BBK
BEST BEST & KRIEGER LLP

OF COUNSEL

Brian Hughes

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Sacramento

Brian Hughes is of counsel in Best Best & Krieger LLP's (BBK) Special Districts practice group. Brian's practice involves advocating for, counseling, assisting, and above all providing thorough legal guidance to special districts, public agencies, and other municipalities throughout California. He specializes in general counsel practice, public cemetery districts, public real estate transactions, public management of natural resources and parks, and California mining law and vested rights.

Brian is deeply committed to serving every client with the same level of care and attention, regardless of size, scope, location, or legal issue. As general counsel, Brian serves to represent, protect, and improve each district through educated and cost-effective legal advice, an involved operational understanding, consistent communications, empathy, and a love of working for public service.

General Counsel Practice
Brian's general counsel practice focuses on assistance in daily operational issues, policy writing, public contracting and grant oversight, public debt financing, public real estate matters, employment issues, CPRA, Brown Act, ethics training, conflicts of interests, and board meeting oversight.

Public Land Use / Real Estate Practice
Brian's work pertaining to land use includes all aspects of land management and public real estate sales and purchases, and includes cemeteries, recreation, wildlife restoration, park management, infrastructure and utility improvements, historical preservation, emergency services, mining oil and gas development, public–private partnerships, and historical mining or reoperations of mining or logging.

Public Cemetery District Practice
Brian is honored to represent, as general counsel, a diverse number of public cemetery districts across California and assists them in all of their needs, including daily operations, abandoned cemetery oversight, new cemetery or expansions, and complete district overhauls. He is an active member of the public cemetery district associations in California and regularly speaks at their conferences.

CORE PRACTICES

Special Districts

Municipal Law

Water

California Public Records Act

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

Real Estate

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

The University of Tulsa College of Law, J.D.

Temple University, M.S., geology

Franklin & Marshall College, B.A., geoscience

Bar Admissions

California

Oklahoma

A hydrogeologist by training, Brian joined BBK after serving with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of the Solicitor. He was an attorney-advisor with the Bureau of Reclamation for the California-Great Basin Region. He handled

legal matters involving federal real estate matters, recreation, law enforcement, wildfires, facility operations and maintenance, grants, and new construction projects.

Accolades

- Public Cemetery Alliance President's Award, 2025

Professional & Community Involvement

- California State Cemetery and Funeral Bureau's (CFB) SB 777 Working Group, Public Cemetery District Representative

Thought Leadership

Presentations

- "After the Gavel: Brown Act Updates & SB 707," Golden State Risk Management Authority Annual Conference, Oct. 23, 2026
- "Brown Act Essentials: Agendas & Compliance," Golden State Risk Management Authority Annual Conference, Oct. 23, 2026
- "Donations & Volunteers: How to Get Help from the Public While Protecting the District From Liability," Oct. 22, 2026
- "Headstone Ownership & Liability," California Association of Public Cemeteries Annual Education Seminar & Area Meeting, Oct. 9, 2026
- "Essential Fiscal and Financial Oversight for Public Agency Officials: SB 827," Public Cemetery Alliance Annual Conference, July 31, 2026
- "Reclaimed Graves Presentation," Public Cemetery Alliance Annual Conference, July 31, 2026
- "Round Table Discussion," Public Cemetery Alliance Annual Conference, July 31, 2026
- "Ethics Training AB 1234," California Association of Public Cemeteries Annual Conference, March 20, 2026
- "Who Does What and Why? A Master Class on Good Governance," California Special Districts Association Special District Leadership Academy, Nov. 17, 2025
- "Fire Liability Risk - Operational and Post-Fire Issues", California Licensed Foresters Association, Fall Workshop, Nov. 14, 2025
- "Generalized Policy Writing" and "Abandoned Graves", California Association of Public Cemeteries, Annual Education Seminar, Oct. 10-11, 2025
- "Life, Death, and How Cemetery Districts Become Community Focal Points," American Planning Association California Conference, Sept. 30, 2025
- "Reclaiming of Unused Plots" and "Policy Writing," Public Cemetery Alliance Annual Conference, Aug. 1, 2025
- "Brown Act" and "Pubic Records Act," Public Cemetery Alliance Rolling Hills Casino Training Day, June 13, 2025
- "AB 1234 Ethics," Golden State Risk Management Authority & BBK Training Day, Apr. 30, 2025
- "Cemetery Finances - In or Out of the County" and "Brown Act," Public Cemetery Alliance Visalia Training Day, Apr. 9, 2025
- "Eligible Non-Residents Issues for Cemetery Districts," Public Cemetery Alliance 2024 Training Day Santa Cruz, June 10, 2024

- “Ask the Experts,” Public Cemetery Alliance Annual Meeting, Aug. 2, 2024
- “SMARA and What Planners Need to Know About Mining and Reclamation Law in California” APA California 2024 Conference, Sept. 30, 2024
- “Brown Act and Ethics for Small Special Districts” California Association of Resource Conservation Districts 2024 Annual Conference, Dec. 12, 2024
- “The Brown Act: Overview and Changes,” Golden State Risk Management Authority Monthly Webinar Series, Jan. 22, 2025

Publications

- “Zoom for Board of Trustee Meetings in 2025,” Public Cemetery Alliance Spring 2025 Newsletter
- “The Brown Act and the Right of Access: Can Employees Attend Board Meetings?” Public Cemetery Alliance Fall 2024 Newsletter
- “Cemetery Districts and Alternative Revenues” Public Cemetery Alliance Fall 2024 Newsletter