



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

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## April 21, 2022– MEETING MINUTES—Approved May 19, 2022

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, April 21, 2022, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

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

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

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), M. Barker (RCDMC), David Kong (Greenfield Public Recreation District and Greenfield Cemetery District)

Recorder: P. Robins, M. Barker

*The meeting was held in hybrid form, both in-person and by Zoom conference.*

Open Session: Director Jefferson called the meeting to Order at 10:06 am.

### Public Comment:

David Kong introduced himself as being on the Boards of Directors for the Greenfield Public Recreation District and Greenfield Cemetery District and that he is running for the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) of Monterey County Special District Alternate Member seat. Kong has been a resident of Monterey County for most of his life and currently resides in Greenfield. He has worked in Education in Monterey County for over 30 years and currently works in the Monterey County Office of Education in the Finance and Business Service Department. He has served on various boards including as President Trustee of Greenfield Union School District School Board. David Kong was formerly a Planning Commission member in Greenfield.

### Consent Items:

- *Approval of Resolution 22-07 to comply with AB 361 for remote meetings*
- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the March 24, 2022 Regular Board meeting*
- *Approval of Minutes from the March 29, 2022 Special Board Meeting*
- *Staff Activities Report for March 2022*

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

### Reports

#### *NRCS Report:*

Robins presented on behalf of NRCS Salinas District Conservationist Ari DeLara who was unable to attend the meeting. Fifteen applications have been received for the Joint Chiefs Program this year, in contrast to complete lack of applications last year. These applications include one large project, one Forest Management Plan (future large project), and fourteen (14) small to medium projects anticipated (\$1,000 to \$20,000). NRCS is collaborating with America's

Conservation Ag Movement to establish a “Farmer Learning Community”. The first event is scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup>, from 10am to 1pm. Javier Zamora has been selected as a local leader of the group. Fifteen to twenty core members will be compensated to engage in several community events throughout the year. The May 13<sup>th</sup> event will act as outreach to individuals who may be interested in being a member of the group and allow for brainstorming of what the group focus will be. Santa Cruz, San Benito County and south Monterey County produced are invited and encouraged to participate.

NRCS Soil Conservationist Allison Tokunaga will be acting as District Conservationist in Jackson, CA for three months. Someone will be appointed to cover her duties while she is away.

*Executive Director Report:*

Robins shared that RCDMC has received a ~\$500,000 CDFA Water Efficiency Technical Assistance grant to support Ag Technical Specialist Aysha Peterson and Soil Scientist Laura Murphy’s technical assistance work. He also announced that while the RCD is waiting for the next Dry Period Loan to come through in late July, he has applied for a \$50,000 CARCD ‘revolving loan program’ loan to help support cash flow. Robins and Errea (Finance Manager) are currently working to update the RCDMC staff retirement and compensation policy. Robins shared that the Next Board Meeting will be held at the RCDMC Salinas Office given that the COVID-related NRCS occupancy restrictions have been lifted and public entry will be allowed again. Meetings will continue to be offered in the hybrid format so that attendees have the option to join remotely.

Elkhorn Slough Foundation (ESF) has purchased a mobile biochar kiln to be operated by Ventana Forestry that can produce biochar from forest fuel management projects to use as a soil amendment, through a process that has a minimal carbon output. ESF has also reached out to the RCD for possible assistance with a CALTRANS mitigation project.

Robins also reported that the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County reached out to RCDMC for a letter of support for their intended purchase of the Pico Blanco Boy Scout Camp, and advised the board that a separate Special Meeting would be required to consider that. Robins was directed to ask for additional information before proceeding with the matter.

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 April 21, 2022. The accrual account balance on April 21, 2022 was \$250,719.54, with a balance of \$330,484.78 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury (including loans and advance payments), \$301,800 in liabilities, and \$222,034.38 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$231,880.86 on March 24, 2022.

*Expenses:*

Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on April 21, including bi-weekly salary through April 10, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of March and April, totaling \$106,399.94, including a payment to University Corporation at Monterey Bay for \$26,546.94.

Director Clarke moved to approve the April financial statements and the March and April expenses. Director Lipe seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*New Contracts and Agreements for review:*

*Independent Contractor Agreement 2019-13 to ACS Habitat Management for Arundo Control.* This modification (#5) to the existing contract sets a new date of December 31, 2023 for contract termination, and sets a new not-to-exceed amount of \$295,000 for herbicide control work for the RCDMC Arundo Control Program during the 2022 work season. The original contract expires March 30, 2022, but the major grant that is funding this work (WCB-SFEP 2019) goes through 2023 and will likely be extended to 2024. This contract extension would cover two more years of work of arundo re-treatment under WCB, IRWM-Salinas, and AC-WMA funding. If funding is secured for “new” arundo control work, we will go through a new bid process, but since the work covered in this extension is a continuation of work already performed by ACS Habitat Management under the same grant, it is appropriate to continue with this contractor given the board’s concurrence.

*Independent Contractor Agreement 2019-06 to Dawn Reis Ecological Studies for Biological Consulting.* This modification (#3) to the existing contract sets a new date of December 31, 2023 for contract termination, and sets a new not-to-exceed amount of \$7,500 for the 2022 Work Season. Dawn Reis will provide biological training and oversight for the Salinas River Arundo Control Program, including on-call assistance to RCDMC biological monitors and wildlife biologists. Previously, DRES has provided biologists to conduct the permit-required pre-activity surveys for the program, but this year RCDMC is planning to hire our own biologists and rely on DRES for consultation and assistance.

Directors identified no potential conflicts of interest with these parties or projects. Director Clarke moved to approve the contracts as described. Director Doud seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

New business

*LAFCO Independent Special District Alternate Seat Election.* Director Lipe motioned to cast David Kong as a primary vote. Director Gularte seconded and all voted to approve.

*FY 20-21 Financials Audit Report.* Robins shared that the audit has been postponed again due to the Auditor’s schedule. A solicitation has been put out for other auditors for future audits, to which two companies have already responded.

*Transfer of Army Corps and Water Board permits for Stream Maintenance Program from Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) to RCDMC.* MCWRA has initiated transfer of the Army Corp Regional General Permit (RGP) 20 and the Water Board 401 Certification for the Stream Maintenance Program to RCDMC. MCWRA will continue to be responsible for operations of reservoirs, flood control or data collection, but will no longer be the permittee for Army Corps and Water Board permits. RCDMC will be responsible for monitoring work activities on site to ensure permit compliance and to train all operators for compliance with permits. MCWRA has a 3-year Professional Services Agreement with RCDMC to cover these new costs for RCDMC time, and MCWRA expects to remain partly engaged given the river management is critical to their water supply and flood control work. For the Water Board permit, extension fees will be due to the Water Board for the 401 Certification, which is on a 10-year term, and MCWRA is prepared to pay those fees.

Director Doud moved to authorize the RCD’s entry into 404 Permit management as described above. Director Clarke seconded and all voted to approve.

*CARCD request for support for AB 1902 to update Division 9 of State Resources Code.* The Board discussed the merits and critiques of the CARCD-sponsored bill to update the CARCD Division 9 State Resources Code. Robins noted there will be listening sessions for people who would like to learn more.

Director Plemmons moved to approve support for the proposed bill. Director Lipe seconded, and all voted to approve.

*Salinas River Partners BBQ fundraising planning.* Barker provided an update on the funds raised for the Salinas River Partners BBQ fundraiser (over \$16,000 to date) and an estimated attendance count of 150 people. All Board and Staff will be given assignments to help run the event.

Announcements

Directors/ Robins

None.

12:00 P.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting: Thursday, May 19th, 10am. Meeting will be held both in-person and by Zoom. The location will be at the RCDMC Salinas Office in Salinas.