



Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council
Minutes
Regular Meeting
June 14, 2023 05:30 PM
8650 East Rd - P.O Box 243 Redwood Valley 95470
<http://www.redwoodvalleymac.com/>

Advisory Council Members

Chair Dolly Riley • Vice-Chair Jini Reynolds • Treasurer Katrina Frey • Member Chris Boyd • Alternate Member Marybeth Kelly • Member Patricia Ris-Yarbrough • Member Adam Gaska • Alternate Member Fran Laughton

1. Call to Order - NOTE NEW TIME 5:30 p.m.

Meeting began at 5:30 pm with a quorum of Members present, along with guest speaker Zach Carson of Revival Ranch (former Flow Kana site); County Supervisor Glenn McGourty; and Sheriff Matt Kendall; 33 people present in all. Alt Member Fran Laughton was absent, and Member Katrina Frey's resignation was received on this day.

2. Consent Calendar. Approval of Minutes from 5-10-23.

Minutes for May 10, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously (except for Chris Boyd, who abstained due to her absence at that meeting.) A motion was made by Adam and seconded by Jini.

3. Public Comments

Kaylee Johnson announced that she has applied for one of the two openings on the Redwood Valley MAC board. Ms. Johnson, a Redwood Valley resident, works as an electrical engineer for the City of Ukiah, and is married with two boys. She would like to join the MAC to help keep Redwood Valley a safe and fun place to live. She is an advocate for local business. Granville Poole commented that when it comes to clearing brush and tree limbs, chipping is better than burning. The chips can compost back into the soil. He is not in favor of hoop houses.

4. Brief Report from County and Agencies

Guest Speaker Zach Carson, tenant of the Flow Kana property, would like to hold events at the property, which he calls Revival Ranch. Carson, a professional event planner for Flow Kana and others, acknowledged that there is some bad feeling in the community toward Flow Kana, because of the way the wholesale cannabis business was handled, and the company's liability for an employee starting the Broiler Fire. Carson would like to start over with Revival Ranch. He mentioned some possible uses: farmer's market, a community garden, hosting Sunday brunches with locally produced food and beverages. Tamar Distillery and Graziano Winery are on site. He is working through the County permitting. Reporter Monica Huettl, who was in attendance at the MAC meeting, has previously been on a private tour of the property with Carson. She stated that homes are beautiful, with multiple conference spaces, large kitchens, and a theater. There is a spring fed pond with a beach and the old The Big Dog Saloon, which was there when the property was owned by the Fetzer family. The vineyards and orchards are overgrown and the hillsides and meadows will require mowing and brush cutting. Carson will have his work cut out for him in obtaining permits. For more information contact info@revivalranch.co.

Gizmo Henderson commented that it might be helpful if Carson introduced himself to the neighbors on Bel Arbres, to try to dispel lingering bad feelings toward Flow Kana.

Update from Glenn McGourty, County Supervisor Board Chair

The County passed a balanced budget, closing a \$7 million gap. "We emptied every cookie jar," said Mr. McGourty. This Board is dedicated to repairing past mistakes. There are other elected officials who control County funds who don't answer to the Board of Supervisors. There are two parts to the budget. One part comes from the state and funds social services. The other part is discretionary, \$90 million this year.

Mr. McGourty is in favor of giving county employees a cost-of-living adjustment, which is long overdue. The Transfer Occupancy Tax (hotel tax) and sales tax revenues are down. Those two items made up \$16 million of County income. Meanwhile inflation has risen, so the County is paying more for items such as gas for County vehicles. The union reps would like a 3-5% COLA, but unfortunately, it appears that 1% is more likely.

The County sent retroactive supplemental tax bills recently. (This is the revenue from properties that are newly purchased, and thus re-assessed, during the prior year.) Due to software issues in the Auditor-Assessor's office, tax assessments for certain property owners had not been updated for the past 5 years when property changed hands. The Board of Supervisors is ultimately responsible. The County will offer a payment plan for those who cannot pay all at once. The BOS is attempting to clean up other financing problems, and Supervisors McGourty and Williams have been leading this effort: approximately 30% of homes in the County have never been assessed; \$400,000 needs to be collected from users of County microwave towers; the County has been unnecessarily matching funds for in-home services. Two things are holding up the process: 1) not enough workers, and 2) software that doesn't work. The BOS needs to fix this structural deficit.

Supervisor McGourty spoke on the status of the County parks given the extremely tight budget. The Mariposa swimming hole on Tomki Road may have a potential buyer working its way through the system. The County is in discussions with the Mendocino Land Trust and the Anderson Valley Land Trust to possibly take over management of the parks. The Madrones complex in Anderson Valley could be a good candidate to manage Indian Creek Park. Alternate Member Kelly asked why these backroom deals are being made without public notice. McGourty replied that an ad hoc committee is investigating the park system and will present options to the Board of Supervisors in a public meeting. Regarding water, he is working with a group to try and keep water flowing from the Eel River to the Russian River. We need help from the state to do this. The state has not invested in water infrastructure in this area.

Update from Sheriff Matt Kendall

Last week, there were marijuana busts in four locations; they confiscated 12,030 illegal plants and 12 guns. Numerous citations from Fish and Wildlife were issued. The Sheriff's Department is preparing a report to be turned over to the District Attorney. The Redwood Valley location was on West Road near the intersection with Tomki.

An individual died in a recent house fire on Colony Drive. The fire and cause of death are still under investigation.

The Sheriff's Department patrol boat will be on Lake Mendocino this coming 4th of July. Please celebrate responsibly. Kendall would like to make it through the year with zero deaths at Lake Mendocino.

Fireworks continue to be prohibited throughout the County.

Kendall said his brother, a CalFire Unit Chief, reported that several fires have been caused recently from unattended or escaped burn piles. Everyone in this county has been affected by fire; please be careful when burning and be sure to follow all permit requirements.

The Sheriff's Department has been busy with a search and rescue operation on the coast, where a subject fell off a cliff, and has not been located.

Board Member Pien Ris-Yarbrough commented that last Friday she had encountered a large group of cars and individuals on West Road near the corner of Laughlin. She reported it to the Sheriff's Department as she saw some guns. She wanted to know if Kendall was familiar with the incident. Kendall said he would take a look through the reports.

RV-Calpella Fire Department Update

Board Member Chris Boyd, who is also on the board of the Redwood Valley-Calpella Fire Department, said that the report on the Colony Drive fire is being prepared.

Ms. Boyd urged people to attend the Fire Department's annual big fundraiser, a BBQ and auction at the Fire Station on July 15. Funds raised last year were used for a new building for the BBQ, turnout gear for the volunteers (which needs to be replaced often), and "jaws of life" extrication equipment, among other needed items.

Redwood Valley Grange Update

Vice Chair Jini Reynolds reported that the Grange will hold a flea market on the second Saturday of every month. Game and Craft Night will be held on the first Thursday of every month. Digital and computer games are discouraged. These events are free and open to the public. The Grange will enter a float in the annual Black Bart Parade on July 1.

Alternate Member Kelly announced that there will be a road cleanup on East Road on Saturday, June 17 at 9:00 am. Road clean ups are done four times a year. It takes less than 2 hours of your time. Volunteers are needed for this community service.

Various organizations regularly meet at the Grange building: Care-A-Van Spay and Neuter, 4H, and Sons of Italy.

The County finally released \$250,000 to the Grange from the PG&E funds received after the 2017 fire. This is being used to pay for HVAC upgrades and kitchen remodeling.

5. **Water Education Standing Subcommittee. Adam, Katrina**

Member Adam Gaska, who is also the current Board President of the Redwood Valley County Water District and Agricultural Representative for the Ukiah Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency, reported as follows:

For the past four years most of Redwood Valley's water has come from a Millview District well. Redwood Valley has asked for 870 acre-feet from Russian River Flood Control, and so far has been promised 280 acre feet. This is water from Lake Mendocino that needs to go through the treatment plant. The plant will soon be operational and there may be a possibility of lifting the 55 gallon per day limit.

There is a real chance of losing water from the Potter Valley Project, as PG&E has stated that they will be walking away. If the diversion of water from the Eel to the Russian River is lost, Lake Mendocino will lose approximately 60,000 acre feet per year. Redwood Valley is last in line for surplus water from Lake Mendocino.

6. **Cannabis Policy Standing Subcommittee: Pien, Community Members**

There was a large turnout of people who submitted letters in support of the application for the Cannabis Prohibition Zone in Redwood Valley. The application was reviewed by the Planning Commission, which was deadlocked on their decision. **The matter will come before the Board of Supervisors at their July 25 meeting.**

Supervisor McGourty said it is unfortunate that the existing cannabis ordinance is ministerial, rather than discretionary. It would be preferable for neighbors to be able to comment on applications to grow cannabis before the grows are in place. There are still plenty of unlicensed grows in Redwood Valley, and these might be generating some of the complaints from neighbors. Legal theories say that changing the zoning once a grow is permitted could be considered a "taking," which could lead to lawsuits against the County. County Counsel will be reviewing this matter. McGourty acknowledged that the hoop houses can be jarring in a vineyard setting, but he said the cut flower industry has been using them for years. Counties such as Santa Barbara, which had a large cut flower industry, approved many more cannabis grows than Mendocino County. He acknowledged that none of the neighbors signed up to hear generators and see lights at night, and that the smell is impactful..

Member Boyd said that because the County built a provision for an opt-out exclusion zone into the ordinance, she is not sure that the argument for taking holds water. This might have to go through the Court system. It can also be argued that people who live in the area have been subject to a taking, insofar as decreased property values for residents can be significant. Mr. McGourty also commented that Counsel is concerned that if we get into a lawsuit, it may result in the determination that all exclusion zones are illegal. There was a comment from John King, that no decisions get made in this county without County Counsel. Is this a hard yes or no, or is there room for compromise?

Marlene Shupe commented that large commercial cannabis grows are not appropriate for residential areas.

7. **Development Review Standing Subcommittee: Marybeth, Jini, Pien**

Subcommittee member Marybeth Kelly reported that Chester Collins of Rancheria Road has applied for a permit to rent two guest rooms in his house as short-term rentals, for which a minor use permit is required. The MAC Members had no objections and will not be commenting to the Planning Commission.

Redwood Valley School Property. Ukiah Unified School District posted a [press release](#) announcing that the Redwood Valley School District is for sale with a minimum bid of \$900,000. Per the requirements for disposing of school district property, the district first tried to find a public agency to buy the property. There were no takers for this, and now it will be offered for sale to the public.

8. **Great Redwood Trail ad hoc Subcommittee: Adam, Katrina, Pien, and community member Gizmo Henderson**

Member Ris-Yarbrough said she would like to hike the train tracks from Laughlin Way to Willits and asked if that was possible.

9. **Community Action Plan ad hoc Subcommittee - Dolly, Chris, Jini and community member**

Sheilah Rogers

Chair Dolly Riley reported that the Redwood Valley Community Action Plan has gone back and forth with Planning and Building three times. Julia Krog, of the Planning and Building (P&B) Department has no significant concerns, but is concerned with language about billboards. The Board voted to modify the language about billboards in hopes of moving this CAP along, and on this motion, the Council voted Yes, with one No by Member Chris Boyd. Modification will say new billboards will be “strongly discouraged,” rather than “prohibited.” The Council also voted unanimously to send a letter to P&B resubmitting the CAP.

10. Officers and Members Reports and Announcements

The MAC proposed Bylaws were submitted to County Counsel in October 2022. There has been no response so far. Chair Riley remarked that the Bylaws will be her next priority after the CAP is finalized.

There are two vacancies on the MAC Board. There is also a vacancy for a secretary, at the rate of \$22 per hour, for about three hours’ work per month. Interested parties are asked to attend a MAC meeting and then apply on the website for the [MAC](#).

Chair Riley announced that Eva King of the Community Foundation is scheduled to be the guest speaker for August. Member Gaska commented that Sage Sangiacomo, Ukiah City Manager, would be a good guest speaker, as he has been working on the Community Plan for Ukiah.

There will not be a MAC meeting in July. The next Meeting is August 9, 2023, 5:30 p.m. at the Redwood Valley Grange, or via Zoom, and is open to all.

11. Adjournment.

Next meeting 8-9-23.