



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

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January 20, 2022– MEETING MINUTES—Approved February 17, 2022

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, January 20, 2022, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

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

Directors Absent: None.

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), M. Barker (RCDMC), A. Curry (NRCS), A. DeLara (NRCS), S. Magaña (Green infrastructure), A. Garcia (Green Infrastructure)

Recorder: P. Robins, M. Barker

The meeting was held by Zoom conference

Open Session: Director Jefferson called the meeting to Order at 10:05 am after quorum was reached.

Public Comment: Sam Magaña and Alexis Garcia (both from Green Infrastructure) introduced themselves and said that their company Green Infrastructure is available for habitat restoration and mapping work. Garcia said she wants to ensure that their data from the Fire Fuels Mitigation Program (FFMP) will be utilized for the RCDMC fuel break work to ensure project success. They also have native seed mixes available for restoration work. They will be presenting at CSUMB (Dan Fernandez) on their data collected thus far. Alexis will provide more information to RCDMC about the presentation.

Reports

Executive Director Report:

Robins gave a brief update on the permit streamlining efforts with Monterey County as modeled after the successful 'Partners in Restoration' Program in Santa Cruz County. He also noted sessions at the virtual CARCD Conference that he attended that were relevant to RCDMC management and work including one about creating inclusive work spaces and another addressing the potential land-repurposing issues likely to arise with groundwater overdraft and sustainability requirements.

NRCS Report:

NRCS Salinas District Conservationist Ari DeLara introduced the new Assistant State Conservationist Allen Curry who will be taking Kay Joy-Barge's position to manage Area 2. Curry mentioned that he will be moving to the area in February and will be taking over Kay's old cell phone number at that time. He is currently based out of the Indio NRCS Office. He stated that the Salinas Office may hire an additional Soil Conservationist and Engineer in the future. Curry also said he would like to create a resource tool that makes it easier for the Field Office to

communicate with the State Office.

Ari DeLara provided an update on program application deadlines. April 1 is deadline for all program applications, including EQIP and EWP. The Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) is specific to fire/erosion issues and there are currently about six applications pending. He also stated that U.S. Forest Service released a Wildfire Crisis Implementation Plan.

Directors Reports:

Director Plemmons shared that he learned at the CARCD Conference that NRCS has hired a lot of people recently and there is an opportunity to hire more this year. Another takeaway from the Conference was that there is a lot of funding available for fire fuels reduction work.

Director Gularte shared that the CARCD Conference is good for learning about what RCDs are doing to address different ag issues. She noted that she particularly enjoyed a session regarding the water resource/access issues of small communities and how RCDs have been instrumental in helping them find solutions.

Consent Items:

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Resolution 22-01 to comply with AB 361 for remote meetings*
- *Approval of Minutes from the December 16, 2021 Regular Board meeting*
- *Approval of Minutes from the December 22, 2021 Special Board meeting*
- *Staff Activities Report for December 2021*

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

Old or Standing Business

P. Robins / Directors

No items pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Monthly Financial Statements:

Finance Manager Errea presented the financial statements regarding Accounts Receivable, Payables and Bank balances for the period ending January 17, 2022. The accrual account balance on January 17, 2022 was \$222,740.05, with a negative balance of \$31,476.70 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury (including loans and advance payments), \$321,777 in liabilities, and \$575,994.09 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. Errea and Robins noted that the negative Chase Bank balance was on paper only, reflecting the preparation of a large payment for arundo treatment work that would not be sent until receipt of a corresponding payment (expected within 1 week) from the USDA EQIP cooperator for the property where the work took place. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$243,130.28 on December 16, 2021.

Expenses:

Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on December 16, including bi-weekly salary through December 5, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of November and December, totaling \$420,889.59.

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

Review of 2021-2022 Mid-Year Budget Comparison. Errea and Robins led the team through a review of the mid-year budget comparison which evaluated the 2022 fiscal year with 2021. He also discussed indirect program costs.

New Board Member search:

Robins noted that the search continues for a new board member. Alex Rodoni will not be able to join the Board. There is an opportunity for Ignacio Mendoza to join the board as a Director rather than an Associate- should he choose to do so. Jefferson noted that the RCDMC Board is currently lacking representation from North County.

Approval of Board Signatories to RCDMC Chase Bank checking account. Robins requested that the Board consider approving RCDMC Directors Jennifer Clarke, Jynel Gularte, and John Doud as additional signatories for the RCDMC Chase Bank checking account. Director Lipe moved to approve adding Directors Clarke, Gularte and Doud as signatories to the account as described. Director Plemmons seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Contract reviews:

Robins requested approval of modification of ICA 2021-08 with Summit West to incorporate cultural resources surveys for fuel break projects in Los Padres National Forest. This would increase the existing budget by \$50,000 to a total of NTE \$185,000. No Directors noted any relationships or interests with the awardee. Director Gularte moved to approve the modified ICA 2021-08 to SummitWest as described. Director Doud seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

New business

Resolution 2022-02 authorizing CAL FIRE grant proposal for Carmel Valley Fuelbreak. CAL FIRE requires that the board approves filing of application and confirms that RCDMC has capacity to complete the work. Funding to manage the project will come from the grant.

Director Plemmons moved to approve the Resolution 2022-02 authorizing the CAL FIRE grant proposal for the Carmel Valley Fuelbreak. Director Doud seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Preview of update needed for RCD staff organization and compensation policy. Robins briefly described the need to update staff structure, compensation structure and increase procedures. His goal is to have a draft plan ready to be presented to the Board in April or May for approval and so that it can be in place prior to the next Fiscal Year and accommodated in the next Fiscal Year budget, to be approved by mid-June.

Presentation about Salinas River Arundo Control Program

RCDMC Ecologist Emily Zefferman gave a presentation on the Salinas River Arundo Control Program's 2021 work, a program which RCDMC has been managing since 2014. She noted that approximately 765 acres of Arundo have been treated between 2014-2021, which comprises about half of the originally-mapped population on the river. Work this year included initial herbicide treatment, herbicide re-treatment, and re-mowing of sprayed Arundo. Zefferman noted that Arundo is not typically mowed following herbicide treatment from the same treatment year, however, this "mowing after spraying" method occurred this year due to stipulations in the funding agreement from USDA NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) funds. Arundo was mowed near Soledad approximately one month after herbicide treatment was administered.

Announcements

Directors/ Robins

None.

12:02 P.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting: Thursday, February 17, 10am. Meeting will be held both in-person and by Zoom. The location will be at the American Ag Credit Office in Salinas.