



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Regular Meeting

June 12, 2025 05:30 PM

West County Services Center, 16390 Main Street, Guerneville

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 pm by Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata.

- A. Announcement from Spanish Interpreter: The Spanish language interpreter will provide information about how to access the interpretation channel via Zoom or obtain a headset if attending in-person.

Meeting recordings are available at <https://www.youtube.com/@sonomacounty5thdistrict>

B. Roll Call

Present: Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes, Guerneville Representative: Joe Rogoff, Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott, Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke, Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative: Patty Thayer, Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar, Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton, Cazadero / Duncans Mills Alternate Terry Gwiazdowski

Absent: Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative: Tony Goodwin, Non-Voting Student Representative: Faye Zamora

Staff Present: Debbie Ramirez, 5th District Field Representative & MAC ClerkLupe Catalan, 5th District Bilingual Field Representative Tracy Lyons, 5th District Chief of Staff

- 2. Approval of the Agenda** Guerneville Representative: Joe Rogoff motioned to approve. Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

 9 **In Favor** 0 **Opposed**

 Abstained **Absent** **Recused**

3. Statement of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were reported.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Minutes: May 8, 2025

Lonnie and Vicki abstained due to not attending the May meeting.

Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative: Patty Thayer motioned to approve. Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

7 **In Favor** 0 **Opposed**

2 **Abstained** 0 **Absent** 0 **Recused**

5. Councilmember Comment

Pip Marquez de la Plata reported that The Station community center in Rio Nido has opened with a recent ribbon cutting ceremony. It will be used for community events, meetings and kids' classes. The post office will soon be functional, allowing for local mail delivery after 8 years. For more information or to get a PO box, go to <https://rionido.net/>

6. Public Comments

- Vesta Copestakes requested a presentation on Measure H funding for roadside clearance and vegetation management. They expressed confusion about the process and emphasized the need for more information.
- Steve Finnegan, via Zoom, supported the request for a Measure H funding presentation and highlighted the need for clarity on how to access the funding and the projects covered.

7. County Update

A. Project 100 Co-Design Community Meeting, Saturday June 21: 10 AM - 2 PM at Guerneville School

Brainstorm and prototype ideas and solutions that support the well-being and development of our youngest residents (ages 0-5) and their families. For more information & to RSVP, please contact Karen Mitchell at kmitchell@wchealth.org.

- Supervisor Hopkins provided updates on various topics:
 - The post office in Rio Nido was reopened after eight years, thanks to community efforts and the Sonoma County Fire District.
 - The Board of Supervisors approved the funding package for the Monteo Redwoods expansion, which will soon be owned by regional parks.
 - The county budget was adopted, showing fiscal restraint due to uncertainties in federal and state funding. Key allocations include funding for the narcotics unit, emergency road repair, and infrastructure.
 - The Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) work with Sebastopol is on hold, but efforts continue for the unincorporated West County EIFD.
 - The Pavement Preservation Program (PPP) was discussed, with a focus on equitable road maintenance.
- Supervisor Hopkins provided an update on the Guerneville shelter, which is currently sheltering 38 people. Due to funding cuts by the State government, West County Community Services is reducing the capacity of the shelter to align with the available funding. They are not taking any new individuals, and only those who have been there well over the shelter standards limit (six months in a 12-month period) are being given 30-day notices. Some guests have been there for over three years.

The Department of Health Services is working closely with West County Community Services to find other placements for the individuals who have received notices. Additionally, there is a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) from Measure O coming out soon, which may assist West County

Community Services with funding

- Supervisor Hopkins also shared exciting news about public art grants. The Lower Russian River area received several grants through the Community Public Art Project Grant program, which is specifically for unincorporated areas of District 5. This program is funded by tourism impact funds and the 5th District Community Infrastructure Funds, with Creative Sonoma overseeing the process.

Here are some of the approved projects:

- **New Stone Spiral AIDS Memorial:** A permanent display at West County Health Centers in Guerneville, in partnership with Face to Face and the Sonoma County AIDS Network.
- **Gateway to Forestville:** An approved project in Forestville.
- **Rain Garden Public Art Landscape Demonstration and Community Shared Space:** Located at the Forestville Water District.
- **The River Remembers Monte Rio:** A civic reunion project in Monte Rio.
- **Rio Nido Community Fountain:** A mosaic installation in Rio Nido.
- **KGB and River Theater Radio Light Up Sign:** Located in Guerneville.
- **Downtown Seasonal Window Art and Decoration:** A project in Guerneville.
- **Downtown Beautification Mural Project:** Through River Arts and Media and the Chamber of Commerce in Guerneville.
- **For Joy Performance Series:** Also in Guerneville.
- **Cultural Healing Mural:** At the Forestville Wellness Center in Forestville

These projects aim to enhance the community's cultural and artistic landscape, providing residents and visitors with beautiful and meaningful public art.

- Supervisor Hopkins provided an update on the implementation of Measure H, which is moving forward. In May, the Board of Supervisors appointed 11 members to the Measure H Oversight Committee. Although none of the appointees were explicitly identified as representing the Lower Russian River, one member, Jackson William, is a former board member of the Russian River Fire Protection District and lives in the area. This ensures some representation from the 5th district.

The Measure H Oversight Committee will play a key role in reviewing expenditures and ensuring that rural and high-risk communities, like those in the Lower Russian River area, are considered in future funding decisions. The committee's work will be crucial in making sure that the funds are allocated effectively and that the projects funded by Measure H address the needs of these communities

B. Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) Update at June 4 Board of Supervisors Meeting

See the attached report.

No Action

8. Sonoma County General Plan Update

Katrina Bramer and Haley Fry from Permit Sonoma presented an update on the comprehensive general plan update process. The general plan is a long-term policy document guiding land use, growth, infrastructure, and environmental protection.

The update process includes community engagement, workshops, and surveys to gather feedback. Key themes from community workshops include concerns about evacuation routes, road conditions, tourism

impacts, parks, water conservation, affordable housing, and bike paths.

9. Pilot Trash Outreach Study | Streets to Creeks, Every Piece Inspires Change (EPIC)

Alyssa Keenan from Permit Sonoma presented the EPIC campaign (Every Piece Inspires Change) to address trash issues in Guerneville. The campaign includes environmental graphics, public perception cleanups, and installing barriers like trash cans. The campaign aims to reduce trash through community engagement and education. Feedback from the community was encouraged to improve the campaign's effectiveness.

10. Ad Hoc Committee Report | Community Engagement for District Formation

The ad hoc committee hadn't yet met. No report.

11. Community Engagement Discussion

Logistics for upcoming events like Rio Fest were discussed.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 7:28 PM

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