

Bay Area Air District
Board of Directors Special/Retreat Meeting
Bloc15, 252 2nd Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

APPROVED MINUTES

This meeting was webcast, and a video recording is available on the website of the Bay Area Air District at www.baaqmd.gov/bodagendas

CALL TO ORDER

1. **Opening Comments:** Board of Directors (Board) Chairperson, Lynda Hopkins, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Roll Call:

Present, In-Person (Bloc15, 252 2nd Street, Oakland, CA 94607): Chairperson Lynda Hopkins; and Directors Dionne Adams, Brian Barnacle, Monica Brown, Ken Carlson, Joelle Gallagher, John Gioia, David Haubert, Tyrone Jue, Otto Lee, Rico E. Medina, Ray Mueller, Gabe Quinto, Linda Sell, Lena Tam, Shamann Walton, and Steve Young.

Absent: Vice Chairperson Vicki Veenker; and Directors Margaret Abe-Koga, Brian Colbert, Noelia Corzo, Juan González III, Bilal Mahmood, and Mark Salinas.

2. **WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

Chair Hopkins welcomed members of the public, stakeholders, Board members, and Air District staff to the retreat and thanked everyone for coming to Oakland.

MORNING SESSION

Note: Because many members of the public arrived in person in the morning to give Public Comments on Non-Agenda Matters (Item 7), which was to take place in the afternoon, Chair Hopkins agreed to bifurcate Item 7, allowing Item 7 to occur both in the morning and afternoon.

7. **Public Comments on Non-Agenda Matters (Item 7 – First Opportunity)**

Public comments were given by Mark Williams, Environmental Justice League (EJL); Camika Robinson, EJL; Millicent Hunter, EJL; Ajanae Young, EJL; Terrell Lawson, EJL; Brittany Bellamy, EJL; Oscar Harper, San Leandro resident; Drew Sage, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555; Yvonne Eashman, EJL; Valerie Davis, Oakland resident; Charmaine Robinson,

Oakland resident; Yvonne Williams; Tina Flores, EJM; Alice, Oakland resident; Matt Regan, Bay Area Council; Tony Sirna, Evergreen Action; Lola; Jared Butler, Pittsburg resident; Ty'Jeare Hunter, Oakland resident; Michael Randall, EJM; Stacey Richardson, Pittsburg resident; Lacoyia Johnson; and Steven Vader.

NOTED PRESENT: Director Mueller was noted present at 10:24 a.m.

ACTION ITEM

3. LOCAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS FUND GRANT GUIDELINES: ROUND 1

Emi Wang, Community Investments Officer, gave the staff presentation *Local Community Benefits Fund Grant Guidelines: Round 1*, including: recommended action; background; overview: Local Community Benefits Fund; public comments on Draft Grant Guidelines; program goals; community needs; core strategies (reduce air pollution and improve health outcomes and build economic resilience for a just transition); measurable outcomes; Seed grant; Opportunity grant (re-granting); Catalyst grant; partnerships; eligible applicants; available funding for Benicia and surrounding communities; eligible communities; Valero Refinery closure; grant awards; available funding for Richmond and surrounding communities; eligible communities; grant awards; application review; anticipated timeline; and recommended action.

Public Comments

Public comments were given by Hon. Terry Scott, City of Benicia; Mario Giuliani, City of Benicia; Ken Szutu, Citizen Air Monitoring Network of Vallejo; Julia Sebastian, Jobs with Justice San Francisco; Glenn Loveall, Napa/Solano Central Labor Council; Richard Offerman, Pleasant Hill resident; Kathy Kerridge, Benicia resident; Richard Fleming, Benicia resident; and Stephen Golub, Benicia resident.

Board Comments

The Board and staff discussed the community of Benicia's appreciation to the Air District for making certain exceptions for Catalyst Grant applications in Benicia, due to the ongoing strain on the Benicia community's civic and organizational capacity resulting from the impending Valero refinery closure; the anticipated process of grant reviews and approvals (whether residents of the local community will be involved in the scoring, and whether the Board makes the final decisions); concerns regarding Valero's tentative plans to transition its Benicia refinery into a terminal for storing and distributing imported gasoline to the California market; the fact that future penalties will continue to fund the Regional and Local Community Benefits Funds (spending the funds does not indicate a permanent scarcity in funding); future staffing needs of the Air District's Community Investments Office; which of the Board's committees will consider staff recommendations and make recommendations (pertaining to these programs) to the Board; how to avoid potential confusion, for prospective Richmond area project applicants, between the two funding sources for the Richmond area (Richmond Community Air Quality Fund versus penalty funds); the suggestion of holding a bid conference so that potential project applicants may identify co-applicants; whether the Air District plans to suggest/provide metrics and impacts other than the reduction of Particulate Matter (PM)_{2.5};

whether sustainability plans will be required within project applications; whether selected applicants will have to pay costs upfront and then be reimbursed; whether the Air District's definition of "government officials" includes non-elected officials that are professional staff; the suggestion of prioritizing projects that can be completed in a single attempt, without needing to be revisited, versus projects that will require maintenance; whether the Air District has preferred projects in mind, and if so, whether the Air District can we encourage specific entities to apply; how the Air District will ensure that none of the community reviewers show favoritism to specific applications (conflict of interest); the desire for cumulative, long-term result/benefit data as projects are completed, and what type of data will come back to the Board (results and scores); whether there is a maximum amount that may be spent on administrative/indirect project costs; appreciation for capacity building that was built into the guidelines; whether the application asks for minimum and maximum grant amounts; and the request for public workshops on how to apply (for non-government organizations/prospective applicants in Benicia and Richmond.)

Board Action

Director Young made a motion, seconded by Director Gioia, to **adopt** the Round 1 Grant Guidelines for the Local Community Benefits Fund, the Call for Projects for Benicia and Surrounding Communities, and the Call for Projects for Richmond and Surrounding Communities, with the following changes:

- 1) extend Catalyst grant application deadline to May 1, 2026 (5:00 PM PT) for Benicia; and
- 2) extend all grant applications across eligible communities (excluding Benicia Catalyst Grant) to May 29, 2026, at 5:00 PM PT

The motion **carried** by the following vote of the Board:

AYES: Adams, Brown, Carlson, Haubert, Hopkins, Gallagher, Gioia, Jue, Lee, Medina, Mueller, Quinto, Sell, Tam, Walton, Young.
ABSTAIN: None.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Abe-Koga, Barnacle, Colbert, Corzo, González, Mahmood, Salinas, Veenker.

THE BOARD RECESSED AT 12:22 P.M., AND RESUMED AT 12:35 P.M.

AFTERNOON SESSION

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Members of the Air District's Community Advisory Council (CAC) joined the Board of Directors for discussion of agenda items 4-6, pursuant to Section 54952.2(c)(4) of the Ralph M. Brown Act, Cal. Gov't Code § 54952.2(c)(4), which authorizes a majority of the CAC members to discuss matters within the CAC's jurisdiction as part of the agenda at an open and noticed meeting of the Board of Directors. The following CAC members attended the meeting:

Sejal Babaria, Adriana Fernandez-Arriaga (via Zoom), William Goodwin, Ms. Margaret Gordon, Patrick Messac, Cynthia Prieto-Diaz, Saidy Reyes Mazariegos, Violet Saena, Jeff Sanchez, Ken Szutu, Azjargal Tsogtsaikhan, and Latasha Washington.

4. **COMMUNITY WELCOME**

Rowena Brown, Oakland City Councilmember At-Large, and Ms. Margaret Gordon, Community Advisory Council member and founding member of the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, welcomed the Board of Directors and participating members of the Community Advisory Council to Oakland.

Public Comments

No requests received.

Board Comments

None.

Board Action

No action taken.

5. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

A. Introductions

The Board of Directors and participating members of the CAC shared introductions and learned about each other's respective work, advocacy, and experiences that shape their approach to air quality and environmental justice.

B. Collaboration of the Board of Directors and CAC

CAC members William Goodwin and Latasha Washington presented recommendations to the Board that the Council adopted at its November 20, 2025, meeting, followed by an open discussion. A presentation entitled *Collaboration of the Board of Directors and Community Advisory Council* was given, and slides included: purpose of increasing Board and CAC communications and collaboration; and CAC recommendations to the Board.

NOTED PRESENT: Director Barnacle was noted present at 1:24 p.m.

Public Comments

Public comments were given by J'marcus Addams.

Board and CAC Comments

The Board and staff discussed the desire for changes to the composition of the Board, allowing seats specifically designated for members of the public (non-elected officials at the city or county level); concern about the decrease of the number of Air District inspectors since the 1970s; the desire for clarification on how the Board and CAC will work together, and ways for the two bodies to meet more frequently, in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (improved bi-directional communication); the suggestion of adding a standing agenda item to the Board agenda (and/or committee agendas) for CAC reports, given by a CAC member, and whether there should be a Board liaison seat on the CAC; whether the Board's Community Equity, Health, and Justice Committee could have a seat designated for a CAC member; the desire of various Board members to avoid future contention and separation between the two bodies; whether the Board is able to request that the CAC make recommendations to the Board; concerns regarding the perception that CAC members cannot bring community concerns to the Board, or have CAC issues agendaized on the Board's agendas, and whether CAC members may contact Board members in their capacity as CAC members, versus as individuals; concerns regarding the perceived imbalance of industrial representation and environmental activist representation at Board and committee meetings; concerns about the Board meeting start times, which can prevent those who work during the day from attending; the desire for improved CAC member onboarding; concerns regarding the fact that the CAC members were not originally being paid for attending this meeting; and the desire for the CAC's list of prioritized objectives.

Board Action

No action taken.

THE BOARD RECESSED AT 2:26 P.M., AND RESUMED AT 2:45 P.M.

At 2:45 p.m., a quorum of Board members (in any location) was lost, and the meeting was forced to adjourn. Items 6 through 11 did not occur.

6. COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR RULE DEVELOPMENT

OTHER BUSINESS

7. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA MATTERS

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

9. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER / APCO

10. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

11. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held in-person at the Bay Area Metro Center and at satellite locations as may be specified on the meeting agenda using a remote teleconferencing link. Members of the Board of Directors and the public may attend at any of those in-person locations, and members of the public may also attend virtually via webcast.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

/s/ Marcy Hiratzka
Marcy Hiratzka
Clerk of the Boards