Rancho Palos Verdes
Council of Homeowners Associations (CHOA)

Membership Meeting
Wednesday, June 18, 2025
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

A membership meeting of the RPV Council of Homeowners Associations (CHOA) was called to order by President Kathy Edgerton on Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at Fred Hesse Community Park McTaggart Hall at 7:08 pm. Marie Chura was asked to lead attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Kathy welcomed all those in attendance. Thirty-four attendees representing 14 HOAs (constituting a quorum) and Neighborhood Watch guests participated in-person or via Zoom. Kathy welcomed Gail and Andy Lorenzen and Neighborhood Watch block captains to the meeting.

Kathy noted that while Dave Emenhiser has stepped down as president of CHOA, he plans to continue to participate in CHOA board meetings in an advisory capacity for the foreseeable future, so we anticipate a seamless transition.

RPV Councilmember Steve Perestam - City Council Issues and Priorities

RPV Councilmember Steve Perestam was the first speaker. Steve served on the CHOA board immediately before being elected to Council last November. He's lived in RPV for over 40 years with his wife Carol, raising 3 children here, and has been active in local public service for most of those years – including as an AYSO board member and chief referee, and as a strong advocate for local control of zoning and land use and active member of California Cities for Local Control. He was a co-author of RPV's view protection ordinance and served on the RPV Planning Commission for 12 years.

Steve discussed the following topics:

- FY 2025-2026 Budget: The City's FY 2025-2026 budget was just approved. The new fiscal year begins on July 1st. The City is in a very different financial position from where it has been in recent years due to the large outlays that continue to be required to maintain the landslide area. The Council monitors expenses more frequently and more in depth than in previous years. A significantly higher maintenance budget means that there are fewer funds available for capital improvement projects. The approved budget is balanced and has some reserves. The City continues to seek federal and state support for landslide expenses but is also considering additional sources of revenue such as

higher transient occupancy taxes and storm drain fees. The City intends to balance the burden of additional taxes and fees between local businesses and citizens.

The City's focus is currently on a maintenance program to sufficiently stabilize the landslide area to keep PV Drive South open and keep the sewer system operating – while continuing to search for funding for a remediation project that would enable the City to effectively mitigate the landslide's impacts in the future.

- Fire Hazard Maps: CalFire has completed its update of fire hazard maps for the area. The previous maps had been in place since 2008. The new maps utilize 3 categories of risk – very high fire hazard, high fire hazard, and moderate fire hazard. The previous maps designated virtually 100% of RPV as very high fire hazard. The revised maps reduced the portion of the City in that category to about 50%. The Council adopted the new maps in June. The reduction in the size of the very high fire hazard zone may help to reduce pressure on home insurance rates and availability for some residents.

  Steve noted that the Fire Department has clarified that the Zone Zero regulations which restrict vegetation within 5 ft. of structures only applies to structures in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The regulations have not been finalized but are expected to be enforced in 2026. However, Steve emphasized that applicability of the Zone Zero regulations is expected to be extended to high fire and moderate fire hazard zones in future years.

- Housing Element: After considering whether to take the Clipper Rd. site out of the City's Housing Element list of properties to be re-zoned to higher density to accommodate its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RNHA), the Council decided to leave it in the list – concluding that the City could better minimize the impacts of development under the approved zoning changes by working with a developer on height limitations and other constraints rather than having little discretion if a builder wanted to develop the property using the standards allowed by SB 9 under the previous zoning.

  Steve also discussed Senate Bill SB 79, known as the Housing Transit Act, which was passed by the Senate by one vote during the current legislative session. It would allow multi-family, multi-level buildings to be built along major transit corridors regardless of adjacent zoning. In addition, it would allow transit authorities to approve development on their own property without input from the cities in which their properties are located. The last-minute changes must be approved by the Assembly. It has been

assigned to 3 committees (local government, housing, and natural resources committees) for review. The City is actively tracking many housing-related bills and voicing its opinion – including opposition to SB 79. Steve asked CHOA members to contact Assemblymember Muratsuchi's office by telephone or email to oppose the bill, or go to his website (https://a66.asmdc.org/) and send comments. *[Note: SB 79 was ultimately passed by the legislature in the last days of the 2025 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Newsom.]*

Steve commented that the makeup of the legislature is changing and becoming less supportive of the overreaching legislation that is eroding local control. Legislative committees are becoming more balanced in their consideration of housing issues and local control of zoning and land use.

- Wayfarers Chapel and Coast Guard Lighthouse: City leadership recently met with the Wayfarers Chapel leadership and Coast Guard representatives regarding acquiring the property adjacent to the civic center that the Coast Guard owns so that it could be used to rebuild the Chapel complex. The Coast Guard property is approximately 4 acres and includes the Battery Barnes. All parties support the concept, and are working together to find a way to accomplish the property transfer as soon as possible. The property needs an environmental review, and the City is considering taking responsibility for the review to facilitate a faster transfer. Doing so would cost very little and could save significant time. The Wayfarers Chapel website (https://www.wayfarerschapel.org/) has wonderful visuals of how the Chapel could be reconstructed on the property with spectacular views of the ocean and Catalina Island. The Wayfarers Chapel would be responsible for raising the funds to develop the site, estimated to cost $25-$30 million. The acquired property could be made available to Wayfarers Chapel on a 99-year lease.

  The Coast Guard wants to retain the lighthouse property but is willing to enter into an agreement with the City that would allow the City to have more access to it for events and open space.

RPV City Manager Ara Mihranian – The Nuts and Bolts of City Hall: Opening the Doors of Local Government

We asked City Manager Ara Mihranian to speak about the City's organizational structure and departmental responsibilities. The City offers a Leadership Academy every year or so for about 25 applicants. It is such a great learning experience that we asked if he could cover the same topics at a membership meeting to reach more people. As leaders of HOAs, we all receive many questions from residents asking where they should go to report certain activities or to obtain

certain types of information – for permits, reporting downed trees blocking a street, view restoration issues, and so forth. The board thought that giving residents an overview of how the City is organized, the responsibilities of the various departments in City Hall, and organizational reporting relationships would help to answer some of their questions.

Before speaking about the Nuts and Bolts of City Hall, Ara added a few comments to the topics Steve Perestam addressed:

- Housing Element: Ara emphasized the importance of residents being aware of the changes that are occurring in housing requirements and actively trying to influence decision-making in Sacramento. RPV's General Plan and vision are virtually the same as they were when the City was incorporated in 1973 – i.e., maintaining a semi-rural, low-density character. However, the State continues to demand ever higher density. Senate Bill SB 9, which was passed in 2021, effectively eliminated single-family zoning throughout the State.

- Landslide Mitigation: The City installed 11 deep dewatering wells in September 2024 to help slow the land movement by extracting water from 300 to 350 ft. below ground. From September 2024 to mid-June, the wells have extracted 280 million gallons of water. On the eastern portion of the landslide (Portuguese Bend Beach Club and Seaview), the extractions have helped to stabilize the land to the point that no movement has been detected for the past 6 months. Edison has been able to restore power to that area and restoration of gas service is in progress. On the western side of the landslide area (Portuguese Bend Community Association), movement continues to prevent restoration of gas and power. In the Abalone Cove area, movement has decreased from 12" per week a year ago to 4" per week in June.

  The City is currently working with Wayfarers Chapel to stabilize the slope on that property on PV Drive South.

  Since October of 2022, the City has spent $42 million, including $37 million in FY 2024-2025, which ends at the end of June. Without the Transient Occupancy Tax collected from Terranea of approximately $70 since it opened in 2009, the City would not have been able to respond to the disaster in a meaningful way. The City's overall fund balance has decreased from $110 million to $79 million.

  Ara and the City Council are trying to find sources of funds for reimbursement of the expenditures, but so far have had little success. The landslide is not considered a

disaster, but rather a known pre-existing condition since the land movement started in 1956. FEMA had awarded a $30 million BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) grant for landslide mitigation, but the current administration cancelled the program.

The City was awarded $40 million grant from FEMA to buy out damaged/destroyed homes in the landslide area. Twenty (20) homes have been red-tagged and approximately 30 have been yellow-tagged. The grant will provide for purchase of twenty-two homes – the 20 red-tagged homes and 2 of the yellow-tagged homes. The homes are currently in the appraisal process. The City has applied for another $40 million in similar grant funds and is currently waitlisted.

The primary topic of Ara's presentation was The Nuts and Bolts of City Hall: Opening the Doors of Local Government. Below is a summary of his comments:

- RPV was incorporated on September 7, 1973. The 3 other cities on the Peninsula were incorporated before RPV (PV Estates in 1939; Rolling Hills and Rolling Hills Estates in 1957).

  After World War II, LA County's master plan encouraged rapid development to support the post-war economic growth, including allowing high-density development along the coastline.

  During the 1960s, leaders of the 3 cities and citizens in the unincorporated areas of the Peninsula attempted to convince the County to restrain the uncontrolled development in the unincorporated areas under County zoning control and to institute planning and zoning regulations that were more compatible with the area's unique qualities. A Peninsula Advisory Council was created in the mid-1960s. Save Our Coastline was formed in April of 1970.

  RPV was incorporated in 1973, to control planning and to preserve the natural beauty, openness, and small community atmosphere of the area. The Eastview area was added in 1983. Other than the addition of Eastview, RPV has changed very little since incorporation. It is the largest city on the Peninsula, with a population of 42,300 and 16,500 housing units. The median household income is $175,000, and the median age is 50. Sixty-nine percent of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher.

RPV comprises approximately two-thirds of the population of the Peninsula and, as a result, usually takes the lead on major issues, such as the fire detection system.

- RPV is a general law city, meaning that the City's powers are limited to the authority granted to it by the State Legislature and California Constitution, and the City has a General Plan that guides its operations. In contrast, some cities are charter cities, meaning that they have established charters that govern their operations - in essence, their own constitution. Charters are intended to give more local control to the cities that have them. However, recently, the state legislature is including statements in bills that certain issues such as housing are emergencies/crises and, therefore, issues of statewide concern that override the authority derived from cities' charters. Numerous lawsuits filed by charter cities as well as general law cities are testing the validity of those determinations and their effect on the two types of cities.

- The City's primary responsibilities are providing the following services: law enforcement, fire protections, traffic control, recreation, roadway maintenance, and sewer and solid waste collection. RPV is a contract city, meaning it contracts with other agencies and private companies to provide services to the community. In contrast, full-service cities hire staffs to perform those services. RPV obtains law enforcement services through an $8.5 million contract with the LA County Sheriff's Dept. Fire protection is obtained from the County Fire Dept. Trash collection is performed by EDCO.

- The City has a council-manager form of government. It is the most common form of government used by local cities in the United States. Voters elect the city council, which is the governing (policymaking) body. Elections occur in November of even years.

- The current Councilmembers are Mayor Dave Bradley, Mayor pro Tem Paul Seo, Councilmember Barbara Ferraro, Councilmember Steve Perestam, and Councilmember George Lewis.

- Three Council seats will be filled this November, and two will be filled in 2028. Council members are limited to two four-year terms. Mayor Bradley and Councilmember Ferraro are termed out this year, and Mayor pro Tem Seo is running for State Assembly this year, so 3 seats will need be filled by new candidates.

- The council annually elects the mayor for a one-year term. The mayor serves as the chief executive officer of the Council and City. The mayor responsibilities rotate through the

council members year by year. Decisions are made by the council as a whole, with the mayor and council members having equal votes. The council appoints the city manager and city attorney.

- The city manager is responsible for hiring the department heads. The council provides direction to the city manager, who leads the implementation of the directions through the city staff.

- The City contracts with Aleshire & Wynder for general legal services. The firm represents the City in litigation, code enforcement, and labor negotiations; reviews ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and provides legal opinion; and advises the Council and City staff regarding liability and legal matters.

- The Council also appoints volunteer residents to advisory committees and commissions – i.e., the Planning Commission, Emergency Preparedness Committee, Traffic Safety Committee, Finance Advisory Committee, Infrastructure Management Advisory Committee, and Civic Center Advisory Committee.

- The staff executive team consists of the following:
    - Deputy City Manager Catherine Jun
    - Public Works Director Ramzi Awwad
    - Community Development Director Brandy Forbes
    - Finance Director Vina Ramos
    - Director of Recreation and Parks Dan Trautner

- The staff consists of 79 approved full-time positions and 33.5 full-time equivalent part-time positions. (The part-time positions are primarily in Rec and Parks Department.) Staff negotiate contracts with outside agencies and vendors that provide services and oversee contract performance to ensure residents receive high-quality services.

- City staff consists of 5 major departments with the following responsibilities:

    - Administration – managed by City Manager and Deputy City Manager
        - City Clerk's Office – preparation of City Council meeting agendas and minutes, election oversight, records management
        - Public Safety contract services, programs and cost control, public safety liaisons

- Emergency preparedness
- Government & Community Relations – intergovernmental and legislative advocacy, community and media outreach, social media, RPVtv studio
- Human Resources – employment, benefits
- Information Technology – management of systems and services
- Leases and real property acquisition

- Community Development – **private property** development oversight to protect public health, safety & welfare (residential, commercial, and institutional)
  - Planning and Zoning – provides design/architectural approval, including neighborhood compatibility, land use and environmental standards.
  - Building & Safety – provides development, engineering and construction oversight based on engineered plans (plumbing, structural, electrical, etc.) and inspections throughout construction process.
  - Code Enforcement – maintains a safe and desirable living and working environment by enforcing municipal code re: property maintenance, unpermitted construction, coyote management.
  - View Restoration –implements City's view restoration/preservation permit procedures resulting from view impairment by residents' foliage.

- Public Works – responsible for planning, engineering, constructing, operating, and maintaining City's infrastructure (streets/public rights-of-way, sidewalks, sanitary sewers, stormwater systems, park facilities), permitting and inspection services in public rights-of-way, coordinating utility services provided by other agencies and utility companies within public rights-of-way, view restoration of view impairment by foliage on City property. It is the largest staff department.

  - The City's transportation network consists of 150 miles of streets with curbs, gutters, sidewalks, guardrails, and pavement markers; 17 traffic signals (signals were owned by SoCal Edison until about 10 years ago); 5,000 traffic signs; and 1,750 street lights.
  - Until the late 1990s, the City had only about 5 traffic signals. The City's policy strongly discouraged installation of traffic signals. When the Trump National project (then known as "Ocean Trails") was reviewed, the traffic data at the intersection of Forrestal and PV Drive South indicated that a traffic signal was warranted. However, in 1992, the City decided not to install a signal and instead required the developer to pay a fee instead of

installing a signal. The City is discussing whether to install a signal at that location now.

- The storm drain system consists of 60 miles of pipes and 1,500 catch basins. The drains are aging and increasingly costly to maintain. As a hillside community, the City needs to ensure that rain is channeled out to the ocean safely. The City is currently considering revenue options to help pay for storm drain maintenance.
- The County owns and maintains the sanitary sewer system in most of the City. However, the City is responsible for maintaining the sewer system in the landslide area which ultimately connects to the County system for processing. The Abalone Cove Sanitary Sewer District serves 270 homes in the landslide area. The system includes 4 miles of gravity-driven pipe and 4 miles of low-pressure pipe. When the land movement was very slow, repairs to maintain the system were a few hundred thousand dollars a year. With the rapid land movement experienced in the last couple of years, maintenance costs have increased to $4 million.
- The city owns and maintains 7 facilities – including City Hall, Hesse Park, and Ladera Linda. Other Peninsula cities do not have facilities other than city halls, so RPV facilities are used by the other cities when they need rooms for larger gatherings. The facilities are also opened as cooling centers on hot days.

- Finance – leads City's budgeting, analysis, and reporting process, handles accounting transactions, treasury operations (cash and debt management), payroll, and business licenses.
  - Fiscal year starts July 1st and ends the following June 30th.
  - Budgeting process begins early in year (around Feb/Mar) with review of Council's strategic goals, includes developing operating assumptions based on those goals, collaboration between finance department and all other departments to determine estimated costs of projects and programs to be combined into preliminary annual budgets and long-term plans that support Council goals.
  - Budget is approved in June for following fiscal year. The general fund budget (for operations) for FY 2025-2026 is $41 million. Revenue must outpace expenditures.
  - Following end of fiscal year, books are audited by an independent accounting firm. Following auditor approval, Council adopts the final

results in December. The Finance Department consistently receives awards for outstanding performance from peer groups.

- Recreation and Parks – manages/operates a comprehensive park system, administers services in the Preserve, and organizes numerous community activities.
  - Administration – provides support services, issues film permits, organizes volunteer programs, handles graphic design, prepares City newsletter.
  - Open Space & Trails – The Nature Preserve started with the Forrestal acquisition in 1996 (intended to be a development of 38 homes, but had financial problems); now 1,500 acres is protected in perpetuity with 37 miles of trails, primarily in the center of the City. The Rec and Parks Department is responsible for maintaining the Preserve trails, coordinating with PVP Land Conservancy (biological resources/habitat manager), fuel modification (fire risk mitigation), Trails Network Plan, Del Cerro Parking Program.
  - Special Events – Whale of a Day, 4th of July, Christmas/year-end festivities.
  - Parks & Facilities – staffing/management of 17 improved parks, including PVIC, Hesse, Ryan, Ladera Linda, Eastview, Abalone Cove.
  - Programs – REACH, community classes, Docent-led public hikes and tours of PVIC.

  The City is not responsible for the Miraleste Park District on the east side of the City. It is managed by LA County and has its own governing board.

- The City Council appoints volunteer residents to serve on 7 boards that advise the City Council and make recommendations for actions in their respective areas.
  - Planning Commission
    - Makes decisions on private land use applications, reviews environmental assessments, and makes decisions on view restoration permits.
    - Is the only board that has decision-making authority, subject to appeal to the City Council.
  - Emergency Preparedness Committee
    - Provides recommendations pertaining to emergency preparedness.
  - Finance Advisory Committee
    - Reviews annual and long-term budgets, potential financing arrangements, debt and reserve policies and makes recommendations to the Council.

- Infrastructure Management Advisory Committee
  - Advises the City Council on matters concerning public works and park infrastructure, capital improvement projects, and maintenance and preventative maintenance programs.
- Traffic Safety Committee
  - Advises the City Council on traffic issues, development proposals and special projects assigned by the City Council.
  - Includes neighborhood traffic calming and proposed projects.
- Civic Center Advisory Committee
  - Advises the City Council on developing the Civic Center Master Plan.
- Youth Advisory Committee
  - Serve as a conduit to encourage youth to become more involved with the inner workings of the City and allow them to advocate for themselves.
  - Includes students in 7th through 12th grades who can get college credits.
  - Takes positions on issues being addressed by the City and sends letters to the state legislature to support City positions.

- Partner Agencies and Companies
  - LA County Fire Department – fire suppression and paramedic services
  - LA County Sheriff's Department – law enforcement (crime prevention and investigation, traffic control, etc.)
  - EDCO – trash collection
  - California Water Company – water supplier
  - Southern California Edison – electricity provider
  - Southern California Gas – gas provider
  - LA County Sanitation District – maintains sanitation sewer system
  - LA County Flood Control District – maintains watersheds and canyons in LA County

- Regional Collaboration Partners
  - Vector Control – addresses pests such as fruit flies.
  - LAWA-LAX Roundtable – addresses noise from aircraft flying over the Peninsula
  - PV Transit – funded by all 4 peninsula cities; used by students and others to travel around Peninsula.
  - PVP Chamber of Commerce
  - PVP Unified School District
  - West Basin Water District

- Santa Monica Bay Watershed Advisory Council
- CA Joint Powers Insurance Authority

- City Membership in Regional Organizations
  - League of California Cities – a very large organization that is primarily intended to be a lobbying organization for all cities, but competing interests between northern and southern cities and between coastal and inland cities often arise, so RPV doesn't always fully support the positions the organization takes.
  - California Contract Cities – leads the negotiation process for the LA County Sheriff's contract.
  - Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) – a planning organization for assigning Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirements to cities in Los Angeles, Orange and San Bernardino counties.
  - South Bay Cities Council of Governments – membership is 17 cities and numerous unincorporated areas; disburses bond funds to cities. Ara is the Chair of the SBCCOG City Managers group.
  - Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Committee
  - Regional Law Enforcement Committee

- Responses to audience questions:
  - Cities (including RPV) are seeing more corporate developers buying single family properties for SB 9 developments (including one in the Grandview area). Investors are also buying single-family homes and adding ADUs to maximize the value of their investments.
  - The City has a letter that was prepared by the Emergency Preparedness Committee delineating all the programs the City has implemented to mitigate wildfire risk. It can be sent to insurance agents for consideration in obtaining discounts or to prevent issuance of nonrenewal letters. The letter can be accessed on the Emergency Preparedness page on the City's website.
  - UCLA is still trying to determine which programs will be offered at the campus on the Peninsula. The leadership has been addressing financial challenges.
  - The Peninsula has a fire detection system consisting of 4 cameras that rotate 360 degrees to provide early detection of smoke. The Fire and Sheriff's departments and City Manager are notified of suspected fires to prompt

immediate investigation. Three cameras are in operation, and the 4th one is expected to be installed by August 2025.

The slide deck for Ara's presentation is posted on the CHOA website (rpvchoa.org).

Kathy Edgerton thanked the speakers, Councilmember Steve Perestam and City Manager Ara Mihranian, and CHOA members and Neighborhood Watch members for attending. Residents who do not normally receive CHOA notices were invited to write their names, email addresses, and neighborhoods on the sign-in sheet, and CHOA will be glad to send notices of future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Edgerton
CHOA President