



North of the River Recreation & Park District

NORTH OF THE RIVER RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REGULAR MEETING 3825 RIVERLAKES DRIVE, BAKERSFIELD, CA 93312 MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2026, 4:30 P.M.

DISCLAIMER: This agenda includes proposed actions and activities with respect to each agenda item, as of the date of posting. As such, it does not preclude the Board from taking other actions on any item on the agenda that is different or in addition to what may have been recommended.

1. CALL TO ORDER: BOARD MEETING CONVENED BY CHAIRPERSON JENIFER VANALSTEIN AT 4:34 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL: BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jenifer VanAlstein; Garrison Moratto; Ryan Skidmore

BOARD CLERK PRESENT

Janett Miller

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Bob Smith; Jeff Chudy

STAFF PRESENT

Bret Haney; Sarah Plank; Esther Grijalva; Steph Thisius; Lauren Cronk; Jasmin LoBasso; Mike Evans

LEGAL COUNSEL

Jacob Thomasy

PUBLIC PRESENT

Adam Ojeda and Stuart Patteson from Provost and Pritchard Consulting Group;
M. Haigh via Zoom

3. NOTICE OF MEETING BEING TAPED, FILMED, STREAMED OR BROADCASTED

Please be aware that a recording and broadcasting of tonight's meeting is being made and may capture images and/or sounds of those attending tonight's meeting.

4. FLAG SALUTE: The flag salute was led by Ryan Skidmore at 4:35 P.M.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Items requiring attention after the agenda is posted may be added to the agenda with 2/3 majority approval of the Board. Items to be added will be made available to the public at the meeting.

Motion: Skidmore **Second:** Moratto **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Moratto; Skidmore

Noes: None **Absent:** Smith; Chudy **Motion carried.**

6. NOR COMMUNITY CHAMPION

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The North of the River Recreation and Park District Board of Directors may take official action only on items included in the posted agenda. Items addressed during the Public Comment section are

generally matters not included on the agenda and, therefore, the Board will not take action at this scheduled meeting. Such items, however, may be added to a future meeting's agenda. Members of the public may address the Board on items included on the agenda in the order that the items appear. Speakers are limited to two minutes. Please state your name before making your presentation. Thank you!

No comments

8. CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are deemed routine in nature. Information concerning these items has been forwarded to each Board Member prior to this meeting for their study. The Consent Agenda is acted upon in one motion unless members of the Board, staff, or public request discussion and/or removal of an item.

A. Posting of Agenda

Approval of Secretary Declaration of Posting of Agenda 72 Hours in Advance of Meeting

B. Minutes

Approval of Minutes from the Board of Directors' Regular Meeting Held July 20, 2026

C. Financial

Approval of Receipt of Bills and Invoices

D. Bills Exceeding Policy Limit

Approval of Black Mountain Software invoice exceeding policy limit

Motion: Skidmore **Second:** Moratto **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Skidmore; Moratto **Noes:** None **Absent:** Smith; Chudy **Motion carried.**

9. BOARD BUSINESS

A. Approval of Change Order for Zone Change and Annexation of Austing Creek Park, Resolution #40-26

Director of Planning and Construction Steph Thisius requested approval of Resolution #40-26, authorizing additional staff hours necessary to complete the zone change and continuing the annexation process for Austin Creek Park, including two required public meetings. Adam Ojeda of Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group provided an update on the project and explained the significant delays that had occurred due to unforeseen complications; including a drainage sump that crosses property lines and challenges associated with historical documentation. The Board discussed the project delays and budget allocation required to continue the zone change and annexation process. The Board requested for Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group meet with the Ad Hoc Committee to provide additional clarification regarding the project delays. General Manager Bret Haney and Board member Garrison Moratto will coordinate and schedule the Ad Hoc Committee meeting. AFTER DISCUSSION, THE BOARD APPROVE RESOLUTION #40-26 AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL STAFF HOURS AND ASSOCIATED CHANGE ORDERS TO CONTINUE THE ZONE CHANGE AND ANNEXATION OF AUSTIN CREEK PARK.

Motion: Moratto **Second:** Skidmore **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Skidmore; Moratto **Noes:** None **Absent:** Smith; Chudy **Motion carried.**

B. Approval of Agreement with Lennar Homes of California, LLC for the Development of future Marcona Preserve Park and future Reven Way Park, Resolution #41-26

Director of Planning and Construction Steph Thisius requested approval of an agreement with Lennar Homes of California, LLC, for the development of the future Marcona Preserve Park and Reven Way Park. AFTER DISCUSSION, THE BOARD APPROVED RESOLUTION #41-26 AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH LENNAR HOMES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF MARCONA PRESERVE PARK AND RAVEN WAY PARK.

Motion: Skidmore **Second:** Moratto **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Skidmore; Moratto **Noes:** None **Absent:** Smith; Chudy **Motion carried.**

C. Authorization to Accept San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Public Benefit Grant Program Purchase, Resolution #42-26

Director of Operations and Maintenance Mike Evans requested approval of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Public Benefit Grant for the purchase for five electric Cushman utility carts, with full purchase cost to be reimbursed through the grant within 100 days. AFTER DISCUSSION, THE BOARD APPROVED RESOLUTION #42-26 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF FIVE ELECTRIC CUSHMAN UTILITY CARTS THROUGH FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT PUBLIC BENEFIT GRANT.

Motion: Skidmore **Second:** Moratto **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Skidmore; Moratto **Noes:** None **Absent:** Smith; Chudy **Motion carried.**

D. Approval of Three-Year Professional Service Agreement with O'Connor & Company to Conduct Annual Financial Audit for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Through 2027-2028, Resolution #43-26

Director of Finance Sarah Plank requested approval of a three-year service agreement with O'Connor & Company for annual financial audit for fiscal years 2026-2028. Ms. Plank explained that O'Connor & Company was selected as the preferred vendor in accordance with the District's existing fiscal policy rather than a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, citing their institutional knowledge and competitive pricing is key factors in the selection. AFTER DISCUSSION, THE BOARD ADOPTED RESOLUTION #43-26 FOR THE TREE-YEAR PROFESSIONAL SEVICE AGREEMENT WITH O'CONNOR & COMPANY.

Motion: Skidmore **Second:** Moratto **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Skidmore; Moratto **Noes:** None **Absent:** Smith; Chudy **Motion carried.**

E. Discussion Regarding Planning Schedule for Austin Creek Park

At the request of the Board, staff provided an update on the planning and development timeline for Phase One of Austin Creek Park. Director of Planning and Construction Steph Thisius presented the projected schedule for the Austin Creek Park design project, including Tract Maps 7338 and 741, which are adjacent to the park. Ms. Thisius reviewed the five-year Planning and Construction Project Schedule and stated that land surveying and conceptual design work are anticipated to begin in early 2027. The project is projected to be shovel-ready by February 2029, with construction potentially completed by 2030. Ms. Thisius noted that the timeline is subject to various factors, including developer schedules and regulatory approvals. Ms. Thisius also provided updates on other park development projects, stating that Marcona Preserve and Raven

Way Park are expected to be completed within six to eight weeks. Ms. Thisius further noted that Standard park has a January- February 2028 deadline due to grant requirements. The Board discussed whether the shovel-ready date for Austin Creek Park could be moved forward two months. Ms. Thisius expressed concerns regarding staff priorities and uncertainty about marked conditions but agreed to proceed with the adjustment. Any changes proposed to the planning and construction for Austin Creek Park will be presented at the Ad Hoc meeting.

10. STAFF REPORTS

A. General Manager

General Manager Bret Haney reported that the final budget packets, incorporating the Board's requested updates, had been provided to the board and would be posted on the NOR website. Mr. Haney also stated that he would communicate by email regarding the Ad Hoc Committee meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2026.

B. Capital Improvement Projects

Director of Planning and Construction Steph Thisius provided and updated on the progress of Marcona Preserve Park and Mission Lakes Park. Ms. Thisius reported that Marcona Preserve Park is moving toward acceptance of the park land and NOR staff are scheduled to meet with Lennar Homes on August 31, 2026. Board requested an update regarding the Wonderful Company in Shafter. General Manager Bret Haney reported that Shafter Parks and Recreation have the most current information and that NOR staff are awaiting a response.

C. Financial

Director of Finance Sarah Plank reviewed the financial report and reported that, as of June 30, 2026, the District had a deficit of more than \$1 million, with \$1.583 million in available resources. She reported that, upon receipt and processing of all reimbursements and payments, the District could have a surplus of more than \$500,000. Finance Director Plank also reported on the cost comparison between monthly and annual CalPERS payments, as previously requested by the Board. She reported that making CalPERS payments yearly would result in a cost savings of \$7,798.

D. Personnel

Director of Human Resources Esther Grijalva reported that three full-time positions were currently open: Park Maintenance Worker, with applications closing August 21, 2026; Recreation Specialist – Recreation and Facilities, and Recreation Specialist – Senior and Community Recreation, with applications closing August 27, 2026. Ms. Grijalva also reported that supervisor training was scheduled for Wednesday, August 19, 2026.

E. Parks Division

Director of Operations and Maintenance Mike Evans distributed an updated organizational chart to the Board and reported that the Parks Department reorganization, titled "One: One Team, One Standard, One Mission," was scheduled to be implemented the following week. He reported that the reorganization was the result of approximately one and a half years of planning and work by supervisors and managers, along with feedback from staff. The updated staff assignments and organizational chart outlining the new structure were provided to the Board. Mr. Evans reported that the reorganization was intended to improve efficiency, accountability, teamwork, and consistency throughout the District, as well as address operational barriers and support changes to the department's culture. He further reported that the new structure would serve as a foundation for future organizational changes and help facilitate future transitions. Mr. Evans also reported that the District had received delivery of the TinyMobileRobot field painter. Training was scheduled for Wednesday, August 19, 2026. He reported that the robotic field painter was

expected to reduce the time required for field painting and allow staff to focus on other park maintenance priorities.

F. Recreation

Director of Recreation Lauren Cronk highlighted the Greenacres Senior Chair Exercise Class, which is held every Tuesday and Thursday and had more than 215 attendees during the month of July. Ms. Cronk also reported that NOR received the Expanded Learning Partner of the Year Award for the 2025–2026 school year in recognition of its partnership with the Standard School District Explore Program. Ms. Cronk reported that NOR would offer free demonstration classes, beginning with the Ready, Set, Cook class for ages 8 through 10 on Monday, September 14, 2026. Ms. Cronk also noted that NOR received a letter from a parent regarding her daughter's participation in the Riverview Neighborhood Place and CO-OP programs.

G. Community Relations

Director of Community Relations Jasmin LoBasso reported that the NOR Foundation would hold a fundraiser at BJ's Restaurant on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Ms. LoBasso reported that the NOR Foundation received \$4,283 in sponsorships across multiple programs, including \$500 from Only Pickleball, \$150 from Sew Sweetly, \$150 from CNC Print, and \$1,500 from Finish Line and Hardrock Tejon. Ms. LoBasso further reported that the NOR Foundation received three sponsorships for general programming, including \$1,000 from North Kern Golf Course, \$250 from Hector's Plumbing, and \$500 from Kali Custom Pools. Ms. LoBasso also reported that the scholarship program would officially open during the week of August 17, 2026.

H. Training

Reports Received and Filed.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

No Correspondence was received in August

12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Opportunity for the Board to comment on items not listed on the agenda

BOB SMITH- not present

GARRISON MORATTO- Mr. Moratto commented that he was in communication with the County regarding a potential annual meeting with leaders to discuss best practices and would send a follow-up email.

RYAN SKIDMORE- no comment

JENIFER VANALSTEIN- Ms. VanAlstein asked for the due date regarding the Fiscal and Financial Training (CA SB827).

JEFF CHUDY- not present

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m. to the next meeting of the Board of Directors of North of the River Recreation and Park District scheduled on September 21, 2026, 4:30 p.m. at the Riverlakes Ranch Community Center and District Administrative Complex.

Minutes to be approved at Board
Meeting held on September 21, 2026



Bret Haney, General Manager



Janett Miller, Clerk of the Board



Jenifer VanAlstein (Sep 22, 2026 13:27:18 PDT)

Jenifer VanAlstein, Chairperson

08-17 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-09-22

Created:	2026-09-22
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