotated into the Vice Chair position on Oakley's City Council, which means in 2024 she'll be mayor.
- 7) We have an opportunity to seat 3 Democrats and help Anissa make major strides, e.g., banning oil/gas.
- 8) Discovery Bay - we have an opportunity to find 2 candidates for the Board of Directors to have Dems serve for the first time ever.
- 9) We need to re-elect Lynell Fuller in 2024 for the Oakley School Board and possibly find 1 more Dem candidate to run against Sherry Seat (NPP).
- 10) Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District - according to their website, they don't have a secretary and everyone else's terms expired in 2020 or 2022 but there were no elections. I need to make some phone calls. I'm sure we have some opportunities there.
- 11) Knightsen Board of Directors - There will be 2 seats up in 2024. Opportunities!
- 12) Byron School Board - Now that we have Trustee Lucy Rodriguez seated, we have an opportunity to seat 2 more in 2024.
- 13) TBD - Ironhouse Sanitary.

Saludos,

M. Carolina Villaseca

# Precinct Committee: Year in Review

## Precincts

- We found candidates to run for city council and school boards. We hope to continue finding candidates for 2024!
- We created electronic slate cards to support the candidates we endorsed and sent them out to candidate districts. We're definitely doing this again!
- We sent close to 40,000 e-mails in support of candidates in Antioch, Brentwood, Byron, and Discovery Bay. We could use some help to cover more precincts. It's not difficult and we can train you!
- We helped candidates get endorsements and funding for their campaigns including additional funding for Tamisha Torres-Walker's recount (Congratulations! Again!).

## Communications

We grew in Facebook exponentially in:

- views (117%)
- active engagement (200%)
- 48 new members of Facebook who helped our engagement.
- We averaged between 2-5 posts per week.
- We posted between 104 – 260 posts per week.

We grew on Twitter. Brand new account!

- 13 new followers
- About 1 new post per week