

Contra Costa Mosquito Vector District (CCMVD) Board Workshop

February 21, 2026
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Chris Sliz



Regional Government Services

Ground Rules for a Great Workshop



Board Workshop Ground Rules
Shared expectations to support a productive, respectful discussion

Stay Engaged Be present and focused during the workshop.	Ask Questions Clarify questions on discussion.
Listen to Understand Listen actively and respectfully. Do not interrupt.	Pause & Reflect Take a moment before responding to complex or sensitive topics.
Respect Each Other Disagree with ideas, not people. Courtesy is expected at all times.	Be Open-Minded Consider new ideas and perspectives thoughtfully.
One Speaker at a Time Allow others to finish before responding or interjecting.	Keep the Public in Mind Remember that your actions and decisions represent the public interest of our state.

These ground rules help ensure a respectful, productive, and effective workshop.

One of the most significant responsibilities as a board member/trustee is to understand that the board is a team and you need to work together as such.

-California Special District Association

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Effective Governance in Practice



Key Topics we'll cover today:

- Strategic Governance vs. Operations
- Running Effective Meetings
- Managing Varying Participation
- Rosenberg's Rules of Order
- Consensus vs. Majority Rule
- Accountability & Board Culture



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Why Good Boards Struggle

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The Reality Gap

Large Boards
Size amplifies friction; strong personalities can disproportionately shape outcomes.

The Silence Trap
Silence does not equal agreement; it often masks disengagement or confusion.

The Drift
Without constant vigilance, boards naturally drift from strategic oversight into operational meddling.

The Goal: To move from 'well-meaning' to 'disciplined and strategic'.

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Strategic Governance vs. Operations

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The Board (Strategic)	The Staff (Operational)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets direction and policy. Defines desired outcomes. Oversees performance and finances. Sole Employee: Hires and evaluates the General Manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements Board policy. Manages daily operations and execution. Provides technical expertise and recommendations.

Key Insight: The Board defines WHAT needs to happen and WHY; Staff determines HOW to make it happen.

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Governing Through The General Manager

Supporting the General Manager
Leadership Through Structure & Trust


- ✓ **Asking about:**
 - Outcomes
 - Budget impacts
 - Risk exposure
 - Contract compliance
- ✗ **Not directing:**
 - How to negotiate a contract
 - How to manage a personnel issue
 - How to manage external vendors

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The Illusion of Individual Authority



Many Voices, One Body



The Board acts as one body.

The Core Principle: The Board acts as one body. Individual trustees have influence, but they do not have authority.

Operational Rules

- **No Individual Direction:** A single trustee cannot direct staff or reallocate resources.
- **No Side Commitments:** Trustees cannot make promises to constituents or vendors outside of a public vote.
- **No "Checking In":** Oversight happens through the Board meeting process, not through back-channel discussions with staff.

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Detecting Governance Drift



Case Study: The Mosquito Abatement Scenario


<p>The Governance Approach</p> <p>The Question: "Are our mosquito abatement outcomes meeting Board expectations?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Focus: Outcomes, policy alignment, and budget. 	<p>The Operational Trap</p> <p>The Question: "Why did staff choose this treatment method on Tuesday?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Focus: Tactics, scheduling, and technical execution.
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Warning Signs of Drift

- Phrases like "Just a suggestion for staff..."
- Operational advice disguised as questions.
- Trustees attempting to troubleshoot execution details.

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The Meeting as a Legal Entity



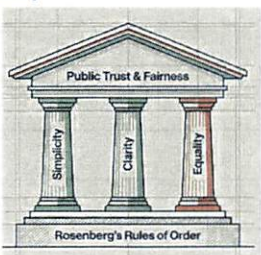
Meetings are the only time the Board exists. Structure is required to protect fairness, efficiency, and the public trust.

The Operating System: Rosenberg's Rules

Why Rosenberg's? Specifically designed for California public agencies and the Brown Act


The Benefit: Prioritizes decisions over procedural battles. Fewer motions, more clarity.


Good meetings don't happen by accident. They are the result of disciplined adherence to structure.




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The Chair as Facilitator, Not Boss






Decorum



Airtime




The Agenda

Core Responsibilities	Tactical Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide the Process: Keep discussion strictly on the agenda item. • Protect Equity: Manage airtime so that dominant voices don't drown out quieter ones. • Clarify: Ensure the motion is clear before a vote is taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To balance participation: "What questions are there from those who haven't spoken yet?" • To maintain focus: Redirect tangents immediately, summarize points before moving on.

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The Art of Inquiry



Board Responsibility: Be concise. Stay agenda focused. Leave space for others.

Effective Questions (Green Light)	Ineffective Behavior (Red Light)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ How does this align with our adopted priorities? ✔ What specific decision is the Board being asked to make today? <p style="font-size: small;">Focus: Strategy, Policy, Financial Impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Long, winding narratives before getting to the point. ⚠ Hypotheticals unrelated to the current motion. ⚠ Deep dives into operational minutiae.

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Public Participation: The Three Essential Rules

Public Participation: The Three Essential Rules

The Chair's Facilitation Challenge

- Accommodate public input.
- Maintain agenda progress.
- Protect public trust.

Three Special Rules for Every Agenda Item

1 RULE ONE

Tell the public what the body will be doing.

2 RULE TWO

Keep the public informed while the body is doing it.

3 RULE THREE

Tell the public what the body did.

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Rosenberg's Rules of Order

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The 9 Steps of Rosenberg's Rules of Order

Rosenberg's Rules of Order offer a streamlined approach to parliamentary procedure, ensuring every agenda item follows a consistent path of presentation, public input, and formal board deliberation before a final vote.

Phase 1: Presentation & Public Input

- Step 1 & 2 Item Introduction & Staff Report**
The Chair introduces the item and the staff reports on the item.
- Step 3 Clarifying Questions Only**
The Chair asks if there are any clarifying questions.
- Step 4 Public Comment & Hearing**
The Chair opens the floor for public comment.

Phase 2: Deliberation & Final Action

- Step 5 Board Discussion & Collaboration**
The Chair asks if there are any board members who wish to discuss the item.
- Steps 6-B The Motion Sequence**
The Chair asks if there are any motions.
- Step 6-A Vote & Official Announcement**
The Chair asks for a vote and announces the result.
- Step 7 Action Taken**
The Chair asks if there are any actions taken.

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Anatomy of a Perfect Motion

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Best Practice: The Chair or Clerk should restate the motion verbatim before the final vote to ensure shared understanding.

Criteria for a Good Motion

- ✓ Clear:** Unambiguous language.
- ✓ Specific:** Detailed enough to be actionable.
- ➔ Action-Oriented:** Moves the agency forward.

1

The Motion
Proposed action.

2

The Second
Willingness to discuss.

3

The Discussion
Debate and Amendments.

4

The Vote
Decision.

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The Tension of Engagement

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The Goal: Maintain balanced tension where the Board provides rigorous oversight without snapping the band through micromanagement.

Too Loose (Disengagement)

Balanced Tension (The Sweet Spot)

Too Tight (Domination)

Silence mistaken for agreement, staff lacks direction.

Board pushes for outcomes, staff pulls with execution.

Micromanagement, stifled expertise.

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Consensus, Clarity, and The Vote

- **The Objective:** The Board needs clarity, not necessarily unanimity.
- **Consensus:** The preferred starting point.
- **Majority Rule:** When consensus isn't reached, a majority vote decides. This is a feature, not a failure.
- **The Rule:** We debate ideas, not people. Disagreement is healthy; dysfunction is not.

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Leaving the Room Aligned

The "Leave-Behind" Rule

Once a vote passes, it becomes the decision of the Board, not just the majority. Even if you voted "No," you uphold the legitimacy of the Board's action.

"If any of these are unclear, the Chair must clarify before adjournment."

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Culture Is Set by Behavior


"Policies matter. Behavior matters more."





The Public Eye	Expectations	Consistency
The public notices tone, respect, and body language. Disrespectful behavior erodes public trust faster than bad policy.	Disagree respectfully. Avoid dominating or dismissive body language.	Maintain professionalism in the parking lot as well as the dais.

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The Discipline of Governance

Strong governance is intentional. It requires practice.



Recap

- **Know your role:** Stay in the strategic lane.
- **Run disciplined meetings:** Use the Chair and rules to protect fairness.
- **Make clear decisions:** Seek clarity over unanimity.
- **Hold yourselves accountable:** Culture requires constant maintenance.

Call to Action

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Identify one behavior to strengthen starting today.

Identify one norm to reinforce in the next meeting.

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Accountability and Censure






- **Informal Correction**
When norms aren't enough, process takes over.
- **Chair Intervention**
The Goal: To protect the integrity of the Board, not to punish individuals.
- **Formal Censure**
A formal process with specific consequences. It is a last resort but a necessary tool for preserving governance standards.

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Key Updates to the Board Handbook



**CONTRA COSTA
MOSQUITO
& VECTOR
CONTROL
DISTRICT**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Manual


Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District
1000 Main Street
Walpole, CA 94597
925.499.4627
www.contracostamvc.org

Structure	Accountability	Process
Terms	Censure Process	Rosenberg's
President's Role	Code of Conduct	Committee Roles
Chair Limits	Norms	

Region 4 Government Services

Brown Act

"The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know."
 — California Government Code §54950 (Ralph M. Brown Act)



Brown Act Refresher
 Key Points for California Public Officials

Open Meetings

- Public Agencies Must Hold at Least 22 Hours of Open Meetings
- Locations To Be Open Must Be Publicly Accessible, Available to the Public, and Not Closed to the Public

Avoid "Serial Meetings"

- Members can't be present for a series of meetings
- Avoid "Serial Meetings" (Serial Meetings)
- No "Chain of Command" (Serial Meetings)
- No "Serial Meetings" (Serial Meetings)

Required Public Access

- Public Access to Meetings Must Be Provided
- Public Access to Meetings Must Be Provided

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Thank you!



RGS REGIONAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES
 25 YEARS

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The Basic Format for Agenda Item Discussions

1. Chair Opening Comments

Chair announces the agenda item number and states the subject as printed on the agenda and announces the format that will be followed

Example:

“The next agenda item is (number) listed on the agenda as (subject). Our format:

- a. First we will hear the staff report,
- b. Then we will open it up to the Board for clarification and technical questions
- c. From there we will invite public comment
- d. Following that we will discuss the Board’s remarks
- e. And the Board will make a decision
- f. Does anyone on the Board have a conflict of interest in this matter?”

2. Listen to the Report

The appropriate person will give a report (could be staff, consultant or Board member)

3. Check with the Board for Questions

Example:

“Does the Board have any questions for clarification, or technical questions?”

4. Invite Public Comment

Example:

“At this time we would like to invite comments from the public. We have a lot to cover tonight, please limit your comments to no more than 3 minutes.”

Important:

Public comment is one-way traffic, from the public to the Board. No one on the Board should give a response other than “thank you.”

5. Invite and Facilitate Board Discussion

The role of the chair is to help the group think together, clarify proposals, and move us toward workable decisions.

Examples of Opening the Discussion:

“Here is what we are deciding today...”

“Who would like to start?”

“Let’s hear from someone who hasn’t spoken up yet”

Examples of Framing the Proposal

"Can someone summarize what we have talked about so far?"

"It sounds like we are in agreement about...but still need to discuss..."

"Is it fair to say the proposal is ...?"

Important:

- The goal is to come to consensus.
- If the group can't come to consensus, a decision on the proposal could be made by majority rule.

6. Invite a Motion from the Board

"(Name) would you like to make a motion?"

7. Ask for a Second

Example:

"Who would like to second the motion?"

8. Ensure the Motion is Clear

Example:

"It has been moved that we..."

9. Invite Discussion on the Motion

Example:

"Is there any more discussion about the motion?"

Note: If there was a thorough discussion in Step 5, it is likely there will be no more discussion at this point.

10. Take the Vote

Repeat the motion and ask for a vote

Example:

"It's been moved that we..."

"Please indicate if you are voting "aye"

"Please indicate if you are voting "nay"

11. Announce the Results

Repeat the motion, announce the results of the vote and identify the members who voted in the minority.

Example: "The motion passes with a vote of ...with Board members ... dissenting. The motion passed is to..."

Tip Sheet

Managing the Meeting

- **If the discussion becomes circular**, invite a member to make a motion to move the item forward.
- **Silence creates tension**, pose a clear question and allow space for others before speaking again.
- **If the discussion loses its place**, return to the last point of shared understanding before proceeding.
- **If you have an alternative recommendation**, surface it early so it can be considered as part of the discussion.
- **When the conversation drifts off topic**, refocus the group by restating the decision at hand.
- **When side conversations occur**, respectfully intervene to maintain full-group engagement.
- **When one individual dominates the discussion**, use the “international stop sign” and use their name to catch their attention. Then you can acknowledge their contribution and intentionally invite input from someone who has not yet spoken. Another option is to simply say “I appreciate your comments, we have a limited amount of time and I would like others to have the opportunity to participate.”
- **When the discussion becomes repetitive**, label what you are observing. “I’m hearing a few perspectives being repeated—does anyone have anything new to add?”
- **Use time boundaries to move the discussion forward** “Let’s spend two more minutes on this, then determine next steps.”
- **When the Board starts commenting on operations**, redirect the conversation by restating the decision the Board is tasked with making.
- **When someone asks about a personnel matter in a Board meeting**, redirect the conversation and remind them personnel issues are confidential and handled by the GM and not the Board.

Scenarios



1. During open session, one of the Board members asks about a personnel matter.
What is the appropriate response?
2. The Board has been discussing an item for 20 minutes. The same point is being made by every speaker. What can be done to move the Board forward?
3. Board members are supposed to be reviewing the new Fiscal Year budget in open session, some Board members are drilling down on questions, getting very detailed and making suggestions about suppliers that might be able to save money for the District.
What can you say, to refocus the discussion on the budget?
4. Not all Board members are prepared when they come to meetings, what could the Board President do to encourage people to read all the materials prior to meetings?
5. During open session, a Board member brings up a topic that's not on the agenda. How should the President respond?
6. During open session, a Board member starts to argue with remarks made by a resident, in the public comment section of the meeting. What can be done to refocus the meeting?
7. After an information item on a new phone system is presented in open session by the General Manager, Board members start giving the General Manager unsolicited advice on the best way to install the system. How can you get this meeting back on track?
8. In open session, one Board member has been sharing an opinion for over 10 minutes without giving others a chance to speak. What can you do to give others a chance to share their perspective?
9. A few Board members have been very quiet throughout the meeting, what could be done to encourage them to participate?

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District

Fiscal Accountability Role

Natalie Martini
Financial Administrator

Rick Wood, CSDA
Chief Finance & Operations Officer



The Board's Role in Finance is Important

Why care about the dollars?


- Because you have a responsibility to your constituents.
- The Board has a fiduciary responsibility for the dollars and finances of the District.

Five Key Elements to the Fiscal Accountability Role


- Understand the concepts of budget and finance.
- Adopt appropriate financial policies.
- Ensure management and the Board receive and reviews key financial reports.
- Understand the right questions to ask.
- Relate fiscal activities to the mission of the District.

What is a Budget?

- a) A list of employees?
- b) A flexible plan of revenues and expenses?
Answer: b) A flexible plan of revenues and expenses
- c) A record of past spending?
- d) A legal contract?



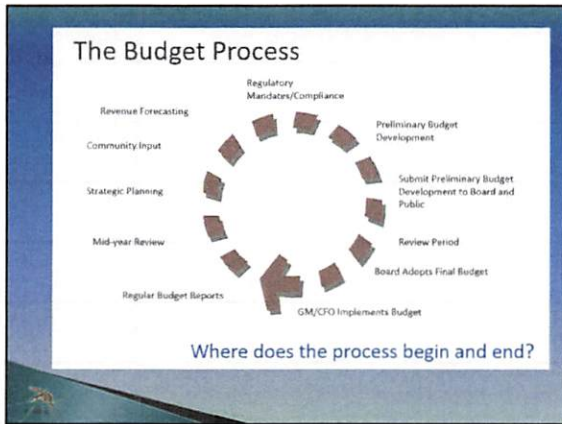
Role of the Budget



- 1. **Planning** - Determine the activities to undertake and the resources it will allocate.
- 2. **Controlling and Administering** - The budget is the legal limit that an agency can expend funds.
- 3. **Reporting and Evaluating** - Use budget to actual results for end-of-period evaluations and report to whom they are accountable.

Understanding the Right Questions to Ask

- How does the District compare budget to actual operations?
- What are specific areas of staff concerns?
- Ensure management and the Board receive and reviews key financial reports.
- Understand the right questions to ask.
- Relate fiscal activities to the mission of the District.



What are Reserves?

- The liquid financial resources (“working capital”) required to insure timely payment obligations
- Evidence of balance sheet liquidity that is often required in order to obtain financing (i.e. a line of credit)
- A buffer against volatility in reserves
- Designated funds available to protect creditors
- Funds set aside for deferred maintenance, renewal, replacement, or future projects

Why Create Reserves

- To provide adequate funding to meet short-term and long-term plans
- To minimize impacts of unanticipated revenue shortfalls or expenditures
- To cover emergencies
- To take advantage of unexpected opportunities



Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District FY26 Reserves

Designated Reserves Policy FY26 (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026)	
Bond/Loan Proceeds Reserve	
*Bond/Loan Proceeds Reserve is equal to current year's principal & interest payments	948,017
Public Health Emergency	2,500,000
Capital Improvement	7,500,000
Emergency Reconstruction Response	500,000
Operations	5,277,366
Vehicle & Equipment Replacement	250,000
IT Equipment Replacement	250,000
	17,225,383

Special District Reserve Guidelines



CSDA created Special District Reserve Guidelines, available through you log in on CSDA's website at www.csd.net

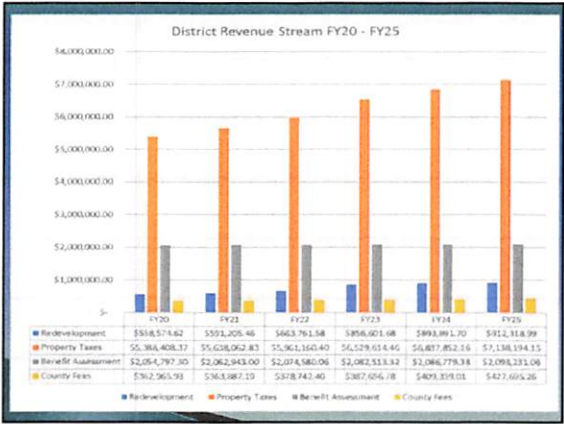
Feel free to email Natalie if you would like a copy emailed to you.

Revenue Stream

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District is primarily funded through local property-related revenue:

- Property Taxes
- Benefit Assessments
- Redevelopment Checks
- Other Sources



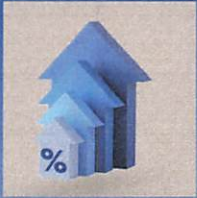


Redevelopment Checks

- Calculated by the difference between old assessed value and the new, lower assessed value of a property.
- Impact of Redevelopment on Expenditures:
 - Increased Service Area
 - Capital Outlay Needs
 - Targeted Surveillance
- MYTH: More development = more income



Property Taxes




- Ad valorem charges based on a home's assessed value (including land and structures) = 1% of purchase price
- The District provides a list of parcels and charge amounts to the Contra Costa County Auditors-Controller annually to be included in the secured property tax roll

Review property tax bill:

- Ad Valorem = Property Taxes
- Special Taxes & Assessments = Benefit Assessment

Key Details to Fiscal Stability

- Long-Term Stability
- Structure/Land Use
- Revenue Sources
- Recent Fiscal Position



What is SB 827?

- Senate Bill 824 (2025) – Effective January 1, 2026
 - Establishes a mandatory fiscal and financial training for local agency officials, including special district Board members.
 - SB 827 was enacted to address concerns about fiscal mismanagement and to promote responsible stewardship of public resources

CSDA will be presenting the SB 827 Live Webinar on Wednesday, March 4, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. (Use CSDA log in credentials to join)

Questions?



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