



**California Special
Districts Association**

Districts Stronger Together

2021 CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase

TUESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2021

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions

Resolving Conflict Constructively

CPS HR Consulting

Have you ever wondered how to identify specific types of conflict, how to respond to baiting language and how to use building language to respond to defensive language? Learn through experience with three interactive activities that encompass: challenging behaviors, subversive language, and the effective use of communication.

Creating a Strong Foundation for your Public Agency

BHI Management Consulting

There are a number of subtle aspects of public agency work that are easy to overlook that, when strengthened, can truly make the difference during tough times.

Taxes, Assessments, and Fees: Recent Developments and Considerations for Your District

Colantuono Highsmith & Whatley, PC

Special Districts have limited revenue-raising powers and often need alternative revenues to fund operations. This session will highlight recent developments and key considerations between common alternative revenues.

Managing COVID-19 Issues: Now and What's Next

Liebert Cassidy Whitmore

Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District

In this training, we will provide a wide-ranging survey of the labor and employment issues implicated by COVID-19. We will provide both legal and practical advice for special districts on myriad subjects from labor relations to wage and hour to litigation. The workshop will address the most important and timely issues facing employers now including, preparing for and responding to outbreaks of COVID, managing employee leave, addressing accommodation requests, ensuring healthy and safe workplaces, and controlling and reducing employers' costs. We will also look forward to what may be next for special districts, including statutory and contractual claims which may be brought against your district and how to help avoid them. We will also discuss budgetary constraints, bargaining obligations, and a potential resurgence of the virus.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions continued

Buying, Selling & Leasing Property: Keys to Successful Transactions and AB1486 Compliance

Meyers Nave

This session covers laws and regulations governing real estate transactions that involve special districts, including the Surplus Lands Act which was extensively amended by AB 1486 in October 2019.

Collaboration: How Multiple Agencies Can Work Together, Better

Probolsky Research and special district panel

We will break down some of the key advantages and elements of success when two or more agencies team up to build something or partner in some other way.

- Get off the ground more quickly
- Spread the risk
- Build a broader coalition of support
- Demonstrate innovation
- Pooled talent
- And more

Trending: Using Social Media to Promote Transparency and Accountability

Aleshire & Wynder, LLP

Social media has transformed how governments interact with constituents. Explore the benefits of social media in promoting transparency and the challenges of complying with the Brown Act in a post-pandemic virtual world.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions

AB 5: So, You're Saying Our Independent Contractor is Actually an Employee?

Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo

Many public agencies benefit from the use of independent contractors in many types of projects. This is usually done out of convenience for the district, the ability to leverage a specialized skill set on a temporary basis, and as a cost savings for ratepayers. However, what if your 'independent contractor' wasn't really 'independent' after all? This session will explore the latest rules as set forth by AB 5, the various methods used to determine whether a contractor is truly independent, and how your district should handle any claims of employee misclassification.

How to Make Your Board / Manager Team a Success

Rauch Communications Consultants

This session focuses on building an effective board manager team by improving board governance and the board and manager roles and relationships. Topics include committee meetings; focusing the board on the right information and issues; dealing with difficult personalities; providing clear policy direction to the manager; a pain free and productive method for evaluating the Manager's performance; and more. The session features real-world examples, opportunities for Q/A, and sharing of experiences.

Public Contracting Requirements: Emergency Preparedness and Federal and State Reimbursement

Meyers Nave

This session covers contracting best practices and procedures that special districts should have in place before a disaster, steps that can be taken during the disaster to help manage the situation and plan for potential State and Federal reimbursement, and what must happen immediately after the disaster to move forward quickly to address the affected community's needs.

1:45 – 3:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions continued

Developments in Prop 218 and the Law of Water Rates

Hanson Bridgett, LLP and Best Best & Krieger LLP

Water and wastewater rates are under continuing legal attack throughout the state. Retail water suppliers and wastewater service providers must collect and fairly allocate the costs of service among their ratepayers, and even well-designed plans may come under attack from disgruntled users and their often-entrepreneurial attorneys - who take the cases on contingency and bet on being able to collect their fees from the special district. A class action case filed against 81 water retailers last year brought the threat of these suits and their financial impact into sharp focus. And recent case law proves to be a mixed bag for public entities. In this program, attendees will learn about: the impact of recent legal decisions; the threats posed by certain pending lawsuits; recent and proposed legislation affecting rate setting and collections; and practical steps special districts might consider to reduce the risks of Prop. 218 challenges.

Reserve Policies for Special Districts – How Much is Enough?

Eide Bailey CPAs

This session will talk about what reserves are needed and why, how to establish reserve level policies, support for your reserve policy including a capital improvement plan and how to communicate your reserve policies to your constituents. We will also provide resources to help you get started in establishing or revising your reserve policy.

Civil Grand Jury Insight and Proactive Cooperation

Grand Jurors Association

This session will provide an overview of the grand jury process and the five foundational elements that make it an effective instrument of democracy. Attendees will learn the necessary processes for districts and juries to work together in order to make local governments more effective and efficient.

Harassment Prevention Training for Board Members and Supervisors - part 1

Renne Public Law Group, LLP

This training promises to provide a fun and interactive way for board members and managers to satisfy their bi-annual harassment prevention training requirement. Conducted by two experienced and engaging employment attorneys, the speakers will have participants weigh in through an electronic survey-method tool (done through an iPhone/Android app) throughout the presentation, facilitating more candid and educational responses. The presentation will teach participants how to identify, prevent, and properly respond to workplace harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and workplace bullying and will address how best practices can reduce the risk of personal and agency liability. Presenters will also highlight new laws that have emerged because of the #MeToo movement and the topic of implicit bias in the workplace. (See AB 1825, 2053, 1661.)

3:45 – 4:45 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions

Key Considerations for Utilizing Debt

California Special Districts Association Finance Corporation

If your district is considering using debt as a tool to fund all or part of a mission-critical capital project, it is important to know what your options are. Join the expert consultants from the CSDA Finance Corporation in a discussion of funding structures, sources of repayment, market conditions, and more. Hear one special district's story of how successfully leveraged debt helped them meet their funding needs.

Effective and Legal Meetings in a New Technology World

Richard Watson Gershon

COVID-19 presented districts with unprecedented challenges, including how to keep public meetings safe and effective, while encouraging public participation and maintaining transparency. Technology has played a key role in this, but it can also open a Pandora's box of pitfalls. This presentation will explore how districts can harness the value of incorporating technology into the board room, while minimizing the potential risks. Topics will include best practices for online board meetings, procuring and using technology support and services, compliance with the Brown Act, accessibility, and more.

3:45 – 4:45 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions continued

How to Help Your General Manager Succeed - And the Board, Too

Regional Government Services Authority

Costa Mesa Sanitary District

Advice and humor from the real world. Topics Include: Giving Clear Direction; How to succeed even though you voted against that motion, and a game show, “What lane am I in”?

Supercharge Your Writing with Inclusive Language

CPS HR Consulting

Spoken communication should empower others, promote inclusion, reduce bias, and avoid giving some groups privilege over others. This workshop will help you understand the ways word choice impacts spoken and written communication, and help you create messages and documents that build relationships and convey respect for your audience and stakeholders.

Dead Gift-Away: The Constitutional Prohibition on Gifts of Public Funds

Aleshire & Wynder, LLP

This session will provide a primer on the doctrine of “gift of public funds,” which prohibits the giving or lending of public funds to any person or entity, public or private, regardless of the amount of the expenditure or loan. 1) Attendees will learn the statutory and judicial exceptions to the doctrine. 2) Attendees will also learn its application to special districts and the critical services provided to communities, including disaster relief, infrastructure maintenance, water, and fire protection, as well as its application to compensation of managers and employees. 3) This session will also explore how a public expenditure is challenged under the doctrine, and the potential repercussions of a violation.

Climate Adaptation Topic - invited

Harassment Prevention for Directors and Supervisors - part 2

Renne Public Law Group, LLP

See previous session description. Must attend both sessions to earn your certificate.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions

Proven, Get-to-the-Point Methods to Complete Your Long-Term and Strategic Planning Quickly, Efficiently, and Enjoyably

Rauch Communications Consultants

This session provides approaches that have been proven to work: step-by-step guidance on how to engage the Board, executive team, staff and public in a successful Strategic Planning process avoiding vague words by pinning down clear direction in plain English; how to measure results; and more. There will be opportunities for questions, answers and engagement among the participants and the seminar leader.

How to Pay Off Your CalPERS Pension Liability – Not Just POBs

Urban Futures, Inc.

This session will start by providing a simple explanation of your CalPERS pension liability. We will provide an update on CalPERS’ Investment Return for FY21 and discuss how much CalPERS is expected to lower the Discount Rate next year. The primary focus of this discussion will be on potential strategies to address your CalPERS liability, including: making Additional Discretionary Payments (ADPs) or a Soft Fresh Start, Leveraged Refunding, and Tax-exempt Exchange - providing real-world case studies of each. Finally, we will also touch upon pension obligation bonds (POBs), why they are so compelling, the GFOA’s position on POBs, and POB risks and how to address them.

Brown Act in the Pandemic Matrix

Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo

The pandemic created a lot of new circumstances with regard to Board meetings. So many aspects changed as public meetings moved into the cybersphere. The question now is how much of that is here to stay, and how much will fade with the pandemic. What we need to figure out is how public meetings will look going forward, and how a special district can remain compliant with the Brown Act – whether the meeting is in-person, virtual, or something in between. This session will discuss recent changes to the Brown Act, with a specific emphasis on the use of technology.

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions continued

FEMA Topic – invited

An overview on the processes and considerations of Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Programs --- best practices, how to engage, applying, etc.

Ethics AB 1234 Compliance Training (part 1)

Lozano Smith

This critical training satisfies your mandatory ethics training requirement during each two-year period, or within six months of being hired. Attendees will refresh their knowledge of public service ethics laws and principles. This includes informing attendees on how to best navigate legal mandates; focus on doing the right thing in the public interest; consider conflicts of interest; and help spot issues before they become a problem. Representative Topics:

- Effective Governance and Principles Beyond the Law
- Personal Financial Gain: Conflict of Interest, Bribery
- Personal Advantages and Perks: Gift and Travel Restrictions
- Governmental Transparency and Fair Processes: Financial Disclosure, Brown Act
- Fair Processes: Due Process, Common Law Bias, Incompatible Offices

WC, ADA, and FEHA: The Keys to Mitigating Liability

Special District Risk Management Authority

MacIntyre & White

In today's increasing liability for employers as it relates to workers' compensation and disability claims, this presentation will focus on an employer's responsibilities when dealing with American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Fair Employment Housing Act (FEHA) as well as how an employer should coordinate those responsibilities when a workers' compensation claim is involved.

Recent Developments in Redistricting and the California Voting Rights Act

National Demographics Corporation and Cole Huber, LLP

This presentation will provide updates regarding the conversion to district elections under the California Voting Rights Act ("CVRA") and the redistricting process (for those special districts that currently have district elections). The presentation will address recent court cases interpreting the CVRA and the legal requirements for creating districts. The presentation will also address the release and use of 2020 Census data, the timing of the districting and redistricting processes, and the deadlines for being ready for the 2022 election cycle.

2:00 – 3:15 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions

Managing the Impacts of Homelessness on Special Districts Facilities and Services – invited

Institute for Local Government (ILG)

Revenues and Recovery - An update on taxes, fees, rates and assessments

Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC and NBS

An update on current developments in the law of special district revenues, including selected case studies and new rulings on water rates, special taxes, assessments and other fees and charges.

Lessons Learned From 2020 and How They Will Impact Litigation for Years to Come

Liebert Cassidy Whitmore

2020 was unlike any year we have experienced. COVID-19, civil unrest and political polarization, among other things, impacted the workplace in ways we could not have imagined. Now, these events have started to shape the type of litigation special districts will be dealing with in the coming years. We will discuss emerging litigation trends such as disability claims, reasonable accommodation obligations, First Amendment and free speech challenges, social media freedoms and more. We will also discuss how districts can mitigate the risk of these types of claims.

2:00 – 3:15 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions continued

Energy Resilience for Critical Infrastructure

Centrica Business Solutions

Energy is vital to every business. When an energy-related failure occurs, operational vulnerabilities become exposed and the need for a secure energy source becomes essential. The cost of an energy related failure is significant and far-reaching. That's why it's important for special districts to have an Energy Resilience strategy in place to address the risks and protect themselves.

Accessing California's COVID-19 Relief Funds for Special Districts

CSDA Advocacy Team

CSDA has led the charge for special districts' access to pandemic assistance programs. Now, discover the various sources for relief districts may utilize at state and local levels, and learn more about best practices in gaining access to funding.

Strategies to Avoid Liability and Minimize Exposure for Claims Related to Streets, Sidewalks and Trees

Special District Risk Management Authority and Porter Scott

Jury decisions in California are awarding millions in damages against public agencies and have eroded most immunities of public agencies. This presentation provides public agencies with strategies to reduce their exposure when dealing with dangerous conditions related to sidewalks and trees.

Ethics AB 1234 Compliance Training (part 2)

Lozano Smith

See previous session description. Must attend both sessions to earn your certificate.

3:30 – 5:00 p.m. - Scheduled Breakout Sessions

Crisis Communications: 5 Ideas, 2 Tips, 20 Questions Answered

Tripepi Smith

Crisis communications is something we all think we are ready for until the crisis hits. Then the real crisis begins. Join Ryder Todd Smith, President of Tripepi Smith as he shares his insights and experiences in local government with crisis communications. He will identify career-ending risks, cool tools to have in your arsenal of platforms and take questions from the audience on a full range of subjects. Don't let your next crisis create a communications crisis, leave this session with some actionable ideas. Also, attendees of this session will look seven years younger when it is over.

Exceptional Boards for Exceptional Times: Creating a Culture of Good Governance

Institute for Local Government (ILG)

Local governments in California face a myriad of critical and emerging issues from economic recovery from the COVID crisis, to the retirement wave, to preparing for future disasters. In order to navigate this, elected officials must be equipped to lead through these changing, and sometimes challenging, times. This session will provide tools and strategies to help elected officials operate more effectively as a board and better engage with fellow board members and staff.

Physical and Cyber Security to Critical Infrastructure

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency within the Department of Homeland Security will conduct a special presentation of current and future threats to our nation's most critical infrastructure.