

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District  
Board Director Elections  
November 4, 2014  
Ward 6

To all MROSD Board candidates:

The intent of this questionnaire is to allow candidates for Board seats an opportunity to address areas of interest for the members of Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers (SVMTB).

We thank you for your willingness to serve the community in this very important role and thank you for your time answering these questions. We would appreciate a reply by October 22, 2014 so that we can share this information with our membership before the election.

Best regards, SVMTB Board of Directors

1. What sort of roles have you had in land management agencies or similar organizations that would speak to your ability to carry out the role as a Director of MROSD?

**Hassett:** I have been a Board member of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District for the past 14 Years, representing Ward 6. I have been a strong advocate for increasing the resources dedicated to land management and public access during that period and was a strong, active supporter of the essential policy changes in the 2012 Strategic Plan and 2014 Vision Plan that led to the passage of Measure AA.

**Lewke:** Great question. My background is in nonprofit finance, where I am responsible for accounts receivable for a \$17M annual organization in the middle of a \$50M, 5 year exhibit renewal campaign. Every day I handle other peoples' money. I am also responsible for creating the monthly department income statement reports for 25 departments and project reporting for over 40 active projects. I know what a restricted fund is, I need to be able to put my hand on my heart and say that a gift was used for the purpose as intended by the donor. The largest check I have held in my hands, not with my name on it, is over \$3M. The measure AA funds are restricted funds, wouldn't you like a caretaker who is familiar with the concept representing you? With the CFO I create the monthly finance committee package and attend the monthly finance committee meetings. I have great personal and professional integrity as a steward of others property and have been the primary liaison for the annual audit for the last six fiscal years with my organization's auditors. All six audits came back clean; no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies.

2. What do you see as the best new opportunities for MTB riders to enjoy MROSD lands in the coming years?

**Hassett:** With the Passage of Measure AA, there will be tremendous opportunities for more access throughout the District. Already completed is the staging area at Bald Mountain and the Summit trail from Bald Mountain up to Mt Umunhum nearly completed. The opening of the Sierra Azul trails, because of the large size of that preserve (18,000 acres) represents one of the very best new opportunities for MTB rides in our region. Other notable trails would be the mid section of the Stevens Creek Trail, trails throughout the La Honda and Bear Creek preserves, completion of the Purisima to the Sea trail, and additions to the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

**Lewke:** In my Ward I am eager to get La Honda Open Space Preserve open in my four year term. I also would like to see a multi-use trail that connects La Honda to Woodside/Portola Valley open, in an effort to get bikes off of 84 for safety reasons. This trail would be a mountain bike and road biking trail, dirt on one side and paved on the other. I would also like to have mountain bikers on a trail committee with me and members of the Mid Pen Field Staff to evaluate a system for determining where is the greatest interest for biking trails and where it is realistic. The arbitrary 60% open to bikes is too low. I would like to see it closer to 75%. Is that achievable in four years? I don't know, I prefer to shoot for the moon and if I miss, still land among the stars.

3. There are currently few trails that allow MTB riders access to the Bay Area Ridge Trail from the urban areas to the East of Skyline Blvd. Thus many of our membership drive to trailheads on Skyline but express interest in being able to do loops on singletrack starting much closer to their homes. Do you see opportunities to develop new trails that would allow this?

**Hassett:** Although I fully support additional trails coming up from the urban area to Skyline, few opportunities currently exist for improving this due to land ownership issues. However, with the Passage of Measure AA, the District now has the acquisition capacity to close gaps in this area as opportunities become available. Short term, the District is working on the Alpine Road trail at Coal Creek, and getting started potential new trails at Windy Hill with links to other preserves. Long term it's a matter of acquiring key parcels when the opportunities arise.

**Lewke:** Certainly, parking lots seem like an afterthought at nearly every open space preserve, if bikers can help identify locations on open space land that could be a mountain biking or multi-use trail start, that would be beneficial. There is only one of me, there are many of you, I prefer to work as part of a team, than to do everything by myself and hope you are happy. I am open to exploring possibilities, please help me serve my community by offering your input!

4. The outdoor experience that Mountain Bikers seek is not that different from other trail users. We want to enjoy a close connection to nature that singletrack trails allow as well as the challenge inherent in navigating such trails. Other park districts have made efforts to develop these multi-use trails. A local example is the Emma McCrary trail in Santa Cruz. Are you supportive of efforts to develop trails within MROSD preserves that have similar features?

**Hassett:** I have not personally experienced the Emma McCrary trail other than seeing it on the internet, however I will put the quality of Midpen's trails up against any other park agency in the Bay Area. We have some of the best world class mountain bike trails throughout our preserves, designed, built, and maintained by our staff and our ability to increase the availability of such trail will now occur as public access is expanded through the implementation of Measure AA funded project.

**Lewke:** Absolutely! I spent four years of my life growing up in Germany, biking to and from school and soccer practice, and going on longer typically one to two week biking trips during the summer with my family. We biked often on multi-use trails along rivers between 40-70 miles a day, stopping to visit cathedrals and castles along the way. I do not see a reason why we cannot convert many of our existing trails to multi-use or create new multi-use trails. We have 62,000 acres of land, with slightly more than half of it open, I would like to have more of it open so we can experience more adventures together. I would encourage the mountain biker community to weigh in on the idea of mountain bike trails that follow a legend similar to skiing: green bunny slope trails, blue intermediate trails, black diamond 'be sure your life insurance policy is current' trails. This would help mountain bikers of different experience levels to enjoy open space without creating friction by managing users' expectations.

5. What is the best way to work with you to better understand the interests of mountain bikers? How will you balance the needs of the various trail users?

**Hassett:** SVMTB has been instrumental in prioritizing capital improvement projects for the District. During our Vision Plan workshops the mountain bike community was well represented. Several members of SVMTB were part of our Citizens Advisory Committee. I recommend your members continue to participate in board and committee meetings as we roll out new projects. Staff and the General Manager also began to explore the creation of a "multi-use" forum to bring all trail users together to ensure that issues could be openly discussed and solutions proposed by the user groups. This effort had to be suspended with activity around the Vision Plan and Measure AA, but I think it is worth pursuing again as Measure AA see more lands opened to the public for multi-use.

**Lewke:** The best way to help me understand the need is to invite me to come ride with you and see what you are talking about. I am a good road cyclist, I try when possible to bike once a week from my home in Redwood City to work in San Jose. It is 23.5mi one way, taking around 90-100min depending on traffic. I am a novice mountain biker, having primarily ridden in Arastradero Preserve. You may need to 'take it easy on me,' I may not be the greatest hill climber, or bravest thriller seeker, but I do own a mountain bike and want to become more proficient with it! I believe we live in a democratic society and need to balance the needs of various trail users accordingly to

the proportion of use they represent on the trails. I believe the majority users of open space are pedestrians, a large but growing minority is mountain bikers, and the smallest contingent are equestrians. I think wider and more multi-use trails would be my preferred approach, a secondary approach based on compromise not involving widening existing trails would be making certain trails open to bikes say on odd days of the week and equestrians on even days, so there are no complaints concerning horses or bikes 'interfering' with the other groups enjoyment of the space. The third approach is to have some biking trails that run parallel but separate from, or just have plain separate trails open exclusively to mountain bikes.

6. Is there anything else you would like to tell our members before they cast their votes?

**Hassett:** Measure AA was a real boost to the Districts ability to complete some long delayed projects. Over the course of the next few years as we ramp up our ability to make these projects happen, the mountain bike community will definitely see substantial trail opportunities. I am personally pleased that SVMTB has participated in our processes to date and I welcome their continuing participation work to implement and grow the best trail system in the region.

**Lewke:** I have a bike and like to bike! If you want someone like that to represent you, please vote for me and encourage your friends to do the same! To learn more please visit [facebook.com/votelewke](https://facebook.com/votelewke) and [democracy.com/votelewke](https://democracy.com/votelewke) Please like my Facebook page, share it with friends, post on it that you support Brandon Lewke and his vision for more multi use and biking trails. Look forward to earning your vote November 4th.