



744 La Guardia Street, Building A, Salinas, CA 93905

(831) 975-7775

February 18, 2021– MEETING MINUTES—Approved 3/18/2021

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, February 18, 2021, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Directors Present: B. Plemmons, J. Clarke, B. Lipe, J. Doud, J. Gularte, M. Ritter (Associate),

Directors Absent: R. King, B. Jefferson, I. Mendoza (Associate)

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), B. Bates (RCDMC), C. Bunn (RMU Assoc), G. Mannell (Sequoia Consulting)

Recorders: B. Bates, P. Robins

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

Open Session: Director Clarke called the meeting to Order at 10:03 am

Public Comment: Grace Mannell joined the meeting to introduce herself and her consulting firm, Sequoia Ecological Consulting, Inc. She represents the Monterey office/branch.

Consent Items

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the January 19, 2021 Special Board Meeting*
- *Approval of Minutes from the January 21, 2021 Regular Board Meeting*
- *Accept Staff Activities Report for January 2021.*

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

Reports

NRCS Report:

NRCS Area Engineer, Desi Ramirez, presented on post-fire erosion protection projects for areas impacted by River Fire debris flows.

Ramirez also reported that NRCS staff are working on batch deadlines for fire EQIP projects including two catastrophic applicants for the March 3rd deadline. They are now in phase 2 of the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (post-fire project planning and implementation) with the County of Monterey. NRCS is still interviewing candidates for the vacant Salinas Field Office District Conservationist position.

Executive Director Report: none

Directors Reports: Director Clark shared that she is still working with Farm Bureau and UC Cooperative Extension for developing local funding to fill vacant Farm Advisor positions in Monterey County. A potential assessment would fund three positions in total: an entomologist, a plant pathologist, and a veg crops specialist.

Director Lipe noted the importance of current water issues that might engage the RCD.

Director Doud mentioned 101 Livestock outreach regarding trades of 'Phantom Cattle' and associated financial risks.

Director Plemmons attended the most recent CARCD Board Meeting and shared that the CA Dept of Conservation announced that they are anticipating \$1 Billion in the Governor's Budget for fire and forest-protection work in the next fiscal year.

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 February 18, 2021. The accrual account balance on February 18, 2021 was \$ 299,304.60 with \$368,726.08 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury accounts (taking into account checks to be signed at the meeting), \$491,397 in liabilities, and \$421,975.47 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$190,279.42 on January 21, 2021.

Expenses: Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on February 18, including bi-weekly salary through February 14, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of January and February, totaling \$61,516.50

Director Doud moved to approve the February financial statements and the February and January expenses. Director Lipe seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Mid-Fiscal Year budget status & Fund-raising update: The Finance committee modified the monthly cashflow projection report to include a figure showing the ratio of what is budgeted versus what will be spent by the end of the fiscal year. This is based on actual expenses to date and projections for the remaining months. There are no foreseeable opportunities for 'in-person' fund raising events however, there may be a chance to host a fundraiser in collaboration with the RMU Assoc.

Strategic Plan Update recommendations review from Special Meeting: Paul Robins briefly described the summary from the January 19 Strategic Plan update meeting and requested board members' individual reviews or comments prior to the next board meeting. Robins will incorporate input from the January 19th meeting into a draft updated Strategic Plan that will be presented to the Executive Committee for initial review in early March. Given the limitations during the pandemic for public outreach and input, Robins emphasized that this plan update is a one to two-year extension until a full plan revision process can be implemented.

Review of New Independent Contractor Agreements:

1. Paul Robins requested a Special Meeting be scheduled as soon as possible to authorize purchasing a skid steer with a brushcutter attachment through the CALFIRE grant for the Los Padres Strategic Community Fuel Break partnership. The grant approved purchase of this specific equipment for fuels reduction on and around San Clemente Rancho. Because the expenditure is under \$250,000, District Procurement Policy requires solicitation of three quotes for said equipment, which staff have procured and are prepared to submit them for consideration to the Board

to authorize a purchase.

2. Robins also requested a second item for consideration at a Special Meeting, to allocate an additional \$5,000 for Finance Manager time (personnel pay and benefits) for the remaining months of the fiscal year. The Finance Manager has maintained the same hours for the past three years despite the RCD's expansion of grant funded staff and budget over that period, and so this is an overdue adjustment. Robins indicated that this would not increase the overall budget but could be managed by redistributing funds from other underspent items in the existing budget.

Board members concurred and agreed to hold a Special Meeting with the above items on Wednesday 24th at 9:00am.

New Business

Salinas River Management Unit Association request for additional RCD assistance: The RMU Association has asked the RCD to take on additional tasks related to the Salinas River SMP now that RMU Assoc. Executive Director, Joanna Devers, has stepped down. The RMU Association intends to continue having the Monterey County Farm Bureau manage their financials. Christopher Bunn, President of the RMU Association Board, expressed that this decision is a logical step and would continue to move the program in a positive direction. Robins informed board members that he would be meeting with staff, the RMU Association and the Farm Bureau to provide a budget and workplan for modified scope of services for consideration by the RCDMC board at the March Regular Meeting.

Staff presentation: provided in context of NRCS Report earlier in meeting.

Compliance training and requirements: Robins reminded Board Members that their annual Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700) forms are due by April 1 and that Board Members need to confirm the status of their biennial AB 123 Small Government Ethics Training and take the 2-hour online training to re-up if necessary. He indicated he would be looking into arranging for providing the Board's mandatory sexual harassment prevention training via webinar during upcoming board meetings if possible, given current Zoom meeting arrangements.

Announcements

Directors/ Robins

None.

12:04 P.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting:

Thursday, March 18, 10am. Meeting will be held by Zoom conference.