



COMMUNICATOR

2021



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year? I've added the question mark because my hangover from the events of 2020 is still with me. We had many good things happen at CARPD last year. We became proficient at Zoom Webinars, with the General Managers group and the Board of Director's group holding interesting and educational virtual meetings. And the Virtual Conference in May was a huge success. We added new, vibrant members to the CARPD staff. Last but not least, our loyal Sponsors stuck by us.

As we ring in the New Year, this is a great time to connect with your elected representatives in Sacramento. Recently, my EBRPD colleagues and I met with Assembly Members and State Senators to advocate for Wildfire/fuels reduction funding, promoting the Climate Bond (SB 45- See Russ Noack's Legislative Update for more on this item), Covid-19 relief funding and declaring our frontline workers as "Essential Workers", deserving of prioritized vaccinations.

We're still doing Zoom Webinars. On February 23, we will be hosting a Board Member Orientation. Executive Director, Matthew Duarte, will address Brown Act updates, the Board's role as policymaker, and how to effectively collaborate with Board colleagues in the pandemic and beyond. We hope you can join us for what is sure to be an interesting discussion for

Board Members new and old! Ever optimistic, the Board and staff have rescheduled the Annual Conference to June 23-26 in Monterey. This year's conference theme is, "*The Essentials: Everyday Heroes in Your Community*". We're confident this will be an "in-person" event. Stay tuned for registration information and we hope to see everyone in Monterey.

I'd also like to welcome our newly appointed Board Member, Gigi Bannister from Rim of the World Recreation and Park District in San Bernardino County. In addition to serving her community at the District, Ms. Bannister is a veteran and experienced filmmaker. Welcome, Gigi!

Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not recognize our outgoing colleague on the CARPD Board, Mr. Mark Johnson from Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Many of you know Mark as former CARPD President and the lively emcee at Conferences past. Mark was a dedicated public servant, a positive spirit, and friend to many all over California. We wish Mark the best in retirement!

Count your blessings and hang on. 2021 should be an interesting ride!

Dennis Waespi,



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CARPD STAFF:

- Executive Director:**
Matthew Duarte
mduarte@capri-jpa.org
- Safety Analyst:**
Kirk Andre
kandre@capri-jpa.org
- Administrative Analyst:**
Monica Breck
mbreck@capri-jpa.org
- Administrative Assistant:**
Jordan Coyle
jcoyle@capri-jpa.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- President:**
Dennis Waespi
- Past President:**
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Dean Wetter
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CARPD GM SPOTLIGHT: HALLIE GREENE—BOULDER CREEK RPD

By Mallory Pickett

Originally published on December 21, 2020 (edited for length)

Republished with the express consent of the author and [Lookout Santa Cruz](#)

Losing her home to fire helped Hallie Greene learn how to help others

Like most of the people who survived the CZU Lightning Complex fire, Hallie Greene couldn't imagine that a disaster of that scale ever would befall her.

From the moment a helicopter flew over her house ordering her to evacuate, to when she returned home and found her house gone and the ground around it still smoldering — none of it felt quite real. "I don't know that I still have my brain wrapped around it really," she said.

After the devastation, the Santa Cruz Mountains got a lot of attention. Greene and her neighbors heard from everyone from the New Yorker to the LA Times, and Greene even got a call from a journalist in Russia, who asked if she was planning to move away because of global warming.

"Where else would I go?" Greene said. She never considered leaving. Instead, she's become a major force helping the community rebuild through her role as manager of the Boulder Creek Recreation & Park District.

Greene runs a recovery hub out of the Bear Creek Community Center, a recreation site that was left unused due to COVID-19, but where she and others now help fire survivors every weekend.

It all started after she went to local firefighters for help after her house burned down.

"[They] showed me what the county had brought up for fire relief and it was like some garbage bags on the ground with masks and a tarp," she said. "I hadn't been through a disaster yet, so I don't know what there should be, but I looked at that and thought, 'Well, it should probably be more than that.'"

Greene worked with the county, the Red Cross and Federal Emergency Management Agency to start organizing a sort of recovery "fair" at the rec center, with booths for different agencies providing different kinds of help.

She and her volunteers help connect fire victims with the various resources, agencies, and donations that can help them, work that there is still a lot of demand for and is planned to continue into next year.

A Boulder Creek native, Greene, 37, left town for college and to work in the film industry in New York and Los Angeles, but returned home in 2007 to help her mother through a cancer diagnosis.

As soon as she was home, she found herself drawn to the Boulder Creek Recreation Center, a place where she had fond memories of spending time as a child. Greene started by offering dance classes and events, and by 2011 she was managing the place.

With her house burned to the ground, she is now living in a trailer on a friend's property with her two children. Like most of her neighbors, she's beginning the long, slow process of rebuilding.

Throughout the ordeal, it had been obvious to her that she needed to step in to help. What was more surprising was to be in the position of needing help herself.

Greene was overwhelmed by the donations she personally received — toys, clothing, gift cards, even a generator — and for her community at large. She watched every GoFundMe met or exceed its goals.

"I've never been a victim of something or had to really receive," she said. "It's been a really good learning lesson in that way."

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Russ Noack
Public Policy Advocates, LLC

Despite the introduction of a vaccine to targeted segments of the population, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to negatively affect the legislative process. Due to the significant increase in the number of cases in December and the need to adhere to the shelter in place policy throughout the state, leadership decided to delay convening the 2021-22 Legislative Session until January 11. When the Legislature resumed, the Democrats once again held supermajorities in both Houses. The Assembly now has 59 Democrats, 19 Republicans, 1 Independent (Chad Mayes) and 1 vacancy since Shirley Weber has been appointed to replace Alex Padilla as the Secretary of State. The Senate roster is 30 Democrats, 9 Republicans and 1 vacancy.

Governor Newsom released a \$227 billion State Budget proposal providing for significant funding to support his highest program priorities. Since tax revenues have exceeded all expectations, the Governor is calling on the Legislature to expedite funding in a number of areas, including vaccine distribution, reopening of schools, assistance for low-income families, funds for businesses hurt severely by COVID-19 restrictions and restoration of wages to state workers who received pay cuts last year. The Governor's Budget proposal further enhances many of his priority areas, which had limited funding increases in 2020 including environmental protection, climate change, natural resource programs, wildfire prevention, emergency preparedness and response, affordable housing, and homelessness. Budget hearings, which will allow legislative input, have begun and will continue for the next four months prior to the final Budget being enacted by the commencement of the new fiscal year on July 1.



Once again, this year, most of the participation of the public at hearings will be provided by virtual or telephonic testimony. The Capitol remains restricted for the time being to try to combat the spread of the pandemic to legislators and staff. Committee activity will accelerate after the bill introduction deadline date of February 19. Interestingly, the leaders of both Houses have decided to not reduce the number of bill introductions by their members, so we can expect the usual avalanche of bills coming to light in late February.

Some holdover bills have been reintroduced by members in the new legislative session. A \$5.5 billion bond package, if approved by the voters on the 2022 Ballot, would fund wildfire prevention, safe drinking water, drought preparation, and flood protection programs has been introduced by Senator Anthony Portantino. The bond measure is [Senate Bill 45](#), which mirrors the number and content of last year's bill authored by Senator Ben Allen. Discussions about building the bill out, including inserting a per capita feature will begin soon.

[Assembly Constitution Amendment No. 1](#) has been reintroduced by Cecilia Aguiar-Curry. The measure would place on the 2022 Ballot provisions to reduce the vote threshold for passage of local government tax investments in affordable housing and infrastructure improvements to 55% instead of the existing 2/3 vote requirement. The bill, which would track the vote threshold for school construction bonds, was defeated on the Assembly Floor last year despite garnering 44 recorded votes (54 needed for passage).

The CARPD Legislative Committee met in December to begin constructing an active legislative program for 2021. Increasing funding opportunities from both state and federal sources and promoting the effort to recognize the major contributions recreation and park districts continue to make on California including community support for students and their families using facilities for distanced learning, providing testing areas, creating cooling centers for the homeless and providing assistance for wildfire response and fire prevention activities.

NEW YEAR, NEW LAWS: SOCIAL MEDIA & PUBLIC OFFICIALS

By Sean De Burgh, Esq.
Cole Huber, LLP

Brown Act: Public Officials' Use of Social Media

After a number of years of questions, the Brown Act has been amended to address a public official's use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Reddit, or any social media platform open and accessible to the public, including chatrooms, forums, or blogs, where the public can participate without charge and without approval by the platform (except for blocking inappropriate content). The legislation acknowledges that constituents and the public have greater access to public officials through social media than through individual interaction (especially with virtual meetings).

The change is set out in revisions to the definition of "meeting" in Government Code Section 54952.2(b)(3). The legislation tries to strike a balance between communication with the public on social media and improper serial meetings as follows:

Permitted Communications. A public official subject to the Brown Act (such as a City Council member or special district board member) may use social media to do the following regarding general matters within the public official's jurisdiction (and presumably those that are not):

- Answer questions from the public (but not from other council or board members);
- Provide information to the public; and
- Solicit information from the public regarding a matter that is within the legislative body's subject matter jurisdiction.

Prohibited Communications. The amendment does not change the current rule that a majority of the members of a legislative body are prohibited from meeting outside a properly noticed public meeting to "discuss, deliberate, or take action on an item" that is within that legislative body's subject matter jurisdiction. In fact, the amendment imposes a stricter rule: In terms of social media, one-on-one conversations between members of the same legislative body are not allowed. Therefore, a public official may not use social media to discuss a matter that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body, including, but not limited to, upcoming or on-going agenda items, as, for example, those that are the subject of an upcoming public hearing.

The prohibition includes comments or the use of "digital icons" (e.g., Facebook's like, love, haha, wow, sad, and angry reactions*) to express a reaction to a communication from another member of that legislative body. Therefore, under the amended Brown Act, council member A is prohibited from "liking" council member B's Facebook post concerning a matter within the jurisdiction of that legislative body.

A public official can continue to engage in individual contacts with another person that does not violate these rules, i.e. individual emails with a constituent or with a public official on another legislative body. The official also may engage in individual contacts with another member of the same legislative body, although not on social media.

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CARPD BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION—FEBRUARY 23, 2021

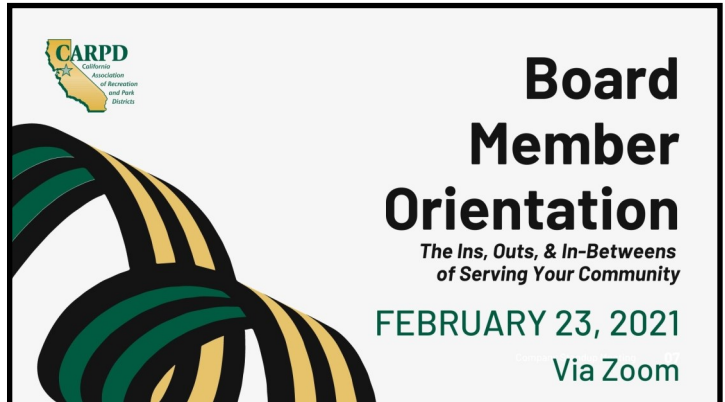
CARPD Executive Director, Matthew Duarte, will conduct this one hour session designed specifically for Board Members of Recreation & Park Districts in California. As a licensed attorney and former Board Member himself, Mr. Duarte will address the unique role of the Park District Board and his personal experiences serving his community. This training is ideal for new Board Members, but will also touch on matters new and relevant to even the most seasoned of electeds.

Topics will also include Brown Act compliance and recent updates, the Board's role as policymaker, and how to effectively collaborate with Board colleagues in the pandemic and beyond.

Registration required: [CLICK HERE](#)

4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. on February 23, 2021

FREE to CARPD Members; \$50.00 to Non-Members



CARPD CONFERENCE—JUNE 23-26, 2021

In 2020, the public at large learned what we at CARPD have known for years: our local parks are essential! As we enter a new year full of hope and primed for healing, our annual CARPD Conference will honor the dedicated service of our member districts -- the everyday heroes within our communities. Our Districts have continuously endeavored to meet the unprecedented demand upon their facilities and recreation spaces while also striving to better the collective physical health and mental well-being for us all. These efforts are certainly worth celebrating!

On behalf of the Board of Directors of CARPD, we wanted to invite you to join us at our **Annual Conference in Monterey on June 23 – 26, 2021**. Our team is working diligently to make this year's Conference a safe and an enjoyable experience and we are looking forward to a great event! Conference registration opens on February 16, 2021 so stay tuned to caparkdistricts.org and see you in Monterey!

