



# HOPLAND

## MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

### Hopland Municipal Advisory Council Minutes

#### Regular Meeting – Hybrid

August 20, 2025, 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, Dale Andrew, Chelsea Arnold, *Vacant*

Alternate: *Vacant*

Administrative Support: Melissa Frausto - LACO Associates

#### 1. Call to order & roll call

The meeting was called to order at 5:34pm. All members were present and none attended virtually.

#### 2. Public comment & announcements on non-agenda items

No comment/discussion.

#### 3. Consent Calendar

a. Approval of the July 16, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

Dale moved to approve the consent calendar with a second from Amy. All 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*

No update/discussion.

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

Chief Franklin reported on the current fire season. He stated that the Hopland Fire Protection District's (HFPD) fire engines were deployed to Santa Cruz and Lake County and have since returned. He also noted an increase in the number of volunteers.

Julie asked if the HFPD still makes the green signs with white numbers for addresses. Chief Franklin responded that they do and that people can call the HFPD to get one at any time.

c. Board of Supervisors: *General updates from Supervisor Madeline Cline*

District 1 Supervisor Madeline Cline shared the following updates:

- The Redwood Valley MAC is considering a ban on the sale of nitrous oxide and asked if the Hopland MAC is also concerned about its use. She explained that nitrous oxide can be deadly or cause lasting health problems and is primarily used by teenagers. The proposed ordinance would have exemptions for things like medical use. Chelsea confirmed that she has also seen the nitrous oxide canisters

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in the area. Dale asked if the ban would also apply to canisters used for things like computers. Madeline clarified that the ban would likely include an age restriction of 18 and stated that while it wouldn't eliminate the issue, it would help to curb it.

- The County is developing a noise ordinance. She explained that this ordinance would help the Sheriff's Office respond to noise complaints, with code enforcement handling issues during the day and the sheriff's office at night. She noted that a neighbor would need to file a formal complaint. Dale stated that he sometimes hears loud music at night, but it is usually off by 10 pm. Amy suggested that the issue seems to be more with event venues like the Red Barn Ranch, and that since most of Hopland is rural, noise is not a frequent problem. Madeline added that there will be a public comment period for the noise ordinance.
- Madeline stated that since the map presented in April for the proposed annexation by the City of Ukiah (City) faced opposition, the ad hoc committee is now working on a new map, which is not expected to be ready until the end of the year. Julie explained the reasons for the pushback, noting that while the annexation might seem to only affect a specific area, it would have involved a large amount of land and could have financially hurt the County by taking away sales and property taxes and as a result, all citizens would be affected. She concluded by stating that the annexation should happen in an orderly and incremental manner. A member of the public asked why the City is annexing County land. Julie stated that the City has a Sphere of Influence, and that this annexation would help them receive grants so that they can improve their water systems.

d. Shanél Valley Academy: *General updates from Amy Frost*  
Amy announced that today, August 20<sup>th</sup>, is the first day of school. She highlighted that the Shanél Valley Academy (SVA) is now fully staffed, including filling all special education teacher roles. The SVA has also expanded the hours of the preschool program, which will now operate until 5:30 pm. Lastly, a town hall meeting is scheduled for September to allow the community to discuss the school's future goals.

e. California Department of Transportation: *General updates from Jen Buck*  
Jen shared the following written update:  
*"My update on the ADA project is that the CA Transportation Commission approved the construction funding at their meeting last week, so we will be putting the contract out to bid soon. I was also hoping to share information on other upcoming projects in the area. We have a left turn pocket project in development at La Franchi Rd, and two spot location projects to repair slip outs just south of Hopland. I will email info on those when I'm back at my desk."*



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Julie added that she is glad that the Hopland Highway 101 ADA project construction schedule is on track.

A member of the public asked if Caltrans is responsible for maintaining and cleaning the roundabout in Old Hopland. Madeline Cline (*Public Comment*): Madeline responded that the Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority (MSWMA) has a program to clean up illegal dump sites when they are reported. She outlined the process for making a report: note the exact location (address, mile marker, or GPS), take a picture if possible, describe the materials and size of the site, and email the information to [sstrader@cityofukiah.com](mailto:sstrader@cityofukiah.com).

- f. Hopland Public Utility District: *General updates*  
No update/discussion.
- g. Hopland Cemetery District: *General updates*  
No update/discussion.
- h. Hopland Research and Extension Center: *General updates*  
No update/discussion.

**5. Discussion and possible action on Mendocino Council of Governments Presentation on New Energy Efficiency Initiatives**

Orion Walker [*Dow & Associates; Northern Rural Energy Network (NREN), Energy Efficiency Manager*] shared information about the NREN, a partnership that works to improve energy efficiency for rural Northern California. He noted that NREN is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) made up of the Redwood Coast Energy Authority, Mendocino Council of Governments, Lake Area Planning Council, and the Sierra Business Council.

He reported that NREN has launched its first programs for residential customers. To spread the word, NREN is setting up tables at events and offering free energy efficiency kits. These kits, which are valued at about \$100, include items like LED light bulbs and energy meters. To get one, residents need to fill out an application on the NREN website at: <https://northernren.org/>. NREN is also promoting rebates for appliances, and their website includes a rebate finder. He added that next month, NREN will begin offering home energy assessments, where they will provide a customized report on how to improve a home's energy efficiency. This service will be expanded to businesses, non-profits, and government buildings next year.

Dale asked if NREN makes a profit from its services. Orion responded that NREN's funding comes from rate payers and that all residents in the State contribute to it. He explained that this is why NREN is important, as its goal is to make these programs available in rural areas. He added that the California Public Utilities Commission requires PG&E to charge this rate, and it is listed as a line item on PG&E bills. Madeline added that the State requires these funds to be set aside for investment in such programs. Orion noted that this line item has been on bills for decades.



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Julie asked how many staff members NREN currently employs. Orion responded that there are two staff members, with a third person starting soon. Julie then asked how NREN informs PG&E users about their services. Orion explained that NREN operates separately from PG&E and avoids duplicating programs that PG&E already offers. He added that NREN was created to allow for greater autonomy in distributing funds for programs specifically tailored to the region. Julie asked about the cost and funding for outreach. Orion stated that NREN's budget allocates approximately 10 percent for marketing. He also stated that NREN has social media profiles and conducts outreach by tabling at community events like farmers' markets.

Amy asked if the programs are based on income eligibility. Orion said that they are not currently income-based, but that NREN is considering this for the future. He noted that NREN can refer people to other programs that are income-based.

Julie asked about the location of NREN's office, and Orion shared that it is in Ukiah. Amy asked if there was any social media content that the HMAC could share. Orion replied that NREN does have social media content and provided the following:

### **1. Free Energy Efficiency Kit**

*These kits (valued at over \$100) include 8 LED light bulbs, Smart Power Strip, Energy Usage Meter, Weatherization strips and more. Simply fill out the application and the kit will be mailed to you at no cost.*

- *Apply for Your Free Energy Efficiency Kit at: [https://redwoodcoast.formstack.com/forms/residential\\_efficiency\\_kit\\_application](https://redwoodcoast.formstack.com/forms/residential_efficiency_kit_application).*

*Please have your PG&E electric or gas bill ready when completing the application.*

### **2. Over-the-Phone Home Energy Assessments**

*Our trained staff will conduct a no-cost personalized assessment over the phone to discuss your appliances and home energy usage. Following the call, you'll receive a detailed report with tailored recommendations to help you reduce energy use and lower your bills. Email Rich at [felicer@dow-associates.com](mailto:felicer@dow-associates.com) to sign up for an Energy Efficiency Home Assessment.*

### **3. Rebates for Energy-Efficient Appliances and Upgrades**

*We also offer rebates to help offset the cost of qualifying energy-efficient appliances and upgrades including heat pumps, water heaters, induction ranges, washing machines and more.*

- *Learn More About Available Rebates at: <https://northernren.org/residential-rebates/>.*

*If you have any questions or need assistance with the application process, please don't hesitate to contact our Mendocino County office at (707) 397-2099.*

6. **Discussion and possible action on County of Mendocino 2024-25 Civil Grand Jury Report - Planning & Building Services Structural Issues: Exposing the Cracks**  
No update/discussion.



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### 7. Discussion and possible action on Rehabilitation of the Highway 101 Northbound Hopland Sign

Chelsea presented photos of the Hopland sign, explaining that the sign's support poles were damaged by the flooding, which caused the rocks around them to wash away and the sign to come apart. A member of the public recommended that Brian Yepez of Hopland Vision might be able to help. Dale stated that permission from the property owner would be required before any work is done. Julie stated she would contact both Tiffany for approval and Brian to see if he is willing to assist.

### 8. Discussion and possible action on Downtown Hopland Pedestrian Lighting

Julie shared that she would like to begin planning for Phase 2 of the Hopland Highway 101 ADA Project. She noted the importance of having a plan in place before Caltrans begins construction, stating that it would be too late to create one once the project is underway.

Amy stated that Hopland has a special lighting district managed by the County of Mendocino Department of Transportation (MDOT), and asked if, in the past, Caltrans has paid for the light poles. Julie clarified that people in the lighting district pay a tax that covers the cost of the light poles. Dale asked if anyone knew how much money the County has collected for the lighting district, to which Julie replied that she doubts the County knows the amount. She added that the lighting district pays PG&E, but the County collects the tax money. Madeline then stated that the County owns the light poles.

Amy then raised the question of jurisdiction on Highway 101, asking who is responsible for paying for the poles in this specific project. Amy suggested that Caltrans use a two-prong lighting pole for the Caltrans Hopland Highway 101 ADA Project, as it would benefit both vehicles on the highway and pedestrians. Julie added that if these poles were installed by Caltrans, they would also be responsible for maintaining it.

Julie reported that the St. Francis Guild (Guild) previously managed the St. Francis Church. When the church closed, the Guild moved about \$100,000 in community-raised funds to the Mendocino Community Foundation. These funds are specifically for use in Hopland. Julie suggested using this money for the Downtown Hopland Pedestrian Lighting Plan and proposed that Destination Hopland could apply for the grant for the lighting plan. Amy offered to write the grant application to make the process easier for them.

### 9. Council Members' and staff reports regarding assigned tasks, committee meetings, and other items of general interest

#### a. HMAC Vacancies

Julie shared that the HMAC currently has two vacancies, and as such, the HMAC is welcoming any community members interested in joining.

#### b. General Item

Julie asked the HMAC members and the public to review the Hopland Community Liaisons section of the agenda. She noted that some liaisons no longer live in the area and need to be replaced.

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**10. Discussion on agenda items for September 17, 2025, HMAC meeting**

No update/discussion.

**11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53pm.