

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 9, 2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

The Regular Meeting of the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (the District) Board of Directors was called to order at **6:46PM, June 9, 2010** at the District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010. The meeting was chaired by Jim McKenna.

Directors Present:	Mike Manfre, Vice President Howard Liebenberg Jim McKenna, President John Ricker Roberta Smith
Directors Absent:	Margaret Kinda David Moeller
Associate Directors Present:	Ward Hastings
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Board Secretary Karen Christensen, Executive Director Sharon Corkrean, Director of Finance Nik Strong-Cvetich, Program Specialist
NRCS Present:	Erin Kurtz, Soil Conservationist

WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting opened at 6:46PM with a quorum present.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No Oral Communications were given.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the May12, 2010 meeting minutes. Howard Liebenberg moved to accept the minutes. Roberta Smith seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

BUDGET & FINANCE

2009-2010 Expenditures – The May 2010 Expenditures were circulated for approval. After discussion, Roberta Smith moved to accept the April 2010 Expenditures. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

2010-2011 Budget Discussion – Sharon told the Board that she has been working with staff to draft the 2010-2011 Budget. However, she explained that she does not yet have all the information she needs to present solid figures to the Board and that next month she will have a draft budget ready for the Board. Sharon then told the Board that the 2008-2009 Audit is complete and almost ready to ship out to the County (there was a mistake on the cover page that is getting fixed). Sharon said that preliminary estimates of next fiscal year's budget should be around \$4.2 million. Sharon and Karen agreed that between \$3.8 million and \$3.3 million of that number comprise contracts that are currently in place and that the remainder comprises contracts that may come in this year, but are not definite. The Board then started a lengthy discussion of anticipated budgets vs. actual budgets. Mike Manfre expressed concern that each year the anticipated revenue falls short, in many cases by as much as 20%, of the anticipated revenue. Sharon explained, and John Ricker agreed, that it is better to budget for more than is expected rather than to under budget. Mike then said that his concern is that if the current budget falls short by 20%, will the District be able to meet all financial obligations. Sharon explained that much of the decrease to the budget will be in professional services and materials and supplies; most of the upcoming construction projects will be smaller and less expensive than last year. Karen shared that she has been working hard to

network with potential new sources of funders for subsequent years. She further explained that this process takes time as funders need to be familiar with what the District does and what services the District can provide. John Ricker then went on to explain that if the District does not budget enough for projects, then the unanticipated revenue has to be taken to the Board for approval, whereas, falling short of projections does not need approval.

ACTION ITEMS

Program Discussion Items

Larkin Valley Gully Repair Project – Nik presented information on the Larkin Valley Gully Repair Project that is scheduled for this construction season, noting that the project could potentially cost over \$100,000 if there are any cost overages. The goal of the project, he explained, is to save an agricultural field from erosion and to restore habitat. The project will create two catchment ponds that are located in Red-Legged Frog and Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander habitat. Nik said that the project is funded through the NRCS, ARRA (USFWS), and Proposition 50 Comp 12, with a budget of \$94,000. The landowner will cost-share \$4,000. Mike Manfre made a motion to approve the Larkin Valley Gully Repair Project as presented. Howard Liebenberg seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

REPORTS

Staff Reports

Karen said that the Community Wildfire Protection Program is going to the County Board of Supervisors this week. John Ricker said that he would email the link to the RCD Board. Karen highlighted the grant Nik received from the USDA Office of Outreach for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers. The grant will be used to ramp up outreach and technical assistance to the Hispanic community by providing materials and brochures in Spanish and having translators for workshops. Nik then told the Board about a grant through the Xerces Society in which the RCD will collaborate with Live Earth Farms to install hedgerows. Then he reported on the successful Community Planting Day in Soquel. He said that this would be an annual spring and fall event.

Howard brought up a previous problem he had with the May minutes stating that there is no “Fire Safe Council” in Santa Cruz County and that the label would be confusing to many people. Howard Liebenberg then made a motion to amend the earlier adopted May Minutes to remove “Fire Safe Council” from the minutes since this label is inaccurate and instead call it the chipper program. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Karen told the Board that there will be a tour of projects scheduled for the end of June or beginning of July. She will let the Board know more details once the event is planned. Karen informed the Board that this coming fall the District would be receiving two AmeriCorps volunteers to work on watershed stewardship projects. Karen mentioned that there will be one additional volunteer that the county might want to place. John said that he would be interested and to pass along the information to him when available.

Written Communications

Written communications were circulated from LAFCO.

Calendar Dates

June 11 the CNPS will host a fire walk; contact Brett Hall at the UCSC Arboretum.

Directors/Associate Directors Reports

Howard said that the chipper training for the chipper program continues to go smoothly and with no injuries.

John Ricker said that the Community Foundation contacted him for an interview about the involvement of the RCD Board for the Fund Diversification Strategy Grant that Nik has been putting together.

NRCS Reports

Erin reported that the NRCS has been ramping up funding in the Central Coast region. The region will receive \$1.2 million this construction season for projects. So far there is one applicant in Santa Cruz County. Erin has been approached by key players in the Pajaro Valley for demonstration projects to collaborate on grower need for water management strategies. She also reported that she has been approached by the Community Alliance for Family Farmers to engage in water quality issues in the Pajaro. Mike Manfre said that the Ag Waiver program is changing rapidly, largely due to the outpouring from the community against the new program. Karen then said that she would have Marti Johnson, the AQWA Coordinator, contact Mike before the next AQWA meeting. Karen reported that there are state funds available for the Irrigation and Nutrient Management Program, but under different circumstances. Marti, Alicia and Ari are working to help rewrite the scope of the program to determine what is realistic and feasible. Karen expressed her cautious optimism for the program.

NEXT MEETING

Date/ Agenda Items

The next **Board Meeting will be on July 21, 2010 at 6:30PM at the RCD office 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010.** The meeting adjourned at 8:22PM.

Jim McKenna
Director, Board of Directors

(TC: JM)