



HOPLAND

MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Hopland Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Regular Meeting – Hybrid

November 15, 2023 at 5:30 pm

Hopland Fire Protection District Community Room

21 Feliz Creek Road, Hopland, California

The Hopland Municipal Advisory Council (HMAC) meetings are held in-person and virtually via Zoom Video Communications. Meeting access information is available on the Agenda for this meeting.

Members: Julie Golden, Amy Frost, Hannah Bird, Jane Cupples, Dale Andrew

Alternate: Bernadette Byrne

Administrative Support: Rebecca Dalske, Melissa Frausto - LACO Associates

1. Call to order & roll call

The meeting was called to order at 5:33pm. All council members were present except Hannah Bird.

2. Public comment & announcements on non-agenda items

Patti Malan (*Public comment*): Patti spoke on behalf of La Familia Sana, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization from Cloverdale that provides resources such as food, backpacks, diapers, mental health and health care to the community. La Familia Sana would like to participate in Destination Hopland to spread awareness of the resources the organization has.

Trevor Mockel (*Public comment*): Trevor announced he is running for First District Supervisor for Mendocino County.

3. Consent Calendar

The following consent items are expected to be routine and non-controversial, and will be acted on by the HMAC in a single action without discussion, unless a request is made by a Council Member or a member of the public for discussion or separate action.

- a. Approval of the October 18, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Bernadette motioned to approve the consent calendar, with a second from Julie. All council members voted in favor.

4. Discussion and possible action on community updates and issues

- a. Mendocino County Sheriff's Office: *General updates from Sheriff Kendall*

Sheriff Kendall shared that the Sheriff's Office has noticed an increase in drug overdoses, with one overdose occurring in Hopland earlier this week. He thinks that due to the availability of Narcan, more overdoses have gone unreported. The Sheriff's Office is looking to start a construction program at the Mendocino County Jail to provide employable skills. Lastly, Sheriff Kendall recommends signing up on MendoAlert and Nixle on mendoready.org to receive emergency information.

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In response to a question, Sheriff Kendall shared that the Sheriff's Office is short staffed and believes it is because 1) neighboring counties have a more competitive pay compared to Mendocino County; and 2) there are not enough young people joining the police academy to replace the staff that is retiring.

b. Hopland Fire Protection District: *General updates from Chief Franklin*

Chief Franklin shared that the Hopland Fire Protection District (HFPD) is also struggling with retaining staff and volunteers, in part, because of the long and odd hours required. Dale asked why people volunteer at the HFPD. Chief Franklin explained that volunteers generally participate to help the community, participating looks good on a resume, or is used as training in their career. Chief Franklin appreciates the volunteers who help.

Chief Franklin also shared that the HFPD is still struggling with obtaining permits from the Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services (PBS) for the training tower and carpports. PBS is requiring that the training tower, designed as a temporary structure, have engineered hold-downs. Additionally, the HFPD is struggling with the permit fees for the carpport. Chief Franklin reached out to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for help and did not receive a response. Julie added that she will follow up with Julia Krog (*PBS, Director*) about the Hopland MAC letter sent to the BOS in September.

c. Board of Supervisors: *General updates from Supervisor Glenn McGourty*

Glenn shared that the County is trying to reduce staff by 200 employees through attrition. Glenn also shared that he spoke at a job fair recently and was glad to see two fire agencies present.

d. Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG): *General updates from Nephele Barrett*

Nephele Barrett (*MCOG, Executive Director*) shared that the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) is working with a consultant to update the Short-Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP), a plan that focuses on the County's short- and long-term transportation goals, objectives, and policies. The consultant will make recommendations on how to improve the current transportation conditions and will look at potentially adding additional fixed route transit service to Hopland and Brooktrails (outside of Willits). A public meeting to obtain community input will be held on January 11, 2024. More information about the project is available at <https://www.2023mendocinotransitplan.com>. Additionally, MCOG will be updating the Local Road Safety Plan. MCOG is looking to have the update complete by June 2024. The consultant for the project will begin next month.

Dale asked how much money the State allocates for road improvements in Mendocino County. Nephele stated that she does not know that information but that the Mendocino County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) has a 10-year maintenance plan that should include an anticipated schedule of improvements. She suggested reaching out to Howard Dashiell (*MCDOT, Director*) for additional information.



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- e. Hopland Cemetery District: *General updates from Katharine Cole*
Katharine shared that two (2) volunteer groups placed flags at the cemetery on Veterans' Day and on December 16th, Wreaths Across America will place wreaths on the headstones of Veterans. Additionally, the Hopland Cemetery District (District) will have its next meeting on January 9, 2024, but due to weather, the meeting will not be held at the cemetery. Lastly, Mendocino Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) has helped continue the investigation on funding that was received before the District had a Board of Directors.
- f. Hopland Public Utility District: *General updates*
No update/discussion
- g. Hopland Certified Farmers Market: *General updates from Mikayla Adams*
No update/discussion
- h. Shanél Valley Academy: *General updates from Amy Frost*
No update/discussion
- i. Hopland Research and Extension Center: *General updates from Hannah Bird*
Prescribed burning: On October 20th, there was a 170-acres prescribed burn and all notifications about it were managed by CALFIRE as part of a 10-year Vegetation Management Plan at the Hopland Research and Extension Center (HREC). HREC is actively working with CALFIRE, Mendocino Winegrowers, and the Farm Bureau to better understand how to conduct future prescribed burns in a way that best balances the complex and differing needs of our watersheds, oak woodlands, rangelands, and our human communities. Prescribed burning is an essential tool to effectively manage our lands and keep communities safe from increasingly intense wildfires. Here at HREC, it is layered into research, education, and adaptive land stewardship. We at HREC are committed to continually improving our practices in collaboration with others.
Events: The HREC's annual native plant seasonal wreath workshop will be held on December 2nd. The community is welcomed, details can be found on the website: <https://hrec.ucanr.edu/>. Hannah also shared that the HREC is getting ready for lambing season; lamb events will be offered in January.

5. Discussion and possible action on Caltrans Hopland Highway 101 ADA Project

Julie clarified the Hopland MAC's role in the Caltrans Hopland Highway 101 ADA Project (Project) is to act as an informal facilitator between the various agencies and the community.

To address concerns discussed in the October 18th Hopland MAC meeting regarding the letter the Hopland Public Utilities District (HPUD) received from Caltrans in October, Nephele Barrett shared that Marie Brady (*Caltrans, Hopland ADA Project Manager*) is setting up a meeting with HPUD. This meeting is anticipated to be held in early December; Marie will share an update after the meeting occurs. Caltrans is looking into options for funding support and has reached out to Senator McGuire for help with funding the improvements needed to the HPUD system.



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In response to previous concerns regarding the Negative Declaration determination made by Caltrans pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Marie shared that Caltrans held a public meeting on April 12, 2022 to discuss potential environmental impacts of the project. Marie acknowledges that public awareness of the meeting could have been better. On the construction side, Marie shared that, Caltrans plans to have sequenced construction so that businesses are less impacted during construction. Caltrans plans to discuss construction impacts with the community so as to develop a plan that works for those that will be affected.

Julie asked why the Project's costs and the costs imposed on the HPUD due to the utility conflicts that need to be corrected were not discussed in the CEQA Negative Declaration. Nephele explained that CEQA analysis focuses on environmental rather than financial impacts.

Dale shared his frustrations that the Project has moved slowly, communication between agencies has been lacking at times, and that it seems like this Project will not be ready to move forward anytime soon. Nephele stated that the reality of transportation projects is that they usually take several years to complete and lots of work is done behind the scenes.

Dale asked Marie for an update on the current schedule and budget. Marie shared that construction is scheduled to begin in early 2026, with 6 to 9 months of working days, and that costs are currently approximated at \$18 to 20 million. Marie offered to provide more communication and will provide another update in December. Additionally, Marie provided her email address and phone number for those with questions about the project: marie.brady@dot.ca.gov and (707)-296-5511.

6. Discussion and possible action on Hopland Rest Stop Project

Louisa Morris (*Project Manager, Great Redwood Trail Agency (GRTA)*) shared that key elements to consider when putting together a plan for the Hopland Rest Stop Project (Rest Stop) are to consider who will manage the overall project, including construction and operation. Luisa suggested that the Hopland MAC work on starting community outreach for elements the community would like to see at the Rest Stop and identify potential partnerships for maintenance and funding. She shared that it will be one to two years before the GRTA will know if the railroad will be railbanked, which will affect the types of improvements that can be completed. Louisa asked about the interest of having Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations at the Rest Stop. Julie shared that Tesla approached her last year with the idea, but the discussions didn't gain any traction since the Hopland MAC wouldn't be able to facilitate their development. Additionally, a member of the public shared that PG&E has stated it is approximately 5 to 10 years out from being able to supply power to charging stations in the area. Julie shared that Visit Mendocino is willing to fund ongoing maintenance if the Rest Stop is managed by a non-profit organization such as Destination Hopland.

Louisa additionally shared that the GRTA has hired Elaine Hogen as General Manager. Elaine will start in January. Louisa stated that Mikayla Adams has submitted a permit application for hosting farmers markets in the GRTA area in Hopland. Elaine will take on the permit application once she starts at the GRTA.

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- 7. Discussion and possible action on Hopland Community Plan**
No update/discussion
- 8. Discussion and possible action on Downtown Hopland Pedestrian Lighting**
No update/discussion
- 9. Discussion and possible action on Hopland Grange**
No update/discussion
- 10. Council Members' and staff reports regarding assigned tasks, committee meetings, and other items of general interest**
 - a. Water Committee Updates
No update/ discussion
- 11. Discussion on agenda items for December 20, 2023 HMAc meeting**
Julie would like to invite Howard Dashiell to discuss the County roads and the MCDOT's funding and Marie Brady to attend future Hopland MAC meetings to provide ongoing updates.
- 12. Adjournment**
The meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.