



# Ventura County Special Districts Association

July/Aug  
2015

*Offering Quality of Life Services Through Direct Representation*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Mike Paule

Hard to believe it is nearly August and we are in the middle of summer. We have seen lots of interesting legislative action this year. We try to keep you apprised of the highlights in the VCSDA newsletter and at our bi-monthly meetings. CSDA also puts out regular communication with action items when there is an impact to special districts and their constituents.

We are coming off a good meeting in June, hosted at the Camarillo Healthcare District, where we learned about the significant issues created regionally by the ongoing severe drought in California. United Water Conservation General Manager, Michael Solomon provided an excellent presentation to our members.

I had a terrific meeting a couple weeks back with our new regional CSDA public affairs Field coordinator, Chris Palmer, and Kyle Packham (CSDA Advocacy and Public Affairs Director). We discussed many ideas on how to strengthen our CSDA chapter and improve the communication between neighboring chapters where we might share ideas on meeting topics and other programming.

They informed me about the creation of new Countywide oversight Boards involving the former Redevelopment Agency. The new consolidated, countywide oversight boards will kick-in on July 1, 2016. The independent special district representative will be appointed by the same independent special district selection committee that appoints commissioners to LAFCO. However, only those independent special districts that have property taxes diverted to the former RDA (and who receive residual property taxes back from the former RDA, per Health and Safety Code Section 34188) are eligible to vote for and be appointed as the representative to the oversight board. More about this to be provided in the months ahead.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at the Strathearn Historical Park and Museum in Simi Valley. Hope to see all of you there.

## How to reach us:

VCSDA, c/o Port of Hueneme,  
Attn: Michelle Kinnun  
333 Ponoma Street  
Port Hueneme, CA 93041  
Phone:(805) 488-3677, Fax:(805) 488-2620  
E-mail: [mkinnun@portofhueneme.org](mailto:mkinnun@portofhueneme.org)

## VCSDA MEETING

August 4, 2015 at

Strathearn Historical Park and  
Museum

5:30 PM Registration, Tour and Dinner  
6:15 Meeting

More details with the RSVP form

*RSVP before deadline with enclosed form*

### Guest Speaker:

Christopher Pisano, Esq.—Partner  
Best, Best and Krieger

## Christopher Pisano, Esq.



*Mr. Pisano will give a presentation on the best practices for special district board members in interacting with agency staff, including division of labor and dealing and resolving ethical dilemmas that often arise.*

Christopher Pisano represents public agencies and private corporations in a variety of litigation matters, including land use, property valuation, water rights, unfair competition, inverse condemnation, construction, civil rights and general business disputes. Chris has represented numerous public agencies in state and federal court matters, including Oxnard Harbor District, LA County Metro Transit Authority, Community Redevelopment Agency—Los Angeles, City of Thousand Oaks, Housing Authority of City of Los Angeles, Riverside County Transportation Commission, County of Shasta, Helix Water District, San Bernadino County Flood Control District, among others.

### Education

University of Southern California (USC), J.D.  
Georgetown University, B.S.

# VCSDA Board Members



**PRESIDENT**  
Mike Paule



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Mike Mishler



**TREASURER**  
Kate O'Brien



**SECRETARY**  
Mary Anne Rooney



**PAST PRESIDENT**  
Elaine Freeman



## Legislative Update



### LEGISLATIVE REPORT – Ventura County Special Districts Assoc.

#### An update of last months report:

- SCA 5 – changing to 55% vote is Pending for a hearing in the Local Government Committee
- SB 875 – Local agency construction Act is dead.
- AB-2 Would authorize certain local agencies to form a community revitalization authority. Referred back to Local Government Committee
- AB 988 – Outdoor Environmental Education & Recreation Grants. Pending Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee
- AB 108 Integrated Regional Water Management Plans, Grants – Ordered for 3<sup>rd</sup> reading
- SB0272 The Calif. Public Records Act – Re-referred to Local Government Committee
- SB 331 Public Contracts Local Agencies- Referred to Committee on Appropriations
- AB 1017 – Employer Requirements – Pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee

A very interesting bill SB 88 was brought up as a trailer bill of the 2015/16 budget. This bill only had one hearing and was opposed by CSDA, the League, CSAC and CALAFCo. But it didn't matter. What it does, is it allows the California Water Quality Control Board to require a water agency (city, county or special district) to take over operations of a failing water provider even private or mutual water companies if they service a disadvantaged community and their infrastructure needs upgrading. This is without any local review by the recipient agency, rate payers or LAFCo. There has been no provision for how the receiving agency is to pay for the upgrades, how it fits with Prop 218. Not only is this a very bad precedent but leaves the receiving agency in a very difficult position. This bill was in response to a situation in Northern California but instead of dealing with a local solution, the State decided it new best. All of the groups, CSDA, CSAC, the League and CALAFCo will be watching other legislation that could affect other types of service agencies and, if there is new legislation that doesn't limit the failing agency just to water.

Some other things of interest, SCA 5 seems to be on target for changing Prop 13 for commercial and industrial properties (split roll).



# Legislative Update Cont'd



AB 1535 will allow for election consolidations so elections can be held in June or November by local agencies.

There are many water related bills moving along. Everything from AB 401 which would require the Dept. of Community Services & Development to create a plan for assistance programs; AB 453 for Groundwater Management regarding sustainability planning; AB 954 Water and Waste Water Loan & Grant Program to establish the Water Resources Control Board to establish a program to provide low interest loans and grants to local agencies and SB 13 by Pavely on groundwater. Would specify that the State Water Resources be authorized to designate or or medium priority basins as probationary basins. The bill would provide a local agency or groundwater sustainability agency 90 or 180 days as prescribed, to remedy certain deficiencies that causes the Board to designate the basin as probationary,. This bill would authorize the Board to develop the interim plan.

## **Little Hoover Commission Calls for Changes to Brown Act:**

Following ten months of review and consultation with elected officials, the Little Hoover Commission adopted its report on California Open Meeting Acts, *Conversations for Workable Government*, on Thursday, June 25, 2015. The opening paragraphs read:

“The perils of the hurried, often-heated atmosphere in which the Legislature proposes, debates and finally decides the fate of thousands of bills annually includes well-intended change that creates unintended consequences. Legislation can unexpectedly miss its mark when those who interpret and implement it respond differently than sponsors anticipated.

So it is with California’s open meeting laws. With the best of civic intentions they are stifling the ability of the state’s public officials to govern effectively. They are due for reconsideration.”

The Commission began looking at the Open Meetings Act to assess its benefits or lack thereof on transparency and the impacts the Act has on the decision making process. The full report lists some interesting findings and makes a number of recommendations to the governor, the Legislature, and local agencies on how to improve the Act to the benefit of governing bodies and the public. The press release announcing the adopted report stated that “[t]he Commission recommends keeping the existing and varied ex parte communication policies throughout state government, while also considering possible additional disclosure requirements and enforcement.”

## **Assembly Bill 327 (Gordon): Volunteers**

*CSDA Position: Support*

Extends the authority of special districts to utilize volunteers without violating California’s requirements for wages, hours, and working conditions until January 2021. The current exemption will sunset January 1, 2017. Special districts rely heavily on volunteer services to meet strict budget demands and complete charitable, humanitarian, and other civic projects.

# Photos from the June 2, 2015 Meeting at the Camarillo Healthcare District

