



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, JANUARY 26, 2026, 2:00 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 2:00 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL: BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jenifer VanAlstein; Bob Smith; Ryan Skidmore; Garrison Moratto; Jeff Chudy

BOARD CLERK PRESENT

Janett Miller

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Bret Haney; Esther Grijalva (2:44p.m.); Steph Thisius; Lauren Cronk; Jasmin LoBasso; Mike Evans

LEGAL COUNSEL

Jacob Thomasy

PUBLIC PRESENT

Gayle Batey; Justin Batey; Noel Madrid from Kya Inc.; Jason List and Jeffrey Land from Isom Advisors
via zoom: Melisa Erikson and Cindy Mendoza from MIG, Inc.; Kristen

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 Bret Haney at 2:00 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: Smith **Second:** Skidmore **Ayes:** VanAlstein; Smith; Skidmore; Moratto; Chudy
Noes: None **Absent:** None **Motion carried.**

6. 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

7. 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 December 15, 2025

C. Financial

Approval of Receipt of Bills and Invoices

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Consent Agenda

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

8. BOARD BUSINESS

A. Approval of Purchase of North Beardsley Playground, Resolution #01-26

Director of Operations and Maintenance Mike Evans requests Board approval of purchase of awarded grant "piggyback" proposal for North Beardsley playground through Omnia partners Contract #2017001134. Mr. Evans stated that this project was approved under the Major Maintenance projects for FY 2025-2026. AFTER DISCUSSION, BOARD APPROVED RESOLUTION #01-26 THE PURCHASE OF GRANT-FUNDED PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT FOR NORTH BEARDSLEY PARK.

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

B. Approval of Purchase of North Beardsley Picnic Shelter, Resolution #02-26

Director of Operation and Maintenance Mike Evans requests Board approval of purchase and installation of a steel hip roof picnic shelter for North Beardsley Park. Mr. Evans stated that the existing picnic shelter at North Beardsley Park has reached its usable capacity and maintaining the wood structure has become increasingly costly. AFTER DISCUSSION, BOARD APPROVED RESOLUTION #02-26 FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A REPLACEMENT SHELTER FOR NORTH BEARDSLEY PARK.

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

C. Recreation Department 2025 Recap Video

Director of Recreation Lauren Cronk presented a video recap outlining the Recreation Department's programs and activities for the 2025 calendar year. Ms. Cronk thanked Digital Content Specialist Paola Hernandez for her dedication and commitment, noting that Ms. Hernandez attended countless meetings to make the recap video possible.

D. Award Contract for the Preparation and Delivery of the District's Master Plan, Resolution #03-26

Director of Planning and Construction Steph Thisius requests Board approval of awarding the contract for the Master Plan, Nexus Study, Strategic Plan and associated services to MIG, Inc. Ms. Thisius explained that due to the volume of data, mapping, and technological advancements implemented since 2019, the Planning Department develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) to retain a consultant capable of providing updated mapping technology, enhanced NOR's GIS system, and Master Plan information suitable for inclusion on the NOR website. The RFP was publicly advertised on the NOR website, in the *Bakersfield Californian*, and through the California Special District Association RFP and RFQ Clearinghouse. Four proposals were received. MIG, Inc. received the highest score based on demonstrated competence and professional qualifications as outlined in the RFP criteria packet. The selection process was conducted in compliance with *Govt. Code §4525 Contracting with Private Architects, Engineering, Land Surveying and Construction Project Management*. Project manager Cindy Mendoza and Melisa Erikson attended the meeting via zoom to respond to questions from the Board. Ms. Mendosa described MIG's philosophy of effectively utilizing resources to balance new development needs while maintaining existing assets. Staff anticipate completion of the project prior to the adoption of the 2027-2028 FY Operating Budget. AFTER DISCUSSION, BOARD APPROVED RESOLUTION #03-26 AWARDING THE CONTRACT FOR THE MASTER PLAN, NEXUS STUDY, STRATEGIC PLAN AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES TO MIG, INC.

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

E. 2026-2027 Capital Improvement Projects Workshop

Director of Planning and Construction Steph Thisius handed out the Capital Improvement Projects Workshop (CIP) handouts to the staff and Board. Ms. Thisius also introduced her planning staff, Administrative Coordinator-Planning Christy Woolfolk and Planner Isaiah Lopez, to the Board, who were present to respond to questions. Ms. Thisius opened the CIP workshop by defining Capital Improvement Projects as outlined by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Ms. Thisius provided a financial overview of the CIP including funding challenges, proposed goals for the upcoming fiscal year, Quimby and Development Fee fund balances, Maintenance District funds, and an overall project timeline.

Ms. Thisius presented renderings of a potential location for the Central Maintenance shop. Director of Operations and Maintenance Mike Evans emphasized the need for a centralized facility to improve operations efficiency and noted that the proposed design allows for future expansion. The Board expresses concern regarding project cost and discussion to continue at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Thisius presented a detailed concept plan for Austin Creek Park including various amenities such as sports fields, a dog park, and hardscape play areas. Ms. Thisius noted that NOR plans to

hold a community meeting in February. Board member Jenifer VanAlstein expresses a preference for a simpler design consisting of grass areas and picnic shelters only. Ms. Thisius addresses the Board's concerns and explained that a turf only design is not feasible due to California water conservation regulations.

During the CIP workshop, representatives from Isom Advisors, Jeffrey Land and Jason List, presented financial options, explaining the differences between private placements and public offerings, and emphasized the importance of tax-exempt financing for public agency. Their presentation focused on general obligation bonds noting that such a bond requires two-thirds voter approval and are repaid through property taxes rather than a general fund. They outlined the bond process, including adopting a bond resolution, filling with County Elections Office, and conducting a public campaign. Mr. List discussed bond measures and related campaign fundraising efforts, stating that a bond campaign for a district of this size would typically require approximately fifty thousand dollars for a thorough campaign. Mr. List noted that costs have declined as outreach shifts way from traditional mail campaigns. The Board discussed whether to conduct a survey to assess community support for a potential bond measure, raising concerns regarding cost and fundraising feasibility. Mr. List indicated that contractors and developers often contribute to bond campaigns. The Board directed staff to prepare a list of projects, provide an estimated cost for a community survey, and bring forward an agenda item at the next Board meeting for consideration of whether to proceed with a bond measure.

At the next Board meeting schedule for February 23, 2026, staff will present the loan end date for the District Administrative Complex, continue discussion and respond to Board questions related to the CIP Workshop, present phase one of Austin Creek Park, and provided detailed financial cost breakdown of the Central Maintenance shop.

9. STAFF REPORTS

A. General Manager

General Manager Bret Haney welcomed new members of the Board, Garrison Moratto and Jeff Chudy. Mr. Haney thanked Crystal Madden and Matt Howard for service noting that Mr. Howard brought valuable experience in both parks and government operations. Mr. Haney advised the Board that training opportunities are available for Board members and noted that registration cost will be covered for those interested. Mr. Haney reported that NOR Director of Finance has stepped down from her role.

B. Capital Improvement Projects

Reports Received and Filed.

C. Financial

General Manager Bret Haney reported that the business department is in the final stages of completing the audit.

D. Personnel

Director of Human Resources Esther Grijalva reviewed the open position and added that the job posting for Director of Finance will close on February 13th.

E. Parks Division

Director of Operation and Maintenance Mike Evans reported a high volume of vandalism and theft occurring throughout the parks. Mr. Evans noted that Riverview Community Center experienced the theft of two air conditioners, and that lighting wiring was removed at North Beardsley and the Skate Park. As preventative measure, staff fabricated metal plates to be welded at damaged locations. Mr. Evans further reported that he and Park Maintenance Safety Manager David

Bojorquez have initiated park lighting audits to identify and address areas with insufficient lighting.

F. Recreation

Director of Recreation Lauren Cronk provided clarification regarding a slice in the recap video presentation. Ms. Cronk explained that the 39 staff members reference the combined total of regular part-time and full-time employees, and that the 325 years of service represents their combined years of service.

G. Community Relations

Director of Community Relations Jasmin LoBasso highlighted NOR Foundation Love Your Park Fun Run & 5k scheduled on February 1, 2026. The 5k race will begin at 8am followed by the Fun Run at 9am. Ms. LoBasso reported that a NOR Pop-Up Rec event will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., offering games and activities for public participation. Ms. LoBasso also noted that an announcement regarding the NOR Rec Pass will be made at 10:00 a.m. Ms. LoBasso further reported that through combined donations the NOR Foundation has raised over sixty thousand dollars.

H. Training

Reports Received and Filed.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

No Correspondence was received in January

11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

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

JEFF CHUDY – have a wonderful day

GARRISON MORATTO – Thanked staff for a warm welcome and for a detail presentation

RYAN SKIDMORE – no comment

JENIFER VANALSTEIN – no comment

BOB SMITH - no comment

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m. to the next meeting of the Board of Directors of North of the River Recreation and Park District scheduled on February 23, 2026, 4:30 p.m. at the Riverlakes Ranch Community Center and District Administrative Complex.

Minutes to be approved at Board
Meeting held on February 23, 2026

Janett Miller

Janett Miller, Clerk of the Board

Jenifer VanAlstein

Jenifer VanAlstein (Feb 24, 2026 13:30:09 PST)

Bret Haney

Bret Haney (Feb 24, 2026 14:38:26 PST)

Bret Haney, General Manager

Jenifer VanAlstein, Chairperson












7B 01-26 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-02-24

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