



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

Meeting Agenda

Santa Clara County Special Districts Association

Monday, December 1, 2025

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://valleywater.zoom.us/j/9747509355>

Meeting ID: 974 750 9355

Join by Phone:

1 (669) 900-9128, 9747509355#

1. Call to Order

Welcome and Introductions

2. Public Comment

Opportunity for members of the public to make comments (3 minutes/speaker)

3. Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Presentation on Recent Milestones and Upcoming Opportunities

Caroline Hernandez, Clerk of the Board, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Lena Eyan, Conservation Policy Specialist, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

4. State Legislative Office Updates

Opportunity to hear updates and ask questions of attending legislative staff

5. Business

- a. Discussion and Action on September 15, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- b. Discussion and Action on Financial Report
- c. Discussion and Possible Action on Draft Travel & Expense Reimbursement Policy

6. Partner Agency Reports

- a. Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Clara County (LAFCO)
 - Neelima Palacherla, Executive Officer
- b. California Special Districts Association (CSDA)
 - Colleen Haley, Public Affairs Field Coordinator, CSDA

7. Santa Clara County Special District Association Member Reports

8. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

- a. Action Item Review
 - b. Adjourn
-



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

Meeting Minutes

Santa Clara County Special Districts Association
September 15, 2025
12:00 p.m. -1:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

SCCSDA President Helen Chapman called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

Members:

Helen Chapman, Director, Santa Clara Valley Open Space District (President)
Brandon Kwan, Director, Rancho Rinconada Recreation and Park District (Vice President)
Jim Beall, Director, Santa Clara Valley Water District (Treasurer)
Frank Maitiski, President, North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District
Sue Fitzpatrick, Trustee, Saratoga Cemetery District
Peter Van Dyke, Board President, Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District
Mark Shumate, Deputy Chief, Santa Clara County Fire Department
Jo Anne “J” Logan, General Manager, Los Altos Hills County Fire District
Craig Gleason, Director, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Gene Zambetti, Commissioner, Saratoga Fire Protection District
Bill Bosworth, Director, Cupertino Sanitary District
Aaron Quigley, Senior Policy Analyst, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Attendees (Non-Voting):

Shiloh Ballard, Director, Santa Clara Valley Water District
Stephanie Moreno, Executive Director, North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District
Yoriko Kishimoto, Director, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Colleen Haley, Public Affairs Field Coordinator, California Special Districts Association

SCCSDA Support Staff:

Roseryn Bhudsabourg, Office of Government Relations, Valley Water
Genevieve Yip, Office of Government Relations, Valley Water
Kalah Williams, Office of Government Relations, Valley Water

2. Public Comment

None.

3. District Overview: North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District (NSCRCD)

Assistant Operating Officer Kirsten Struve provided an update on Valley Water’s Water Supply Master Plan 2050, outlining the agency’s mission, existing water supply system, and current supply mix. Assistant Operating Officer Struve explained the need for long-range planning due to climate change, demand uncertainty, and aging infrastructure. The update uses scenario-based forecasting and shows potential future supply shortages, especially after the Semitropic banking program ends in 2035. She also reported three investment portfolios (Lower Cost, Local Control, and Diversified) were evaluated and that staff recommended an adaptive approach focused on the Lower Cost portfolio while continuing planning for other options. Directors commented on regional coordination and groundwater recharge opportunities.



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

4. State Legislative Office Updates

None.

5. Business

a. **Discussion and Approval of June 2, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

It was moved by Director Sue Fitzpatrick, seconded by Vice President Brandon Kwan, and unanimously carried, that the Board approve the June 2, 2025 meeting minutes.

b. **Discussion and Approval of Financial Report**

President Helen Chapman announced that the financial report item will be called after Items 5C and 5D. It was moved by Director Sue Fitzpatrick, seconded by Director Jim Beall, and unanimously carried, that the Board approve the quarterly financial report

c. **Discussion and Possible Action on Reimbursement on Vice President Brandon Kwan's Attendance at CSDA Annual Conference**

Director Kwan presented his expense report and stated that all expenditures were for SCCSDA business. He noted that it was necessary for him to book a room at the conference host hotel at a higher rate as the block rate was no longer available at the time of his booking. He also briefly went over his activities at the conference.

It was moved by Director Jim Beall, seconded by Director Gene Zambetti, and carried, to approve Vice President Brandon Kwan's reimbursement request for his attendance at the CSDA Annual Conference. Directors Bill Bosworth and Sue Fitzpatrick opposed.

Following the action, the Board discussed the need for a formal travel and expense policy that aligns with municipal standards and emphasizes ethical use of public funds. It was agreed that the policy should provide clear guidance on allowable expenses, encourage cost minimization, and outline reporting requirements for board members attending conferences or other official business.

It was moved by Director Aaron Quigley, seconded by Director Gene Zambetti, and unanimously carried, that the Board direct staff to develop a formal policy on travel reimbursement. Staff stated they will draft a policy for review at a future meeting, incorporating best practices and alignment with policies of government agencies.

d. **Discussion and Possible Action on Reimbursement on Director Sue Fitzpatrick's Attendance at CSDA Annual Conference Attendance**

Director Fitzpatrick presented her expense report, noting that she did not take per diem and was mindful that the costs were funded with public tax dollars. She highlighted steps taken to minimize expenses, such as registering only for the conference, booking a hotel at the block rate, and utilizing included meals. Director Fitzpatrick reiterated the importance of ethical and prudent spending and supported the creation of a formal travel policy to ensure consistency and transparency in future expenditures.

It was moved by Director Jim Beall, seconded by Director Gene Zambetti, and unanimously carried, to approve Director Sue Fitzpatrick's reimbursement request for her attendance at the CSDA Annual Conference.



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

6. Partner Agency Reports

a. **Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Clara County (LAFCO)**

Executive Officer Neelia Palacherla reported that the next LAFCO meeting will be held on October 1. She noted that LAFCO will be initiating a countywide Water and Wastewater Service Review, the first since the water service review in 2012 and the first to include wastewater. The review will examine special districts, city departments, and private/mutual water companies that provide water and wastewater services countywide. If authorized by the Commission, staff will release a draft RFP in the weeks following the October meeting to retain a consultant, with stakeholder feedback to be solicited before returning the RFP for Commission approval in December. There were no questions raised.

b. **California Special Districts Association (CSDA)**

Colleen Haley, Public Affairs Field Coordinator for the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), reported that the CSDA Annual Conference attendance exceeded 1,000 this year, which created room block and space limitations. She reported CSDA continues to select the lowest-cost venues suitable for the conference size, typically Monterey or Palm Springs, but may need alternative locations in the future. President Helen Chapman thanked Colleen for taking SCCSDA's feedback on the conference regarding the block room rates.

She provided a legislative update, reporting that Brown Act changes were consolidated into SB 707/AB 259, which includes CSDA's sponsored language on virtual meetings for Just Cause emergencies. The bill passed and is awaiting the Governor's action. CSDA's Clean Fleet Vehicles bill became a two-year bill but is expected to return next year. She also reported on upcoming events, including the Board Clerk Conference (October 27-30, 2015) and two Legislative Academies in October and November. Dates for the spring Legislative Meeting in Sacramento are pending.

7. Santa Clara County Special District Association Member Reports

Director Jim Beall reported that Valley Water is hosting Coastal Cleanup Day on September 20, which coordinates local creek cleanup events throughout Santa Clara County as part of the statewide effort to prevent pollution from entering the ocean. Director Peter Van Dyke reported on Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District's ongoing work in South County, including Pajaro Watershed resiliency discussions, small farm meetings on proposed County zoning changes, and projects on soil health, carbon sequestration, and grower workshops. He noted concerns that zoning changes do not address key challenges for growers, such as regulation and permitting. He also highlighted coordination on wildlife corridors, flood control opportunities, and engagement with Ohlone groups. President Helen Chapman encouraged his participation in the County's upcoming Agricultural Mitigation Plan meeting. Director Aaron Quigley shared that, in addition to the Brown Act bill, the Legislature also approved a package of bills extending the state's cap-and-trade program to 2045, which will continue funding for environmental and transportation projects. President Helen Chapman noted that many agencies are working on similar issues, and it is helpful to collaborate when everyone comes together.



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

8. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

a. Action Item Review

Staff will work with President Chapman and Director Fitzpatrick on a draft policy for official travel reimbursement.

b. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 p.m.



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

Item 5B. Financial Report

Balance on hand as of 9/12/2025	\$9,018.03
Deposits	+100.00
Withdrawals	
<i>Reimbursement for Vice President Brandon Kwan's Attendance at CSDA Annual Conference</i>	<i>-\$3,627.82</i>
<i>Reimbursement for Director Sue Fitzpatrick's Attendance at CSDA Annual Conference</i>	<i>-\$2,012.13</i>
<i>Catering for September Quarterly Meeting Held on September 15, 2025</i>	<i>-\$175.47</i>
Remaining Balance as of 11/26/2025	\$3,302.61



SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

5770 Almaden Expressway • San Jose, California 95118 • (408) 265-2600

Item 5C. Discussion and Possible Action on Draft Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy

BACKGROUND

At the Board's direction at the September 15, 2025 SCCSDA meeting, staff developed a draft Travel and Expense Policy in coordination with President Helen Chapman and Director Sue Fitzpatrick. The intent of the policy is to reflect best practices, align with municipal standards, and emphasize the responsible and ethical use of public funds.

DISCUSSION

To inform the development of the draft policy, staff conducted a brief survey of regional agencies to identify existing policies and understand current practices. Staff benchmarked policies from the following agencies:

1. County of Santa Clara
2. Valley Water
3. Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
4. Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
5. Rancho Rinconada Recreation and Park District
6. Saratoga Fire Protection District
7. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
8. West Valley Sanitation District
9. North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District
10. City of San Jose
11. City of Santa Clara

While the Cupertino Sanitary District does not maintain a formal travel policy, staff incorporated feedback provided by Director Bill Bosworth.

RECOMMENDATION

Review and provide direction on the attached draft Travel and Expense Policy.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft SCCSDA Travel and Expense Policy

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

DRAFT

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and uniform standards for reimbursing travel and business-related expenses incurred while conducting official business on behalf of the Santa Clara County Special Districts Association (“SCCSDA” or “Association”).
- 1.2. As a public agency, SCCSDA must ensure that all expenditures of public funds:
 - 1.2.1. Directly support a legitimate public purpose;
 - 1.2.2. Represent the most economical and responsible use of public resources; and
 - 1.2.3. Avoid any appearance of personal benefit, misuse, or excessive spending.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Authorized Representative: Any Member Representative, or individual formally authorized to represent SCCSDA in official business.
- 2.2. Official Business: Activities explicitly approved by SCCSDA, including conferences, trainings, workshops, intergovernmental meetings, and stakeholder or collaborative efforts directly related to SCCSDA’s purpose as defined in the Chapter’s bylaws.
- 2.3. Economical Option: The lowest reasonable cost alternative that meets the requirements of the business purpose, including use of government or group rates whenever available.
- 2.4. Reimbursable Expense: An expenditure incurred by an Authorized Representative that meets all eligibility requirements in this policy.
- 2.5. Non-Reimbursable Expense: Any expenditure that does not meet eligibility criteria, is primarily personal in nature, or is excessive or unrelated to Official Business.

3. Ethical Standards & Public Funds Requirements

- 3.1. All expenditures must comply with:
 - 3.1.1. California Government Code §§ 53232–53232.3 (AB 1234);
 - 3.1.2. California Government Code § 8314 (Misuse of Public Resources);

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

DRAFT

3.1.3. California Government Code § 1090 and the Political Reform Act; and

3.1.4. Applicable FPPC regulations.

3.2. Reimbursable expenses shall:

3.2.1. Be necessary, reasonable, and solely related to official business;

3.2.2. Be the most cost-effective option available;

3.2.3. Never include personal, extravagant, or recreational costs; and

3.2.4. Be appropriate for review by the public, media, or auditors.

3.3. Expenditures shall not include:

3.3.1. Personal entertainment, recreation, or amenities unrelated to official business;

3.3.2. Alcohol;

3.3.3. Excessive or luxury accommodations or travel upgrades.

3.4. Ineligible Participation in Conferences and Training

Authorized Representatives shall not attend educational conferences, seminars, workshops, courses, or professional meetings if:

3.4.1. The event offers no significant or demonstrable benefit to SCCSDA;

3.4.2. The opportunity occurs after the individual has announced their resignation; or

3.4.3. The event has not received preauthorization by the SCCSDA Board.

3.5. Travel or training that primarily provides personal enjoyment or networking without a clear official business benefit is not eligible for reimbursement.

3.6. Junkets (e.g., travel or events primarily for personal pleasure at public expense) are strictly prohibited.

4. Eligible Activities

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

DRAFT

4.1. Reimbursement is allowed only for official business, including:

4.1.1. Conferences, trainings, workshops, or continuing education directly related to SCCSDA's purpose;

4.1.2. Intergovernmental, regional, or legislative meetings where SCCSDA representation is required or directed;

4.1.3. Panels, speaking engagements, or collaborative efforts where SCCSDA has a formal role.

4.2. Not Eligible

4.2.1. Attendance at SCCSDA quarterly business meetings;

4.2.2. Routine internal meetings or events that are part of normal governance functions;

4.2.3. Any activity that does not provide clear benefit to SCCSDA.

5. Pre-Authorization

5.1. All reimbursable travel or expenses must receive advance approval from the SCCSDA Board.

5.2. Requests must include:

5.2.1. The official business purpose;

5.2.2. Estimated costs;

5.2.3. Confirmation that the most economical options were considered;

5.2.4. Additional supporting documentation,

5.3. Expenses incurred without prior authorization will not be reimbursed.

6. Reimbursable Expenses

6.1. Transportation

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

DRAFT

- 6.1.1. Personal Vehicle: Reimbursed at the IRS standard mileage rate; most direct route required; travel to quarterly meetings is not reimbursable.
- 6.1.2. Air Travel: Economy/coach class only; no upgrades, early boarding, or priority seating; government or group rates must be used when available.
- 6.1.3. Ground Transportation: Public transit or hotel shuttles preferred; taxis/rideshare only when more efficient; rental cars limited to standard or smaller class and only when necessary.

6.2. Lodging

- 6.2.1. Standard room accommodations only; luxury lodging is prohibited.
- 6.2.2. Lodging will not be reimbursed for events within a reasonable commuting distance, except when attendance at a multi-day conference or event requires an overnight stay to participate in official sessions.
- 6.2.3. Government or conference rates must be used when available.
- 6.2.4. Itemized receipts are required for reimbursement.
- 6.2.5. Lodging for the night before or after a conference or event will not generally be reimbursed. Lodging the night prior to the start of an event may be approved in certain circumstances. If the attendee can depart at or after 6:00 a.m. on the first day of the event and arrive on time, lodging the night prior will not be reimbursed.

6.3. Meals

- 6.3.1. Actual costs will be reimbursed up based on per diem established by the General Services Administration (GSA).
- 6.3.2. Alcohol is not reimbursable.
- 6.3.3. Tips must be reasonable and consistent with public agency standards.
- 6.3.4. Meals provided as part of a conference, event, or meeting registration (including group meals or catered events) will not be reimbursed separately. Attendees are expected to utilize provided meals when available.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

DRAFT

6.4. Eligible Business Expenses

- 6.4.1. Conference or registration fees;
- 6.4.2. Required internet or business communication services;
- 6.4.3. Modest parking fees;
- 6.4.4. Necessary program materials.

6.5. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

- 6.5.1. Alcohol;
- 6.5.2. Entertainment, recreation, movies, tours, or personal excursions;
- 6.5.3. Room service or minibar items;
- 6.5.4. Expenses for spouses, partners, or guests;
- 6.5.5. Laundry for trips under 5 days;
- 6.5.6. Gifts, souvenirs, toiletries, or clothing;
- 6.5.7. Travel that includes personal vacation elements;
- 6.5.8. Costs exceeding reasonable government or group rates.

7. Documentation & Submittal Requirements

7.1. All reimbursement requests must:

- 7.1.1. Be submitted within 30 days of the expense;
- 7.1.2. Use the SCCSDA Reimbursement Form;
- 7.1.3. Include itemized receipts for expenses of \$25 or more;
- 7.1.4. Identify any personal travel portion, which is not reimbursable;
- 7.1.5. Demonstrate that the expense reflected the most economical option;

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

TRAVEL & EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

DRAFT

7.1.6. Be reviewed by the Treasurer and approved by the Executive Committee.

7.1.7. Individuals receiving reimbursement must be prepared to provide a brief report summarizing the value and relevance of any conference or meeting attended at SCCSDA expense.

8. Travel Advances

8.1. No travel advances will be issued.

8.2. All reimbursable expenses must be incurred first and submitted for reimbursement after completion of the travel or event.

9. Violations

9.1. Improper claims, misuse of public funds, or failure to follow this policy may result in:

9.1.1. Denial of reimbursement;

9.1.2. Repayment obligations;

9.1.3. Loss of future reimbursement privileges;

9.1.4. Referral to appropriate authorities if warranted

Adopted: December/March, X, 2025/26 [TO BE UPDATED]