



**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 8, 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OF THE  
 RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**

The Regular Meeting of the Resource Conservation District (RCD) of Santa Cruz County Board of Directors was called to order at **6:30 PM, October 8, 2014** at the District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010.

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| Directors Present:    | Jim McKenna, President<br>Mike Manfre, Vice President<br>Gordon Claassen<br>Robert Ketley<br>Roberta Smith |
| Directors Absent:     | John Ricker<br>Howard Liebenberg   |
| RCD Staff Present:    | Chris Coburn, Executive Director<br>Sharon Corkrean, Director of Finance<br>Kelli Camara, Program Director |
| NRCS Staff Present    | Rich Casale, District Conservationist  |
| Members of the Public | Lewis Kay  |

**WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting opened at **6:30PM** with a quorum. Staff and directors introduced themselves to the member of the public. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting.

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no oral communications.

**REPORT**

**NRCS Report**

Rich Casale circulated the NRCS activity report for the Board to review. Rich updated the Board on work with the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) on capacity building, including being interviewed by a consultant working for CARCD. Rich announced that he will be the master of ceremonies at the luncheon at the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual CARCD Conference. He has been working with RCD staff on funding applications, including NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) application, for which the RCD of Santa Cruz County has been short-listed. The RCPP would be a mini-special fund pool to support the Community Water Dialogue, among other activities. Rich had a meeting with the RCD Executive Director and the Area Conservationist Kay Joy-Barge to get acquainted with each other and to update each other on local activities. Rich urged the importance of partnership's; principally with the RCDs. Rich worked with California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) last year to exempt all CCOF growers going through transition to organic from application fees. Mike Manfre suggested that all organic growers should be exempt; not just CCOF. Rich has been working with the Homeless Garden Project, including giving a presentation to 16 participating interns. The Homeless Garden project intends to apply for 2015 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding. Rich reported on the success of Tuesday's College Lake meeting, and expressed what a great job Stacie Ruffoni, RCD Program Specialist, did in facilitating the meeting. Robert Ketley suggested that NRCS and the RCD along with the City of Watsonville should have a meeting to discuss sediment issues in Salsipuedes Creek. Rich reported on the first tri-County (check with Rich Santa Cruz, San Mateo, and Monterey) local work group meeting held on October 1 in Watsonville. Rich reported that April Jernberg's duties have been spread so thin that over the past year she has been working on Santa Cruz County projects only a fraction of the time. The previous Soil Conservationist worked full time on local projects. Rich explained that this has had a large impact on the productivity of the NRCS; only five EQIP contracts were funded this year in Santa Cruz County. Rich expressed that at some point he may need RCD support in securing additional staffing.

## MINUTES

The Board reviewed the September 8, 2014 meeting minutes. Roberta Smith reported that there should be a comma following Tangi Chapman's name in the header. Gordon Claussen moved approval of the September 8, 2014 meeting minutes with the correction. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

## BUDGET & FINANCE

FY 2013-2014 Expenditures – The September 2014 expenditures were reviewed by the Board. Sharon Corkrean reported on the expenditures, including a large California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) expenditure. Sharon reported that the College Lake and the Prop. 50 Irrigation and Nutrient Management (INM) projects are coming to a close, and Kelli Camara reported that the current-year NRCS Wildlife Habitat contract came to a close on September 30. Sharon provided an overview of a table that presents monthly expenditures compared to the remaining budget. Robert Ketley moved approval of the expenditures as presented. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

Sharon presented the “dashboard” concept that was requested by Robert Ketley during last month's meeting. Sharon walked the Board through what the graphs are displaying. The Board discussed that they wanted a quick visual tool to provide them an ability to get a quick understanding of financial status, and tease out any potential problems. The Board complimented Sharon on the visuals she presented, and asked a few questions to better understand the data. Overall, the Board expressed that this is what they were looking for, and Sharon will continue to prepare these reports each month. In addition, Robert Ketley suggested that the Executive Director use his discretion to bring to the Board particular grants or projects that may be problematic for their consideration or assistance.

Chris announced that, unfortunately, two grants that the RCD applied for this year were not awarded (California Department of Food and Agriculture: Specialty Crop Block Grant II and the United States Department of Agriculture: 2014 Conservation Innovation Grant).

## ACTION ITEMS

### Program Discussion Items

CARCD Delegate – Jim Reported that he was willing to attend the CARCD Annual Conference, but opened it up to others should there be interest. Roberta Smith nominated Jim McKenna as the delegate and Gordon seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried. The Board did not nominate an alternative delegate as Jim said it was not necessary.

Resolution RCDSCC 2014-12 – This resolution supports a contract to build a new breeding pond in Watsonville. Kelli Camara reported on the \$124,000 grant; approximately \$96,000 of will be going to construction. Kelli reported that this was a more intense design because of the potential for bullfrogs to transit into the pond. Kelli reported that the RCD had hoped to construct the pond this year, but it was pushed to next year because of a variety of factors. Gordon Claussen moved approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2014-12 as presented. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Director / Associate Director Policy – Staff reported that there were no requirements in Division 9 of the Public Resources Code or from CARCD regarding these policies. Staff reported that, in essence, it was up to the Board to make any changes as they see fit. Jim McKenna reported the importance of distinguishing the roles of Director versus Associate Director. Not having the policies in front of them, the Board asked that this be brought back for future consideration after the policies are sent to them via email. No action was taken on this item.

CEQA Policy – Kelli reported on the CEQA process specific to Notices of Exemption. Kelli worked with a CEQA expert, who said that an entity such as the RCD is not required to file with either the County of Santa Cruz or the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR). Kelli recommended that, while not required, the RCD would be better off filing because it shortens the public review period from 180 days to 35 days. The Board requested that staff bring back a resolution regarding this item that sets policy to submit the Notices of Exemption and to provide the Executive Director with the discretion to sign or forward it to the Board, as necessary. No action was taken on this item.

## REPORTS

### Staff Reports

Chris Coburn reported on his visit to Sacramento last week in which he met with legislative staff from the local delegation, including Mark Stone, Luis Alejo and Bill Monning. Chris also met with staff from the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, the Wildlife Conservation Board, and the Department of Conservation. Chris reported that the intent of the meetings was to introduce himself as the new Executive Director, to talk about the RCD's role, and specific opportunities

and challenges to the RCD of Santa Cruz County. Chris reported that he and his family, as well as fellow staff Sue Pearce and her family attended the Swanton Pacific Ranch Cal Poly Day, and greatly enjoyed the day along with Directors Roberta Smith and Gordon Claassen. Gordon participated in the presentations with calf/steer roping. Chris also reported that he attend the local work group meeting, and discussed the new groundwater legislation and the impacts it could have locally. Chris also reported on various meetings related to the North Coast, including the Sempervirens Fund, the Trust for Public Land, and Bureau of Land Management handoff, along with fellow staff Kelli Camara and Director Roberta Smith. Kelli Camara mentioned that staff member Sooni Gillett as left the District to pursue her work with the Raachel and Jackie Foundation. The RCD will be welcoming two new AmeriCorps volunteers next week. Sharon Corkrean reported that the November 6 Blue Circle Meeting will be held in Watsonville and the November 19 Board Tour will be held on the North Coast. Chris provided a brief report on the RCD's use of social media, including the website and Facebook.

#### **Director Reports**

Gordon Claassen reported that a Ranchers Sustainability Assessment is scheduled for October 30.

#### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

No Written Communications were discussed at this time.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

##### **Date/ Agenda Items**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM. The next meeting will be the November 19 Annual Board Tour with Board Meeting to follow.

Jim McKenna  
President, Board of Directors  
(CC:JM)

