

R-20-98
Meeting 20-20
October 22, 2020

AGENDA ITEM #2

To: Board of Directors
Open Space Authority

From: Andrea Mackenzie
General Manager

SUBJECT

Approve Amendments to Open Space Authority Policy BRD-026 -- Employee Handbook and Adopt Juneteenth, Emancipation Day, as a Paid Holiday.

REVENUE/COST

Changes proposed in this Employee Handbook revision will result in the addition of a paid holiday. The current costs associated with a paid holiday are \$21,553.74, including paid wages, taxes, workers' compensation insurance, and CalPERS contributions.

BACKGROUND

On January 11, 2001, the Board approved the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Employee Handbook (Handbook). The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (Authority) reviews the handbook regularly and updates it when revisions are necessary. On December 12, 2019, the Board approved the most recent revision to the handbook.

DISCUSSION

Staff reviewed the Handbook for legally required updated and internal recommendations and consulted legal counsel. The proposed edits are detailed below.

- **Holidays:** Authority staff is recommending that Juneteenth, Emancipation Day, be included as an additional paid holiday for Authority staff. Juneteenth is a holiday celebrated on the 19th of June to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. The holiday was first celebrated in Texas, where on that date in 1865, in the aftermath of the Civil War, slaves were declared free under the terms of the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation. The significance of this date has become especially impactful to the staff of the Authority in the wake of protests over systemic racism locally and across the nation. As the Authority works to understand and identify the agency's role in Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Access (JEDIA), recognizing Juneteenth is one action that the Authority can take now to move towards inclusion and representation for those who have been impacted by slavery's history. On September 22, 2020 the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors declared Juneteenth as a Countywide holiday for all employees, becoming the first County in California to do so. In the current fiscal year, the costs associated with a paid holiday for the Authority are \$21,553.74, including paid wages, taxes, workers' compensation insurance, and CalPERS contributions.
- **Lactation:** Updates have been made to the section covering provisions for nursing mothers. The updates reflect recent changes to California law (SB142), this change created specific requirements for the space provided to employees to use to express milk. The Authority

previously updated the physical space provided to nursing mothers to be in alignment with these requirements.

- Leave of Absence: Unpaid Time Off: This section has a brief addition to the introduction that acknowledges that there may be other types of unpaid leave provided by the law that are not detailed in the Handbook. Employees are directed to contact Human Resources for further information.
- Paid Family Leave: The state of California increased the number of weeks that an employee may receive limited compensation when on a leave for the birth, placement, or adoption of their child. As of July 1, 2020, the number of weeks of Paid Family Leave is eight (8), it had previously been six (6) weeks.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the resolution approving the amendments to BRD-026 – Employee Handbook as presented in the attached draft (Exhibit E).

Prepared by:

Elizabeth Loretto, Office and Human Resources Administrator

Attachment(s): Resolution 20-65 – A Resolution of the Governing Board of the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority Approving the Amended Employee Handbook BRD-026 and Adopting Juneteenth, Emancipation Day, as a Paid Holiday

Exhibit E – DRAFT – BRD-026-11 – Employee Handbook -- Redlined