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## November 24, 2020— MEETING MINUTES—APPROVED 12-17-2020

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, November 24, 2020, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Directors Present: R. King, J. Doud, B. Plemmons, J. Clarke, B. Jefferson, J. Gularte, B. Lipe

Directors Absent: M. Ritter (Associate), I. Mendoza (Associate)

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Barker (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), John Schweisinger (public)

Recorders: M. Barker, P. Robins

*Because of shelter-in-place orders for the COVID-19 outbreak, the meeting was held by Zoom conference.*

Open Session: Director Jefferson called the meeting to Order at 10:05 am

Public Comment: John Schweisinger joined the meeting to promote the Monterey Peninsula Regional Parks District (MPRPD) WebGIS explorer (<http://www.mprpdexplore.org/>). MPRPD Explore! is a GIS Library that allows users to gain access to MPRPD GIS Data. Users can analyze and combine datasets using maps, as well as develop new web and mobile applications. Schweisinger asked that users reference any information used on their projects and provide any information created back to the library so others can build, share, and create important district-wide projects.

### Consent Items

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the October 15, 2020 Regular Board Meeting*
- *Accept Staff Activities Report for October 2020.*

Director Lipe moved to approve the Consent Items. Director Clarke seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

### Reports

*NRCS Report:* Robins shared that NRCS has a new source of fire-recovery focused EQIP funding (\$4M statewide) that needs to be obligated by the end of December. This funding is primarily designated for dealing with near-term post-fire needs such as erosion control and removing hazard trees (i.e. emergency response purposes).

*Executive Director Report:* Robins attended the CARCD annual conference last week. During a session on engagement with local tribes, Robins learned that NRCS has tribal liaisons, that there is a tribal RCD (Klamath-Trinity RCD) and that there is an intertribal agricultural council that supports Native American farmers and ranchers. There was also a fund-raising workshop that was particularly helpful. Robins also shared an Americorps 'GrizzlyCorps' opportunity for partial-funding for interns to assist with CA forest health and soil health projects. He noted that the cost of living on the Central Coast might making

procuring one of them difficult. Director Lipe suggested that Tanimura and Antle might have excess housing available that could accommodate an intern.

*Directors' Updates:* Director Brent Plemmons also attended the CARCD Annual Conference last week. Plemmons attended a general manager and executive director performance review session that was valuable. Plemmons shared that all sessions were recorded and should be available in January. He also shared that CARCD is also asking for suggestions for 2021 Speak-Off Contest topics.

Director Lipe met with Robins and Brian Thayer from the Community Foundation of Monterey County to develop a way to allow donations of stock through the Community Foundation to RCDMC. The Community Foundation would liquidate the stock and convey the proceeds to the RCD minus 5% (their 'fee') as a grant within 2-3 weeks of the stock sale. The donor of the stock will be able to take a full deduction at the full market value for tax purposes.

#### Old or Standing Business

P. Robins / Directors

No items pulled from the Consent Agenda.

*Monthly Financial Statements:* M. Errea presented the financial statements regarding Accounts Receivable, Payables and Bank balances for the period ending November 24, 2020. The accrual account balance on November 24, 2020 was \$199,583.97 with \$403,649.15 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury accounts (taking into account checks to be signed at the meeting), \$992,804 in liabilities, and \$788,739.60 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$229,236.56 on October 15, 2020.

*Expenses:* Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on November 24, including bi-weekly salary through November 22, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of October and November, totaling \$505,803.53.

Director Lipe moved to approve the November financial statements and the October and November expenses. Director King seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*Strategic Plan discussion:* Robins shared the information provided by Board and Staff about the second 2021 RCDMC Strategic Plan Update Preparatory Question. The prompt was "What is the RCD doing that least benefits the community or serves our mission? If it's not being done well, should we modify it, or not do it at all?" Robins received responses from a few board members and staff. Board members and meeting attendees reviewed the document for several minutes before continuing with a brief discussion bulleted below.:

- Outreach to the public could be improved. RCDMC should focus on building followers in both Facebook and Instagram (particularly for younger audience).
- Community engagement (in general) should be increased.
- RCDMC might be too passive in its outreach with grants. One suggestion was to link conservation practices to research done by farm advisors.
- Need to improve our capacity for providing row alignment technical assistance (with additional training needed) and increase board-staff interaction
- Provide information to municipal residents about conservation practices. Director Lipe shared that he has some ideas for reaching municipal residents through Mailchimp.
- Create opportunities for the public to experience on-farm conservation work through volunteer opportunities or demos
- Ramp up nutrient management assessment as well as irrigation efficiency evaluations and erosion control planning

Robins shared the next strategic planning question to be distributed to staff and board for feedback in December: “*What else should we be doing that we have not already identified?*”. Robins proposed two board planning retreat Zoom sessions on January 19th and January 21st from 9am-12pm.

### New Business

### Directors/ Staff

*Approval of Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy for RCDMC (required for CAL RECYCLE grant eligibility):* Grants are available for removing non-agricultural waste that is illegally dumped on agricultural properties. RCDMC recently submitted a grant application (\$50,000) for a fence installation (to deter illegal dumping), garbage removal and site restoration at a ranch in Chualar. Robins asked for the board’s consideration in accepting the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy modelled after those used by other RCDs.

Director Lipe moved to approve the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy with the consideration that RCDMC and the Board can re-visit editing the document in the future. Director Gularte seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*Staff presentation: Fish Passage Project Permitting:* Environmental Scientist Megan Barker presented on the steelhead barrier removal project permitting that she has been working on. She focused on the No Name Road Ford Replacement Project and the Cachagua Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project. Barker began the presentation by providing an overview of steelhead ecology and stating the importance of the upper tributaries of the Carmel River in sustaining the Central Coast steelhead population (which is listed as Federally threatened). Steelhead use the perennial waters of the upper tributaries (San Clemente and Cachagua Creeks) for spawning and rearing habitat.

The No Name Road Ford Replacement Project is located on San Clemente Creek and replaced an old low-lying concrete ford (that acted as a barrier for juvenile and adult steelhead during low flows) with a 35-ft x 12-ft free-standing timber bridge. Construction was completed this fall. Approximately 100 ft of the streambed was also restored according to NOAA/NMFS guidelines. The project involved channel dewatering and required permits from CDFW, Army Corps, Water Board, Monterey County, and NOAA/NMFS. The project was primarily funded by the Coastal Conservancy with an in-kind match from San Clemente Rancho.

Barker also provided a brief introduction to the Cachagua Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project. Project construction was delayed due to the Carmel Fire this year and will be completed in late summer/fall 2021. The project replaces a low-lying concrete ford that will be replaced with a concrete three-box culvert design. The project is a CDFW Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP) project that involved less permitting than a typical stand-alone project. The only permits that RCDMC needed to acquire were the CDFW 1652 permit, the Monterey County grading permit, and the State Housing and Community Development building permit (as the CEQA, Water Board and Army Corps permit were all previously covered under programmatic permits for the FRGP).

### Announcements

### Directors/ Robins

None.

11:54 A.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting:

Thursday, December 17, 10am. Meeting will be held by Zoom conference