



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

AGENDA

Regular Meeting

May 08, 2025 05:30 PM

West County Services Center, 16390 Main Street, Guerneville

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/94877739130?pwd=zzpFHFLY3ULbjrrlYo3cfubCeA5Bxl.1>

Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata • Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes • Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative: Tony Goodwin • Guerneville Representative: Joe Rogoff • Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott • Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke • Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative: Patty Thayer • Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar • Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton • Non-Voting Student Representative: Faye Zamora

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council will make reasonable accommodations for persons having special needs due to disabilities. Please contact the Fifth District Field Representative at 707-565-1219 during regular business hours at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to ensure necessary accommodations are made.

1. Call to Order

A. Announcement from Spanish Interpreter: The Spanish language interpreter will provide information about how to access the interpretation channel via Zoom or obtain a headset if attending in-person.

B. Roll Call

2. Approval of the Agenda

☒ Discussion ☒ Possible Action

This approval process ensures that the agenda accurately reflects the items to be discussed and decided upon. Members may request adjustments to the agenda, including reordering or deletion of items at this time. Any changes must comply with the Brown Act requirements for public notice and agenda setting. The agenda must be finalized before the Council proceeds with other meeting items.

3. Statement of Conflict of interest

☒ Discussion

This is the time for the Chair, Vice Chair and Council Members to indicate any statements of conflict of interest for any item listed on this agenda. The River MAC bylaws state that members

will not involve themselves in official River MAC activities that could materially benefit them personally, their business interests, or the interests of organizations that they represent. In a conflict of interest, the member will abstain from voting, and the abstention will be recorded in the minutes.

4. Consent Agenda

☒ Discussion ☒ Possible Action

These items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. The Lower Russian River MAC will act upon them at one time without discussion. Any Representatives, staff member or interested party may request that an item be removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

A. March 13, 2025 Minutes

B. April 10, 2025 Minutes

5. Councilmember Comment

This is an opportunity for Councilmembers to provide a brief comments, restricted to matters within the Board's jurisdiction. Due to Brown Act regulations, this is not a time for discussion of any item, however a brief dialogue about considering an item for a future agenda is permitted during this time.

6. Public Comment on Matters not listed on the Agenda

Comments are restricted to matters within the Lower Russian River MAC's jurisdiction. Please be brief and limit spoken comments to two minutes. While Councilmembers may not respond to or discuss comments except to express interest in agendizing the topic for a future meeting, staff can briefly address or follow up after the meeting.

7. County Update

☒ Discussion ☒ Possible Action

Updates and Remarks from Supervisor Hopkins and / or Staff Report(s)

A. Proposed Russian River Sanitation Sewer Capacity Charge and Rate Increases

On May 13 the Board of Supervisors will be reviewing and taking action on new capacity charge rates. The item is scheduled to begin at 10:05 AM at Board Chambers, 575 Administration Drive in Santa Rosa.

Capacity charges are one-time fees assessed on new construction or reassessed parcels to help offset the costs of sewer infrastructure, ensuring those expenses are fairly shared among all users of the sewer system. The capacity charges study is separate from customer sewer rates.

The proposed rate per ESD (Equivalent Single Family Dwelling) in the Russian River CSD is \$15,589, while the current rate is \$5,969.

More information and FAQ's about the sewer capacity charges can be found online at: <https://www.sonomawater.org/capacity-charges>.

Additionally, Russian River **rates** are proposed to increase 8.5% to an annual rate of \$2,486 for

Fiscal Year 2025-26. The sanitation rate relief program will continue to be available to qualifying residential customers and non-profits that provide housing to low-income renters.

A. Review draft of magnet to be produced and used for outreach purposes

8. Sheriff's Office Update from Sheriff Eddie Engram

☒ Discussion

Sheriff Engram will provide the Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) with a mid- program update on the Sheriff's Office [pilot program to temporarily re-establish the Narcotics Unit](#). The program, launched on November 12, 2024, and funded through June 15, 2026, utilizes unspent allocations from the discontinued Solano County Out-of-County Jail Agreement.

The presentation will cover:

- Data on arrests, drug seizures, inter-agency collaborations, and community outreach efforts, with a particular focus on activities in the Lower Russian River area.
- Next steps for the program, including opportunities for public engagement and the exploration of future funding options.

In addition, Sheriff Engram has been invited to provide updates on the following topics:

- The status of the Guerneville Substation.
- The role and activity of Regional Parks Deputies, whose work enhances law enforcement coverage in unincorporated areas.

The MAC welcomes any other information the Sheriff may wish to share that is of relevance to the Lower Russian River community.

9. Formation of Ad Hoc Committee to Ensure Community Voice and Context in District Formation Outreach

☒ Discussion ☒ Possible Action

On March 25, 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved an agreement with RSG, Inc., to provide [District Formation Advisory Services](#). As part of this effort, RSG will launch an initial community engagement phase, anticipated to last approximately two months, focused on supporting interested communities in exploring options for organizing local services and governance.

The goal is to offer technical assistance and information to any community that may wish to consider district formation or other local governance strategies as a way to strengthen self-determination and improve service delivery. This work builds on previous conversations across the Lower Russian River region and elsewhere regarding community needs and aspirations for greater local control.

To assist with localized outreach and ensure community voices are central to the process, staff recommends forming a temporary ad hoc committee of interested Lower Russian River MAC Representatives and/or Alternates. This committee would work with 5th District Supervisor's Office staff, County Administrator's Office staff, and/or RSG consultants to help tailor engagement efforts to the diverse needs of Lower Russian River communities.

The ad hoc committee would dissolve upon completion of the initial two-month community engagement phase. Broader technical assistance efforts under the RSG contract will continue beyond this phase to support any interested communities in further exploring opportunities, including — if desired by the community — district formation or other governance changes.

10. Consideration of Hearing Request and / or Formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to review UPE24-0077, 6615 Front Street, Forestville

☒ **Discussion** ☒ **Possible Action**

Permit Sonoma intends to post a Notice of Hearing Waiver for the this project on May 8, 2025. The Use Permit approval will be issued without a public hearing, unless a written request is received for a public hearing. If a written hearing request is received within 10 days of the Notice of Hearing Waiver, a public hearing will be scheduled.

Project Description: Request to modify Use Permit UPE20-0046 to allow a 735 sq. ft. outdoor dining area under a new 1,200 sq. ft. arbor structure, legalization of an existing shade structure, and reconfiguration of the parking lot to add a waiting area and bicycle parking in place of two spaces, to an existing restaurant offering indoor dining, takeout food, and alcohol sales. Up to 24 community or promotional events may be held annually, limited to two per month and 49 attendees per event. The existing 1,490 sq. ft. restaurant will continue to operate from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week, with 21 employees and approximately 120 daily visitors. A total of 13 on-site parking spaces will be provided, supported by a shared parking agreement for 35 nearby spaces and 20 bicycle parking spots. All existing utilities will remain. This Use Permit (UPE24-0077) shall supersede all prior Use Permit approvals.

Potential Actions:

- 1) Consider recommending that District 5 submit a hearing request for this Use Permit modification
- 2) Form an Ad Hoc comprised of a maximum of 4 named members to review the Use Permit modification application and identify potential impacts, missing information, and any potential conditions or mitigations in order to bring the topic back to the full River MAC at a regular meeting for discussion and possible action to provide feedback to District 5 and Permit Sonoma.

Note: The role of the Lower Russian River MAC is not to approve or deny a project, but rather identify key concerns, gather community input, and elevate issues that should be considered during the decision-making process.

11. Community Engagement Discussion

☒ **Discussion** ☒ **Possible Action**

This is an opportunity for discussion regarding scheduling for tabling at upcoming events, calendar input for other events, or to report on individual outreach to other MACs or community groups regarding engagement initiatives and best practices.

12. Adjournment



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Regular Meeting

March 13, 2025 05:30 PM

West County Services Center, 16390 Main Street, Guerneville

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes.

Meeting Recordings: <https://www.youtube.com/@sonomacounty5thdistrict>

Direct Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AkI7QvtnbY>

A. Announcement from Spanish Interpreter: The Spanish language interpreter will provide information about how to access the interpretation channel via Zoom or obtain a headset if attending in-person.

B. Roll Call

Present: Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott, Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke, Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative: Patty Thayer, Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes, Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton, Forestville Alternate Cari Hernandez, Rio Nido Alternate Jenn Otten
Absent: Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata, Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative: Tony Goodwin, Guerneville Representative: Joe Rogoff, Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar, Non-Voting Student Representative Faye Zamora

- 2. Approval of the Agenda** Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke motioned to approve. Non-Voting Student Representative Faye Zamora seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

7 In Favor 0 Opposed

 Abstained Absent Recused

3. Statement of Conflict of Interest

There were no statements of conflict of interest.

4. Councilmember Comment

Betsy suggested inviting Russian River Recreation and Park District to a MAC meeting for an update on the Dam installation and other topics. Additionally, Betsy requested to hear updates about impacts on our community to healthcare / Medi-Cal due to Federal administration. Perhaps an update from West County Community Health?

5. Public Comment on Matters not listed on the Agenda

Cynthia Halliday (representing the new Hollydale Canyon Terrace COPE group):

Cynthia Halliday introduced a newly formed COPE (Communities Organizing to Prepare for Emergencies) group in the Hollydale Canyon Terrace area. She explained the group's mission to organize neighbors in preparation for emergencies, complementing existing Fire Safe and Firewise efforts. She acknowledged mentorship from the Northern Sonoma County COPE and initial encouragement from Vicki Clewes and Steve Finnegan. Halliday emphasized the group's focus on emergency preparedness activities and their continued engagement on issues like egress and communication.

Steve Finnegan (resident, Russian River Terrace):

Steve Finnegan raised concerns about a damaged section of Summerhome Park Road near Russian River Terrace. He highlighted the potential risk to emergency egress during wildfires or floods and requested a comprehensive plan to address both the road repair and emergency access. Finnegan also expressed appreciation for the County's ongoing efforts and asked for an update by May to share with his neighborhood association.

Vesta Copestakes (online public commenter): Vesta Copestakes announced an upcoming Forestville Town Hall scheduled for March 27 at the El Molino Library. She also requested a future agenda item inviting Public Infrastructure staff to present updates on road repairs and planned projects, emphasizing the value of in-person presentations.

6. County Update

Supervisor Lynda Hopkins provided a broad update on key initiatives and ongoing issues in West County. She began with the exciting news of a major land acquisition—1,500 acres being added to Monte Rio Redwoods Park. The expansion is expected to go before the Board of Supervisors in May for final approval. A public survey will be launched soon to help guide the park's master plan. In addition to this parcel, other properties owned by the Sweetwater Springs Water District are being considered, which could expand the total area to over 2,000 acres and potentially connect Monte Rio all the way to the coast.

On the infrastructure front, the major slide on Westside Road remains a critical concern. Public Infrastructure Director Johannes Hoevertsz is exploring engineering options to allow at least a one-lane reopening, with a Bailey Bridge also under consideration. Avoiding simultaneous closures of Westside Road and the Wohler Bridge is a priority, especially with fire season on the horizon. Emergency road funding will be discussed during the April budget hearings, and community support may be needed to push those efforts forward—especially given similar road failures in other districts.

Community members were encouraged to review and comment on CAL FIRE's updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps, which influence building standards, defensible space rules, and real estate disclosures. Although the state claims the maps won't affect insurance decisions, there's concern that insurance providers may still use them as justification for dropping or denying coverage.

The conversation then turned to local grant funding. The Fifth District office recently reviewed applications for the Community Investment Fund (CIF) and the Tourism Impact

Fund (TIF), prioritizing support for West County nonprofits. Not all of the funds have been distributed, so a second round of applications will be reviewed later this year. Community groups who haven't yet applied are encouraged to do so. Links to both grants can be found at <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/district5>.

Acknowledging the continued hardships for downtown Guerneville businesses impacted by state-led construction, plans are in place to recommend funding for the Russian River Chamber. The goal is to hire an expert to assist businesses in filing claims with Cal OES—since other routes, including outreach to state representatives and agencies, haven't yielded results. In fact, the most useful information has come not from the state, but from the project contractor.

A proposed update to Permit Sonoma's public hearing and administrative procedures also drew attention. These changes aim to streamline permitting by shifting certain responsibilities, consolidating oversight, and eliminating some advisory bodies. However, after receiving significant public feedback, the proposal is being sent back to the Planning Agency for further review, ensuring meaningful public input remains a top priority.

Hopkins also clarified that the seasonal dam on the Russian River is managed by the Russian River Recreation and Park District, while the bridge crossing is handled by County Public Infrastructure—a point of confusion for many residents.

Reflecting on the recent All-MAC meeting, she expressed pride in the MAC's leadership and effectiveness, noting that other districts were impressed by the group's ability to make things happen locally. Credit was given to staff, particularly Che and Debbie, for their dedication and consistent follow-through.

Regarding the proposed asphalt plant, Supervisor Hopkins may not take stance, due to legal constraints—Board members must remain neutral ahead of land use hearings. Taking a position now would require recusal from the final vote. However, the public is encouraged to submit feedback directly to the project planner, Stephen Schurke (stephen.schurke@sonoma-county.org), as the project is still in early stages and likely several years from coming before the Board.

Supervisor Hopkins concluded by noting that decisions about certain County-generated funds—particularly those relevant to West County—will be coming up soon. Updates will be shared with the community as more information becomes available.

7. Sonoma County Tourism: Diversity, Sustainability & Stewardship

Kelly Bass Siebel, Vice President of Community Engagement for Sonoma County Tourism, was welcomed to speak about a new initiative titled *Wine Country for All of Us*. She began by thanking the group for including her on the agenda and expressed appreciation for their engagement with tourism in the community, noting that public sentiment has ebbed and flowed over the years.

She emphasized the important role tourism plays in the local economy of West County and provided an overview of Sonoma County Tourism, which is a 501(c)(6) destination stewardship organization. It was one of the first of its kind in the country, shifting its focus in 2018 from solely promoting tourism to also stewarding the community and preserving local resources.

Organizational Structure and Funding

The organization is primarily funded through a 2% Business Improvement Area (BIA) assessment on lodging properties generating over \$350,000 in annual revenue—excluding those in the cities of Sonoma and Healdsburg, which opted out when the BIA was established

20 years ago. Additionally, 1.25% of the County's Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) from the unincorporated areas supports Sonoma County Tourism's broader stewardship and community engagement efforts.

The board consists of lodging industry professionals and appointees from the Board of Supervisors. West County is well represented, with local board members including Kirstyne Lange, Margaret Grahame (Timber Cove), Crista Luedtke, and Joe Bartolomei.

Economic Impact and Current Trends

Kelly Bass Siebel reviewed tourism's economic impact in 2023, noting:

- \$2.2 billion in visitor spending
- Nearly 22,000 jobs (approximately 1 in 10 local jobs)
- \$121 million in local tax revenue, with \$60 million coming from the unincorporated areas
- Over 10,000 tourism-related jobs in unincorporated Sonoma County

She acknowledged that the tourism industry has faced compounding challenges since 2017—including wildfires, floods, and the pandemic. In 2023 and into 2024, recovery continued to be uneven. Businesses in West County were especially impacted by winter rain and ongoing economic slowdowns.

A recent non-visitor study revealed that lack of awareness and negative perceptions of San Francisco have deterred potential visitors, particularly from outside California.

New Campaign: Wine Country for All of Us

Sonoma County Tourism is launching a multi-year initiative titled *Wine Country for All of Us*, which expands on the organization's commitment to inclusivity, sustainability, and stewardship. It builds on their brand slogan, *Life Opens Up*, and aims to position Sonoma County as an inclusive and welcoming destination.

Key Components:

1. Accessibility – Partnership with Wheel the World

A booking platform for travelers with physical disabilities, visual impairments, or hearing loss. Wheel the World will assess at least 70 local businesses and offer verified accessibility data to users, increasing traveler confidence and comfort.

2. Hospitality Training – Partnership with HospitableMe

Launching a curriculum titled *Seven Secrets of Hospitality*, focusing on inclusivity training for frontline hospitality staff. The training addresses diverse needs of travelers, including those from the LGBTQ+ community, Black travelers, Jewish travelers, and more.

3. Paid Marketing Campaign

The new campaign leans into the identity of "Wine Country," while showcasing diverse experiences such as zip-lining, coastal adventures, and farm-to-table cuisine. All imagery is sourced from real user-generated content, reflecting authentic visitor experiences.

The campaign is running in the Bay Area, key flight markets, and, for the first time, in Chicago and New York. Pixel tracking is used to better measure ROI, monitoring visitor engagement from ad click to physical arrival.

Sustainability Efforts

Sonoma County Tourism continues its sustainability programming with initiatives such as:

- **Black Cod Week**, promoting sustainable local seafood in partnership with the fishing

community, the Economic Development Board, and District 5 staff.

- **Leave No Trace Partnership**, creating unified messaging and providing free toolkits to businesses, including signage, window stickers, table tents, and posters tailored to river, coastal, and inland environments.
- **Geo-fenced App Messaging**, using the SonomaCounty.com app to send real-time messages to visitors in targeted areas (e.g., Russian River beaches) to encourage responsible recreation.

Potential collaborations were proposed to further reduce summer impacts, such as parking congestion and litter in sensitive areas like river beaches. Additionally, it was recommended to explore more ways to integrate visitor education at vacation rentals, hotels, and through permitting processes.

Discussion & Community Feedback

During the discussion, several community members and MAC members raised concerns and suggestions:

- **Vacation Rental Messaging:** There was interest in creating mandatory in-room materials for rentals (similar to Tahoe), including sustainability and parking rules. The idea of providing reusable “pack-it-in, pack-it-out” bags was also suggested.
- **Family-Friendly Content:** Several attendees noted that the campaign visuals were too focused on wine and lacked representation of families, children, and affordable or outdoor recreation. There was support for adding a prominent “Family” tab to the tourism website.
- **Cultural and Language Inclusion:** A community member suggested expanding materials into Spanish and ensuring bilingual communication in public-facing content.
- **Broader Recreation and Culinary Representation:** There was a request to more explicitly promote Sonoma County’s trail systems, surf spots, crabbing, wildlife viewing, and high- quality yet affordable culinary options.
- **Neighborhood Impacts:** Residents stressed the importance of managing summer traffic, parking issues, and day-visitor impacts in residential neighborhoods, calling for clearer rules and neighborhood outreach.
- **Stronger Inter-Agency Collaboration:** Several participants urged more coordination with Permit Sonoma and vacation rental permitting processes to ensure tourism education materials are disseminated consistently.

Kelly Bass Siebel welcomed the feedback and expressed interest in forming a working group or community brainstorming session before the summer season to explore signage solutions, targeted messaging, and new partnerships.

8. Ad Hoc Committees

A. Land Use Ad Hoc: Discussion re: PLP25-0001: Cargo Container Storage Facility in Pocket Canyon

The Ad hoc met on March 4 to review the Completeness Referral Packet and have several questions about the project. This is an opportunity for the full MAC to discuss the application and draft feedback to the Planner. The applicant has been invited to attend to answer questions.

Ad hoc members: Betsy Van Dyke, Thai Hilton, Cari Hernandez, and Patty Thayer

The River MAC instructed staff to provide the following feedback to Brendan Norton, the Planner:

The Lower Russian River MAC reviewed the project referenced in the attached referral packet, PLP25-0001, at their March 13 meeting, at which the Applicant was present to answer questions. Please see below for comments and request for additional information.

1. The River MAC sees merit in this project. There is a need for this service in the area and the applicant has been a good steward of the property.
2. The application proposes eight storage units. Would additional permitting be required for expansion?
3. Will the applicant be required to add concrete slabs? If so, what are the environmental implications? For example: impacts on nearby creeks, runoff, potential flooding?

Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke motioned to approve.

Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

7 In Favor 0 Opposed

 Abstained Absent Recused

B. Community Engagement & Outreach Plan Ad Hoc

The MAC will review and consider adoption of the 2025 Community Engagement and Outreach Plan

Ad hoc members: Vicki Clewes, Patty Thayer, Cari Hernandez, Betsy Van Dyke, and Faye Zamora

The 2025 Community Engagement and Outreach Plan was adopted.

Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton motioned to approve. Monte Rio / Villa Grande

Representative: Patty Thayer seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

7 In Favor 0 Opposed

 Abstained Absent Recused

9. Consent Agenda

A. February 13 Minutes

Patty Thayer and Jenn Otten abstained because they did not attend the February meeting.

Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton motioned to approve. Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

5 In Favor Opposed

2 Abstained Absent Recused

B. 2024 Lower Russian River Annual Report

The 2024 River MAC Annual Report was accepted.

Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton motioned to approve. Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

 7 In Favor 0 Opposed
 Abstained Absent Recused

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM



Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council

Minutes

Regular Meeting

April 10, 2025 05:30 PM

West County Services Center, 16390 Main Street, Guerneville

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac>

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes.

Pip Marquez de La Plata arrived at 5:34 PM

a recording of this meeting is located

here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1mDef-BR3wor>

here: <https://www.youtube.com/@sonomacounty5thdistrict>

- A. Announcement from Spanish Interpreter: The Spanish language interpreter will provide information about how to access the interpretation channel via Zoom or obtain a headset if attending in-person.

B. Roll Call

Present: Chair & Rio Nido Representative: Pip Marquez de la Plata, Vice Chair & Hacienda Representative: Vicki Clewes, Guerneville Representative: Joe Rogoff, Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke, Monte Rio / Villa Grande Representative: Patty Thayer, Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar, Non-Voting Student Representative: Faye Zamora, Cazadero / Duncans Mills Alternate Terry Gwiazdowski, Forestville Alternate Cari Hernandez

Absent: Cazadero / Duncan Mills Representative: Tony Goodwin, Guerneville Representative: Spencer R. Scott, Forestville Representative: Thai Hilton

Staff Present: Debbie Ramirez & Lupe Catalan, District 5 Field Representatives Tracy Lyons, District 5 Chief of Staff, remote

2. Approval of the Agenda

The motion to approve the agenda was approved after public comment was made by Lloyd Guccione noting that there is not a "correspondence received" section of the agenda. Staff explained that his correspondence regarding non-agenda items had been distributed to members via email and was not formally agendized per Lower Russian River MAC procedures.

Guerneville South / Pocket Canyon Representative: Betsy Van Dyke motioned to approve. Forestville Representative: Lonnie Lazar seconded the motion.

The motion passed with the following vote:

8 In Favor 0 Opposed

☐ Abstained ☐ Absent ☐ Recused

3. Statement of Conflict of Interest

There were no statements of conflict of interest.

4. Councilmember Comment

Councilmember Joe Rogoff expressed interest in exploring how the MAC could more effectively respond to public comments without requiring full agenda placement.

Staff clarified that the Brown Act limits such discussions unless agendized, but individual members may follow up independently.

5. Public Comment on Matters not listed on the Agenda

Maeve Bergman thanked Supervisor Hopkins for her leadership around the acquisition of the Neely Hill and Silver Estates properties. She asked about the progress on the water management plan that was part of the Silver Estates project. Staff subsequently connected her with the appropriate person at Sonoma Water, the agency handling the process for the sanitation district.

Lloyd Guccione commented that he would like the MAC to agendize the George's Hideaway project and also would like the MAC to publish written public comment on non-agenda items in their meeting agendas.

Mike Nicholls provided an update on the Forestville Connect broadband project, which received a \$17 million grant. The project will serve over 500 homes and is being coordinated with Caltrans and local infrastructure planning.

6. County Update

Field Representative Debbie Ramirez shared a draft promotional magnet design to assist with MAC community outreach, shared that Sheriff Engram was confirmed to provide an update on the Narcotics Task Force at the May meeting, and that Permit Sonoma would present on the the General Plan Update at the June meeting.

7. Sonoma County's Legislative Affairs: Advocacy at the State and Federal Levels

Will Tesconi, Strategic Initiatives Analyst for Legislative Affairs, presented an overview of Sonoma County's approach to legislative advocacy. Highlights included:

The County uses a legislative platform, adopted in November 2024, to guide timely responses to state and federal legislation.

SB 239 (teleconferencing flexibility) is supported by the County and would allow MAC members to attend meetings remotely under Brown Act compliance.

AB 470 (Carrier of Last Resort): The County opposes this bill, which would allow AT&T to unilaterally discontinue copper landline service. The County believes the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) should retain regulatory authority.

Will encouraged early engagement with legislators, noting that constituents are often more agile than formal boards when responding to fast-moving legislation.

8. Discussion on Takeaways from the All-MAC Convening

Councilmembers shared reflections from the February 22 All-MAC Convening, which brought together advisory councils from across the county.

Key takeaways:

Top-down communication from the Board of Supervisors is effective, but many MACs expressed uncertainty about whether public input is heard at the Board level.

The Lower Russian River MAC is more established than many newer MACs and was able to share insights on bylaws, structure, and community engagement.

Some MACs had access to greater funding due to legal settlements; others used modest budgets creatively to boost public outreach through events and videos.

Councilmembers expressed interest in exploring shared outreach strategies, public engagement tools, and enhancing inter-MAC communication.

A suggestion was made to share annual reports among MACs to encourage cross-learning and transparency.

9. Consent Agenda

A. March 13 Minutes

A speaker objected to the lack of itemization on the consent agenda and suggested moving minute approval to follow the agenda vote. The chair clarified that the March 13 minutes were listed on the consent agenda and included in the meeting materials.

Action on the approval of the minutes from the March 13 meeting was not taken. Members Gwiazdowski, Marquez de la Plata, and Rogoff abstained due to absence from the meeting in question, resulting in the lack of a quorum of eligible voting members.

10. Adjournment

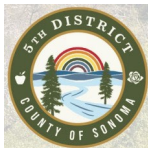
The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 PM



The Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council



- Links the community with County Government
- Actively engages all community voices on local policies, land use and priorities
- Encourages public participation and engagement
- Monthly meetings: 2nd Thursday at 5:30 PM
 - attend in-person or remote via Zoom
- Use the QR code to the right or the URL below to learn more



SoCo Connect - Download the App

Submit service requests for potholes, roadside debris, damaged or blocked street signs, clogged culverts, vegetation overgrowth and more.

district5@sonoma-county.org

sonomacounty.ca.gov/lrrmac

Narcotics Unit Update

Actualización de la Unidad de Narcóticos

Sheriff Eddie Engram

Alguacil Eddie Engram



History

Historia

- Unit eliminated July 2017 due to budget cuts/*Unidad eliminada en julio de 2017 debido a recortes presupuestarios*
- Fentanyl introduced to Sonoma County/*Se introdujo el fentanilo en el condado de Sonoma.*
- Increasing deaths due to fentanyl use – intentional and hidden/*Aumento de muertes por consumo del fentanilo, intencional y oculto.*
- Pilot program started in November 2024/*Un programa piloto comenzó en noviembre de 2024.*



November 5, 2024 – March 31, 2025

5 de noviembre, 2024 – 31 de marzo, 2025

Arrests/Arrestos	78
Narcotics seized (approx.) <i>Drogas incautadas (aprox.)</i>	
Methamphetamine/ <i>metanfetamina</i>	68.5 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
Cocaine/ <i>cocaína</i>	4.5 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
Fentanyl/ <i>fentanilo</i>	13.5 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
DMT/ <i>DMT</i>	13 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
Psilocybin/ <i>psilocibina</i>	10,000 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
Illicit pills (incl. fentanyl)/ <i>pastillas ilícitas (incl. el fentanilo)</i>	101,000 pills/ <i>pastillas</i>
Approx. value of Narcotics Seized (not including psilocybin) <i>Valor aproximado de las drogas incautadas (sin incluir la psilocibina)</i>	\$2.1 million/<i>millones</i>
Currency seized (approx.)/En efectivo incautado (aprox.)	\$135,000
Firearms/Armas	62



November 5, 2024 – March 31, 2025

5 de noviembre, 2024 – 31 de marzo, 2025

Agency assists/<i>Asistencia de agencias</i>	52 assists (12 different agencies) <i>52 asistencias (12 agencias diferentes)</i>
Narcotics seized during assists <i>Drogas incautadas durante las asistencias (aprox.)</i>	
Methamphetamine/ <i>metanfetamina</i>	50 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
Fentanyl/ <i>fentanilo</i>	11 pounds/ <i>libras</i>
Psilocybin/ <i>psilocibina</i>	10,000 pounds/ <i>libras</i>



Future

El futuro

- Now requesting funding for a permanent Unit through the budget process/*Se solicita financiación para una Unidad permanente en el proceso presupuestario.*
- Public participation/*Participación de la pública*



Other Topics

Otros Temas

- New River substation/*Nuevo sub-estación en Guerneville*
- Parks Unit/*Unidad de Parques*
 - 1 sergeant + 4 deputies/*1 sargento + 4 oficiales*
 - Enforcement/*Aplicación de la ley*



Stay Connected

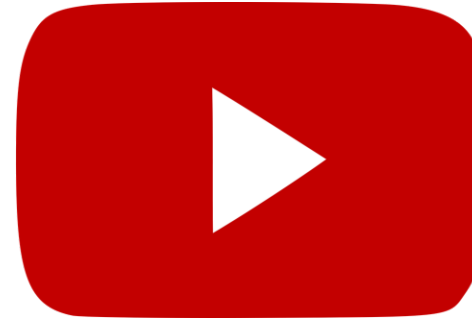
Manténgase Conectado



Nixle



@sonomasheriff



Monthly newsletter

Boletín mensual





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Tyra Harrington
Code Enforcement

Genevieve Bertone
Communications

Steve Mosiurchak
Fire Marshal

John Mack
Natural Resources

Brian Keefer
Ombudsperson

April 30, 2025

To: District 5 Director and All District Commissioners,

INTENT TO POST A NOTICE OF HEARING WAIVER

Project File No. /Title: UPE24-0077 / Use Permit Modification
Applicant: Lars Langberg
Project Location: 6615 Front St, Forestville, CA 95436 (APN 083-090-038)
Project Description: Request to modify Use Permit UPE20-0046 to allow a 735 sq. ft. outdoor dining area under a new 1,200 sq. ft. arbor structure, legalization of an existing shade structure, and reconfiguration of the parking lot to add a waiting area and bicycle parking in place of two spaces, to an existing restaurant offering indoor dining, takeout food, and alcohol sales. Up to 24 community or promotional events may be held annually, limited to two per month and 49 attendees per event. The existing 1,490 sq. ft. restaurant will continue to operate from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week, with 21 employees and approximately 120 daily visitors. A total of 13 on-site parking spaces will be provided, supported by a shared parking agreement for 35 nearby spaces and 20 bicycle parking spots. All existing utilities will remain. This Use Permit (UPE24-0077) shall supersede all prior Use Permit approvals.

Project Planner: Jacob Sedgley, Jacob.Sedgley@sonoma-county.org, (707) 565-1931

Permit Sonoma intends to post a Notice of Hearing Waiver for the Use Permit referenced above on May 8, 2025. The Use Permit approval will be issued without a public hearing, unless a written request is received for a public hearing. If a written hearing request is received within 10 days of the Notice of Hearing Waiver, a public hearing will be scheduled.

cc: File No.: UPE24-0077
Lynda Hopkins, District 5 Supervisor
Tennis Wick, AICP, Director
Scott Orr, Assistant Director
Cecily Condon, Project Review Manager