



Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation Board of Directors Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation?

The Parks Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that raises funds, fosters partnerships and advocates on behalf of Sonoma County Regional Parks. The Regional Parks Department consists of more than 50 parks throughout Sonoma County, including the highly popular Spring Lake, Doran, Ragle Ranch and Foothill Parks.

How many individuals serve on the Parks Foundation's board of directors?

A full board is 19 individuals. Ten are appointed by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors; nine positions are elected by the Parks Foundation board.

When does the board meet?

The board meets the third Friday of each month from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. The board typically meets at the conference room of the Sonoma Land Trust, 822 Fifth Street in downtown Santa Rosa.

What are the responsibilities of board members?

A key responsibility of the Parks Foundation and its board is to raise funds to support Regional Parks' projects and programs. This is an exciting time for Regional Parks, with new parks opening to the public, such as Taylor Mountain Regional Park and the Laguna de Santa Rosa Trail. The Parks Foundation is currently raising funds to match a \$50,000 challenge grant for Helen Putnam Regional Park in Petaluma; to expand the trail system and build a natural play area at Taylor Mountain; and to support the Russian River Water Safety Patrol.

We are proud of the fact that 100% of board members contribute financially to the Foundation. In addition, board members assist the Foundation in fundraising in a variety of other ways, depending upon the skills and interests of each board member. Examples of the ways board members raise funds include:

- Using materials developed by Foundation staff to approach new sponsors for programs or events
- Using materials developed by Foundation staff to encourage donations from individuals

- Introducing the Foundation executive director to prospective donors or sponsors
- Helping to plan and promote fundraising events and sell event tickets.

Depending upon their interests and professional abilities, Foundation board members also help develop the budget and financial documents, donate graphic design and marketing services, assist with social media outreach, and carry out other tasks as needed.

What is the time commitment of board members?

Board members spend approximately 3 hours per month preparing for and attending board meetings. The executive committee members (chair, vice chair, treasurer and secretary) spend an additional 5-10 hours per month meeting with the executive director, supervising the administration of the nonprofit, and undertaking critical tasks such as developing or updating policies or financial documents.

The monthly time commitment for other board members varies depending upon the activities that month. The Foundation frequently presents events or programs at which board involvement is encouraged.

What is the financial commitment of board members?

Board members are asked to contribute at a “personally significant” level. The Foundation offers a guideline of at least \$500 per year.

What are some typical activities for board members?

Following are some typical events and activities that involved Foundation board members in recent years:

- Fundraising hike from Tolay Lake Regional Park to Gloria Ferrer Vineyards
- Hike to meet and greet donors at the Laguna Trail (part of the Annual Parks Celebration)
- Tabling at Water Bark events, regularly scheduled fundraising events that allow dogs to swim off-leash at the Spring Lake Swimming Lagoon
- Donor appreciation brunch at the Healdsburg Water Carnival, old-time fun at Healdsburg’s Veterans Memorial Beach.
- Arranging for Dine-and-Donate days at restaurants where Board Member has contact.

For more information, contact Melissa Kelley, Sonoma County Regional Parks Foundation executive director, at (707) 565-1830 or melissa.kelley@sonoma-county.org.