



STAFF REPORT

City Council

Meeting Date:

2/24/2026

Staff Report Number:

26-022-CC

Regular Business:

Consider applicants and make an appointment to fill an unexpired vacancy on the East Palo Alto Sanitary District Advisory Committee

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Council consider applicants and make an appointment to fill an unexpired vacancy on the East Palo Alto Sanitary District (EPASD) Advisory Committee (Committee).

Policy Issues

The Committee, formed in 2023, functions as a subsidiary body to the EPASD's governing body, including advising the East Palo Alto (EPA) City Council/EPASD Board on operations and maintenance agreements, annual budgets, capital improvement planning and service rates.

One seat on the Committee is reserved for a Menlo Park resident who lives within the service area of the EPASD.

Background

On Nov. 15, 2023, San Mateo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) approved EPA's application to establish the EPASD as a subsidiary of the City of East Palo Alto and included terms and specific to this report, Condition No. 6:

- Condition 6 – Within 90 days of the certificate of completion issuance, the City of East Palo Alto must submit a plan for establishing an advisory committee for the subsidiary district. This committee will advise on various matters, and the plan must include at least one seat for a resident of the Menlo Park portion of the EPASD service area. The City of East Palo Alto must collaborate with Menlo Park on the advisory committee's composition and provide evidence of this correspondence to LAFCo.

On Sept. 10, 2024, the City Council received a report (Attachment A) providing details on the future governing body of the EPASD, providing a reserved seat for a resident of the City of Menlo Park on the Committee. LAFCo issued the certificate of completion Sept. 16, 2024.

On Dec. 17, 2024, the City Council appointed Menlo Park resident Diane Otterby to the Committee (Attachment B), who resigned Jan. 7.

Analysis

The city clerk's office conducted a recruitment from Jan. 12 to Feb. 13, similar to recruitment for city advisory bodies, including a series of advertisements and announcements in both English and Spanish, disseminated throughout the city. Notably, while the broader outreach was citywide, mailed postcards were

sent to all Menlo Park residents within the EPASD service area.

Residency for all applicants has been verified by the city clerk's office. Nominations will be made and a vote will be called for each nomination in the order received. Applicants receiving the highest number of affirmative votes from a majority of the City Council present shall be appointed. The number of votes for each City Councilmember is limited to the number of vacancies.

Note, all applications will be provided to the City Council under separate cover and are also available for public viewing at the city clerk's office during regular business hours or by request (Attachment C).

The City received two applications, listed in alphabetical order by last name.

- Jagan Subbiah
- Vamsi Velagapudi

The appointed Committee member will continue the term of the previous appointee, which ends Jan. 11, 2028. Following appointment, the Menlo Park city clerk's office will coordinate with the applicant and EPA staff to provide further instructions, guidance, and details on the next steps. The City Council also has the option to direct staff to reopen recruitment to seek additional applicants.

Impact on City Resources

The costs associated with vacancy recruitments are included in the fiscal year 2025-26 budget.

Environmental Review

This action is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it is an organizational structure change that will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Hyperlink – Sept. 10, 2024 Staff Report #24-163-CC:
www.menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2024-meetings/agendas/20240910/j2-plan-to-establish-epasd-advisory-subcommittee.pdf
- B. Hyperlink – Dec. 17, 2024 Staff Report #24-212-CC:
www.menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2024-meetings/agendas/20241217/g1-consider-applicants-epasd-advisory-committee.pdf
- C. Applications

Report prepared by:
Sarah Sandoval, Deputy City Clerk

East Palo Alto Sanitary District (EPASD) advisory committee application



Submitted on	13 February 2026, 3:22PM
Receipt number	5
Related form version	4

Applicant's full name (first and last)	Jagan Subbiah
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Applicant interest, experience and qualifications

Education

Dear Menlo Park City Councillors,

My name is Jagan Subbiah and included below is the same, detailed application I submitted last year for this same EPASD advisory committee position at the recommendation of Councilor Drew Combs. Interestingly, when I attended the Menlo Park City Council meeting (held on Dec 17, 2024) that examined EPASD committee applicants then, it seemed that my application had not been read, instead appointing a retired school teacher and senior citizen whose background (based on her application) indicated little in the way of qualifications relevant to EPASD activities, and who was unable attend the city council meeting virtually because she couldn't get Zoom to work. (I attended in person.) If being born and raised in the Willows, gaining degrees from UC Berkeley (BA Neurobiology) and Oxford (MBA and part of a Pediatric Neuroscience PhD utilizing cutting-edge neuromedical devices I built and developed for NICUs nationwide), managing the finances as a controller for multiple companies and raising funding for startups, 2 years of experience in construction in the trades (including plumbing), and managing dozens rental properties (8 in Menlo Park of which 6 of which are part of EPASD I believe) is not qualified enough, I'm not sure what is.

Also, over the last 12+ months since my previous application, the wastewater recycling startup that I help manage (whose technology can turn raw sewage into pure drinking water in <4 hours with its shipping-container-sized units processing up to ~25K gallons per day) has received orders for hundreds of units from the United Nations directly to be deployed in warzones including in Gaza, Ukraine and Africa to provide fresh, clean drinking water (particularly for refugee camps and hospitals) where the local & regional water infrastructure has been destroyed.

Born at Stanford Children's Hospital and raised in Menlo Park, I had an unique upbringing as both a world-class, adventure-sport athlete (mountain-climbing, sailing, skiing & scuba diving) and an academically accelerated student (being accepted to a university at age 10 and graduating at UC Berkeley (neuroscience, after taking 2 years off in the middle to solo-sail competitively with Team USA globally while travelling to some 75 countries) by age 16, where I learned to appreciate the environment and California's outdoors. Between 16 and 18 I won three of the Bay Area's best startup competition for all-comers (not just students) in blockchain technology and received venture funding which I set aside to spend a year turning around a medical device company that was critical to covid recovery in the ER where I also led the successful design and miniaturization and FDA approval of the first ever EEG headset for tiny preemie babies. After gaining entry at 18 as the youngest ever in history to enter an MBA program (via an age waiver by about 10 years) at age 19 I became the youngest ever to

complete an earned (non-research) masters at near enough the oldest college (St. Johns) at near enough the oldest university (Oxford, UK) in the world. Save for some business experience in the past year or two since the MBA my twin brother had identical accomplishments until he joined Boston Consulting Group (BCG, the rival of McKinsey) as the youngest ever hire by 10 years and now after promotion is on track to be a partner by age 26 – typically one makes partner at 40 to 45 – at their no. 1 global office, San Francisco.

I on the other hand, have declined similar opportunities, and given my interest in technology taken a more entrepreneurial path a tech and have worked in raising venture funds and new business development in 4 startups in neuro-medicine, cybersecurity, sports/events ticketing platforms and most pertinently to the current application to EPASD, in novel, cheap electrolytic technology to recycle and reuse the worst sewage water (pit latrines to septic tanks) including for drinking purposes in rural and urban areas in third world countries where there are no public sewers and water has become scarce. Additionally, with direct relevance to my application here, together with my ex-Stanford Professor Dad who has previously built, developed and sold 100s of homes and retail shops in 3 countries (Singapore, USA and India) we have recently bought, next door to our 25 year home, 6 EPASD district Menlo Park homes on 2 lots of about an acre total and are in the permitting process to redevelop them into more affordable 11 homes.

The above being a general overview, I provide additional details below.

From an early age, I spent many seasons in the Sierra Nevada's, learning to ski by age 2 and hike tall mountains by age 3-4 when I climbed up & down 11,000 ft over three days through 33 miles of Yosemite's Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne near & along the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir – the primary fresh water source for over half of the San Francisco Bay Area. By age 6, I was the youngest to climb Mt. Whitney (14,000 ft.) - the tallest mountain in the continental USA, and by age 7, became the youngest to ever climb Mt. Kilimanjaro - the tallest mountain in Africa, as well as the youngest to climb up to 20,000 feet in history (receiving commendation by President Bill Clinton). By age 8, I was a national-level skier before switching to solo sailing, and by age 10 became the best youth sailor west of Mississippi River (western half of USA) and one of the youngest to ever become scuba-certified (recently achieving PADI Rescue Diver status).

Academically, with high ACT and AP scores, I was accepted to UC Berkeley at age 10, becoming the youngest student to ever be accepted to college. There, I majored in Molecular & Cellular Neurobiology and graduated by age 16 near the top of my class. In addition to extensive training in both biology, chemistry and physics theory and experimentation, I also conducted publishable computational biology research on protein folding & evolution in Berkeley HHMI investigator Prof. Michael Eisen's lab (who unsuccessfully ran for California Senator Dianne Feinstein's seat in 2018 to restore non-partisanship towards and public confidence in the role of science in policy making) and practiced graduate-level CRISPR-Cas9/genetic editing techniques in Nobel Laureate Jennifer Doudna's lab.

Additionally, in my final semester at Berkeley, I led my team to 1st place in a series of prestigious entrepreneurship challenge competitions and startup accelerators against hundreds of Stanford and Berkeley computer science students, MBAs and professors. Gaining the support of senior, mostly C-suite, executives at Oracle, Wells Fargo and Intuit, I raised \$500K in seed funding to develop blockchain technology to enable estate planning and auto-execute wills and trusts (although this was put on hold due to key team members contracting COVID).

Undeterred, I soon joined a neuro-medtech device manufacturing & research startup that sells its novel, miniaturized EEG-recording/brain-monitoring systems (hardware, wearable recording device, software, and chemicals that are 10X smaller and cheaper than existing, legacy platforms) to 300 hospitals across the US. Upon joining as an intern and with the company on the verge of bankruptcy, I assisted the new management in their successful multi-year turnaround. Initially, I recreated two years of accounts previously mismanaged by a fired bookkeeper, recovered unbilled, uncollected revenue & eliminated unnecessary expenses totaling >\$50k and corrected financial statements that misled investors and cost them millions of dollars

eventually being promoted to Controller/Assistant CFO. Upon reaching profitability, we turned our attention to the underlying processes and technology. First, I helped streamline the company's organizational structure and improve employee training. Second, I assisted in overhauling FDA compliance, updating thousands of pages admin, safety, compliance, testing, quality, and manufacturing procedures in a 24/7, 3-month on-site marathon effort to avoid shut down after years of failed inspections and an FDA-mandated recall due to sub-supplier contamination. Third, I reorganized intellectual property to support new R&D, managing tens of patents & trademarks and collated the findings from 30 different research projects undertaken over almost two decades. Fourth, I introduced new, cost-saving manufacturing equipment and project-managed the design, development and FDA clinical trialing of the first-ever, disposable, infant EEG-recording headset (likely needed by 1 in 10 births nationwide) to improve monitoring and outcomes for neonates in the ICU, successfully leading a team of three – with support from Harvard Medical School researchers who encouraged the project – through the pandemic.

On the side, I also spent several months in manual construction to assist in and manage the remodel of multiple houses in the Willows, working with minimum-wage handymen to lift 80 lb.-cement bags; paint fences/houses; fix sprinkler systems & sewers/plumbing; build decks; lay flooring, roofing & patios; landscape, plant 100+ plants (bamboo, fruit, maple, lavender & tulips), cut/prune (large) trees, install gutters & electricals, and replace 50 ft of plumbing lines.

Interested in pursuing further research utilizing these technologies, I attended University of Oxford to investigate neurodevelopment, improve neonatal surgery and develop AI-detection algorithms for sports concussions and Autism. While in England, I also gained an MBA from Oxford's Said Business School (SBS) as the youngest MBA student (accepted at age 18, graduated at 20) in the history of MBAs. During my studies, I also led the Oxford rocketry club build and launched test rockets with the UK Space Agency in their development of Europe's first rocket launch facility in the Scottish isles near the Arctic Circle.

Returning to the United States, my primary focus has been towards fundraising and scaling leading various water recycling and cybersecurity startups. The first is a startup whose mission is to sustainably recycle wastewater into drinking water in infrastructure-poor, developing regions with a plug-and-play, infrastructure-as-a-service business model leveraging its proprietary, world-leading titanium chemistry technology. The unit itself is easily movable, being the size of a small shipping container and thus obviating the need for expensive, infrastructure-intensive, industrial-sized sewage treatment facilities and networks of pipes. Instead, the unit electrolytically treats the sewage on the spot and generates fresh, drinking water for immediate reuse or to be pumped into the ground to recharge the stressed and often depleted groundwater tables/aquifers - all at a cost of just a several cents per gallon.

Recently, the water-recycling company has secured contracts to treat and recycle to drinking water quality the sewage & wastewater of hundreds of hotels owned by major, Western brands in India, Thailand and the Middle East. Flexible in application, the units have also been used to process palm oil effluent of the world's leading producers in Malaysia & Indonesia as well as biomedical wastewater by the United Nations in their refugee camps in Nepal and the ongoing Israel-Gaza war/humanitarian crisis. In addition to reducing pollution in globally critical rainforests and improving public health by eliminating waterborne diseases such as diarrhea and dysentery that are leading causes of illness and death, the unit's energy efficiency (requiring only electricity) greatly reduces carbon emissions particularly in places where people currently rely on cutting down trees to gain firewood to boil water every day.

Regarding cybersecurity, I am currently involved with three companies – the current world leader in brand protection, cyberfraud/fake products and phishing company whose customers include ~300 companies (incl. OpenAI), Britain's oldest cybersecurity consulting firm that advises the UK's largest companies, hospitals, energy producers and sewage management firms, and a fast-growing startup that specializes in quantum-proof encryption to address data privacy.

Civic affiliations and community activities, including service on other advisory bodies, commissions or committees

Sports:

At age 12, I also took two years off from my university studies to focus full-time on my sailing career where I represented Team USA twelve times internationally, eventually reaching the top 2 in my age group nationally and top 10 internationally in the under-15 class. I then spent the next several years sailing high-performance, foiling catamarans (sailing boats similar to those used in the America's Cup) as a member of the US Olympic Development team with many coaches and teammates competing at the 2024 Paris Olympics. Through these experiences, I was able to travel to all 50 US states, 2 of the 4 US Protectorates/Territories, and over 75 countries across 5 continents (staying at least a few days in each, and weeks in dozens of them), including visiting hundreds of world-class museums and staying with hunter-gatherer 'bushmen' deep in Africa.

Civic Participation & Elections

When I was 8-10 years old, I door-knocked on 4,000 houses for several local Menlo Park, California city elections and distributed flyers & encouraged voting in a non-partisan, regardless of political affiliation to improve voter turnout. In fact, on a few occasions, my twin brother and I faced hostility from a handful of residents even in Menlo Park – a harbinger of politics today. While at Oxford, I also assisted a fellow MBA classmate and MP candidate (as his Chief of Staff) to successfully navigate municipal elections, the intra-party vetting process and eventually campaign for Parliament despite the chaos of Brexit and COVID.

Public Health:

I was a Covid-19 Tester & Lab Tech in the first, US Covid Seroprevalence study conducted by Stanford Medical School and the local San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties. I participated in many different roles, from testing patients to organizing & streamlining the whole process onsite, greatly improving efficiency & safety. Although highly controversial, the study results were featured in the NY Times, Washington Post, CNN etc., and advised White House Covid Policy, with volunteers like me receiving acknowledgments in the final paper. (One of the Stanford professors who authored the effort has been recently selected to become the next Director of the NIH (and responsible for all government-funded medical research) as one of the incoming Trump Administration's least controversial picks – go figure. :)

With my twin, I personally funded a charitable expansion of the neuromedtech company's prior Cerebral Malaria research that is becoming the new WHO standard-of-care & has the potential to reduce global childhood mortality by 8%. Using cheaper equipment, generic drugs, EEG software & telemedicine, we were able to cut costs from \$10K to just \$10 per life saved and held discussions with Health Ministers in Africa & South America and major NGOs like the Gates Foundation.

Scouting & Community Service:

From ages 5-12, I was heavily involved with the local Cub (finished program 2 years early with almost all possible badges earned) and Boy Scout (achieved rank of 1st class within 2 years before focusing on sailing) programs. As a Scout, I participated in and helped lead 20-30 charitable outings including flag planting at the Golden Gate National Cemetery every Memorial Day (where we each hand-planted American flags in front of hundreds of headstones to honor fallen veterans), building tens of play structures for Habitat for Humanity, 2nd Harvest Food Bank's canned food drives, collecting trash at Yosemite and Kings Canyon National Parks, and assisting and Xmas caroling for the elderly at local senior living homes. I subsequently was part of the 50-student MA student council team that collected one of America's largest high-school-run canned food drives collecting 250,000+ lbs.

Music:

Played Saxophone for 6+ years in Oak Knoll Elementary, Hillview Middle and Menlo-Atherton (MA) High School concert/marching/pep bands and choir, performing in multiple annual Menlo Park downtown Halloween parades and seasons of pep band & half-time entertainment for home MA football games. Also performed 3x with MA's state-ranked concert/jazz band

Describe why you want to serve on this advisory body and what you hope to accomplish as a member

Given my wide-ranging experiences and accomplishments, I would be able to serve as an advisory board member to support and promote the following:

- Provide firm oversight into the new, consolidated water district on behalf of Menlo Park residents. Given my experience in helping turn around mismanaged startup companies where I helped investors and management eliminate tens of thousands of dollars in wasteful spending and uncollected revenues (as Controller/CFO), identify millions of dollars in unaccounted-for losses (as Bookkeeper), and successfully assist creditors in recouping millions lost in fraud (part of which I self-represented without a lawyer in court), I would be well-equipped to spot & prevent frivolous & illicit spending in the future.
- Given my studies and varied experiences in chemistry, biology, medical technology & manufacturing, FDA regulation, public health, and water-recycling/wastewater management, I would bring relevant, subject matter expertise and a tech-approach to the advisory body representative of tech entrepreneurship that Silicon Valley is known for.
- Support innovation with a focus on climate change, public health and cybersecurity. Simply maintaining dated infrastructure systems is unlikely to be enough to address these critical issues. New ideas and approaches will be needed to address questions like:
 - o How can we reduce our carbon footprint, conserve water in the face of growing droughts, and promote climate resiliency? My experiences with low cost, low emissions and low infrastructure spend water purification technology in Asia, the Middle East and Africa would enable me to investigate new ways of playing our part against climate change. And as a longtime sailor on the San Francisco Bay (including in our nearby Bair Island and Ravenswood wetlands) and neighbor within 2 blocks of the away the already flood-prone San Francisquito Creek, I would provide a local perspective on flooding and sea-level rise.
 - o One of the most effective ways public health officials could track the pandemic was by measuring COVID levels in sewage systems. What other ways could we leverage our sewage system to better inform us about future pandemics? Additionally, as more biotech laboratories are being constructed in the Bay Area, what additional safeguards are being implemented to ensure that biowaste or pathogens generated by these labs are being properly treated?
 - o Cyber-attacks are only becoming more damaging and frequent with the rise of AI and greater geopolitical tension, and aging infrastructure, often overlooked, that provide basic services are the often the weakest links. Cyber companies I work with have experience successfully hardening the water-infrastructure of many large European cities (including Rome's modern aqueducts) and US energy pipelines.
- As a local resident born at Stanford Children's Hospital and raised in the Willows who also oversees many rental properties and single-family home construction projects (with considerable experience in residential plumbing and having also dealt with Menlo Park's planning/permitting office) - I can help balance the concerns of local residents and promote a higher quality of life and affordability for current & new families with those of developers and municipalities seeking a business friendly climate.
- As a young person and outsider to city politics, I would be able to provide a fresh perspective on the advisory board. New energy and ideas are needed, and the focus should be on residents and the community, not long-standing, interpersonal disagreements between career politicians.

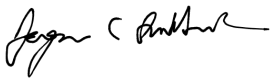
Ultimately, from my diverse range of accomplishments, skills and experiences and proud local, Menlo Park resident, my goal would be to conserve our most precious resource while improving affordability and quality of life for the community. I appreciate your time in reviewing my application and hope you will allow me the opportunity to support my hometown through civic participation in local government.

Finally, what better way for a young person like me with an Oxford degree and all, to start out from the bottom up :) – first literally cleaning 'sewage' and hopefully working my way up to metaphorically clean BS to help society. Thank you.

Contact and residency information

Email	
Cell phone	
Home phone	
Business phone	
Address 1	
Address 2	
City	Menlo Park
State	CA
Zip code	94025
How did you hear about this opportunity (check all that apply)	Other: physical brochure/flyer delivered by USPS mail
If I am appointed, the City and District are authorized to post the following information on the city website (please select at least one):	Cellphone: Yes Business phone: No Home phone: No Email: Yes

Application acknowledgement and submittal

	I agree
Signature	
	Uploaded signature image: JS transparent.png

East Palo Alto Sanitary District (EPASD) advisory committee application



Submitted on	19 January 2026, 2:46PM
Receipt number	4
Related form version	4

Applicant's full name (first and last)	Vamsi Velagapudi
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Applicant interest, experience and qualifications

Education	MBA, 2010, University of London MSc Economics, 2003, University of London MA (Cantab) Mathematics, 2000, University of Cambridge
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Civic affiliations and community activities, including service on other advisory bodies, commissions or committees	Menlo Park Finance and Audit Commission (Current) Menlo Park City School District, Community Bond Oversight Committee (Current) Menlo Park Library Commission (Prior)
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Describe why you want to serve on this advisory body and what you hope to accomplish as a member	I would like to represent the Willows area of Menlo Park on the EPASD committee and help the district deal with sanitary governance and issues as they arise
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Contact and residency information

Email	[REDACTED]
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Cell phone	[REDACTED]
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Home phone	[REDACTED]
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Business phone	
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Address 1	[REDACTED]
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Address 2	
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City	Menlo Park
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State	CA
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Zip code	94025
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How did you hear about this opportunity (check all that apply)	City website
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If I am appointed, the City and District are authorized to post the following information on the city website (please select at least one):

Cellphone: No
Business phone: No
Home phone: No
Email: Yes

Application acknowledgement and submittal

I agree

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. J. / 1'.

[Link to signature](#)