



SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

NON-AGENDA

June 13, 2025

Board Policy EL-7 Communication and Support to the Board
The BAOs shall inform and support the Board in its work.

Page	<u>CEO BULLETIN & NEWSLETTERS</u>
	CEO Bulletin: None
	<u>BOARD MEMBER REQUESTS & INFORMATIONAL ITEMS</u>
	BMR/IBMR Weekly Reports: None
	<u>INCOMING BOARD CORRESPONDENCE</u>
3	Board Correspondence Weekly Report: 06/11/25
	<u>OUTGOING BOARD CORRESPONDENCE</u>
5	Email from Vice Chair Santos to Shaunn Cartwright, dated 06/06/25, responding to their inquiry concerning fires at Columbus Park.

INCOMING BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

Board Correspondence (open)

Correspond No	Rec'd By District	Rec'd By COB	Letter To	Letter From	Description	Disposition	BAO/ Chief	Staff	Draft Response Due Date	Draft Response Submitted	Writer Ack. Sent	Final Response Due Date
C-25-0087	05/30/25	05/30/25	All	JAMES REALINI	Email from James Realini to the board, dated 05/30/25, inquiring about the San Pedro Ponds.	Refer to Staff	Baker	Williams	06/07/25	-	n/a	06/13/25

OUTGOING BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

From: [Candice Kwok-Smith](#) on behalf of [Board Correspondence](#)
To: [Mark Bilski](#); [Jennifer Codianne](#); [Kathy Nguyen](#); [Shanika Richards](#)
Cc: [Board of Directors](#)
Subject: FW: No Plan Mahan Nearly Causes Disaster Again at Columbus
Date: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 8:53:36 AM

Good morning,

C-25-0088 is complete.

Thanks,
Candice

From: Candice Kwok-Smith **On Behalf Of** Board of Directors
Sent: Friday, June 6, 2025 5:04 PM
To: iq4rent sc [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: No Plan Mahan Nearly Causes Disaster Again at Columbus

Sent on Behalf of Vice Chair Santos:

Dear Shaunn Cartwright,

Thank you for reaching out to Valley Water and sharing your concerns about the recent fire incidents at Columbus Park in the City of San José. Valley Water does not own or maintain Columbus Park or the surrounding area, nor do we supply potable drinking water to the park, but we will relay your concerns to our counterparts at the City of San Jose.

Valley Water owns and manages 333 miles of the more than 800 miles of creeks in Santa Clara County. For reference, this GIS map shows Valley Water-owned lands in green: <https://gis.valleywater.org/FeeEasement/>. Regarding your mention of an upcoming encampment sweep along Guadalupe River between W. Taylor Street and Highway 880, Valley Water does own a small portion of land along this stretch. However, our staff have not observed encampments on that property, and the City has not requested our participation in encampment abatement activities there.

Thank you again for your message. Valley Water is committed to using the power we have as an environmental stewardship agency to protect our waterways in collaboration with the cities and the County as they fulfill their public safety and social service roles. Please contact Assistant Operating Officer Mark Bilski at mbilski@valleywater.org with any follow-up information. You can also report concerns to Valley Water via our online system at <https://access.valleywater.org/s/>.

Stay safe and healthy,



Richard Santos

Vice Chair, District 3

C-25-0088

From: iq4rent sc [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 1, 2025 8:10 PM
To: iq4rent sc [REDACTED]
Subject: No Plan Mahan Nearly Causes Disaster Again at Columbus

***** This email originated from outside of Valley Water. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *****

Hello All,

Columbus Park was on fire again this afternoon because the high, dry vegetation caught on fire, causing at least a 5-acre fire. At Spring and Asbury, the most populated corner, it almost jumped the street and would've killed hundreds of people and pets, if not everyone, within a half hour (according to SJFD estimates).

We have spoken to SJFD at two previous fires and they expressed their great frustration at having warned the city several times about this kind of fire danger. We then warned you of the same danger and nothing has changed.

The fire department has told URG twice and we've also passed this along, that not having access along Spring St., between what was Zone 2 and 3, because it's blocked with K-rail is dangerous and thwarts firefighting efforts and nothing has changed.

We have also spoken to you for months about Columbus not having any potable drinking water. While the two may seem like unconnected issues, they very much are since people tap into the fire hydrants to get water. I spoke to one of the only two workers that maintain the hydrants, and they warned that tapping into the hydrants could cause a lack of water pressure when responding to a fire.

While the mayor, PRNS and councilmember may be fine repeatedly sweeping more and more people into a confined area, not maintaining the vegetation in that area and denying the growing group of residents in that area—including children--access to fresh water, we are not. Days like today prove again these actions are placing people in harm's way and it is only a matter of time before someone (or many people) dies. *Sweeping Columbus is not the answer either as there is nowhere for people to go—and everyone knows it.*

The *responsible* things to do are:

- 1) Immediately provide access to clean water via large water tanks stationed near Spring/Asbury, Spring/Irene and Hedding/Ruff.
- 2) Remove the K-Rail or at least make one access point for SJFD. Sure, people might move vehicles in, but what's more important, allowing firefighters in or preventing unhoused people from moving in?
- 3) Cancel the upcoming sweep of the creek from Taylor to 880 slated for the 16th, it will only make people move into the actual Columbus Park area, making that even more congested and dangerous. There are no housing/safe parking options for the hundreds of people that have been posted, so all this will do is create turf wars, exacerbate mental illness and make people suffer.
- 4) Cut the grass, all dry grass, everywhere, but specifically around Columbus, the Heritage Rose Garden, etc. These are arson/accidental fire hazards for housed and unhoused people alike.

All of these are solutions that must be followed, particularly as we head into summer, **last summer had the highest death rate due to hyperthermia ever recorded in San Jose or Santa Clara County**. Removing people from the weatherproof shelters they've built (particularly in cool, creek areas), not ensuring they have access to potable water, and them losing access to shaded areas because of fire damage are all things that will lead to increased hyperthermia.

Regards,
Shaunn Cartwright
URG
Unhoused Response Group