



**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 14, 2015 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 **6:31 PM, January 14, 2014** at the District Office, 820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136, Capitola, CA 95010.

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| Directors Present: | Jim McKenna, President
Mike Manfre, Vice President
Gordon Claassen
Howard Liebenberg
Roberta Smith |
| Directors Absent: | Robert Ketley
John Ricker |
| Associate Director Present | Sheryl Bailey |
| RCD Staff Present: | Chris Coburn, Executive Director
Sharon Corkrean, Director of Finance
Tangi Chapman, Recorder |
| NRCS Staff Present | April Jernberg, Soil Conservationist |

WELCOME - INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting opened at 6:31PM with a quorum. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There were no oral communications.

REPORT

NRCS Report

April Jernberg circulated the NRCS activity report for the Board to review. April reported that Rich Casale has been working with RCD staff on several projects. April reported that she has been working primarily on the Farm Bill, explaining that there is now a rolling funding deadline for Farm Bill funds. The screening and ranking scores are done according to resource benefits and the threshold for the first round of funding requires a score of 400 and local rankings tend to be in the 200s. Therefore, most local projects will not make it into the first round of funding. It is unclear as to whether there will still be funding by the time the local projects qualify in the second or third round. Typically the Area does get funding, but it may not happen until July. The national, state and local ranking criteria are evaluated and then combined to get an overall score. Applications will likely be accepted until July.

MINUTES

The Board reviewed the November 19, 2014 meeting minutes. Howard Liebenberg moved approval of the November 19, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Gordon Claassen seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

The Board reviewed the December 11, 2014 meeting minutes. Roberta Smith moved approval of the December 11, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

(Sheryl Bailey entered)

BUDGET & FINANCE

FY 2014-2015 Expenditures – The October 2014 expenditures were reviewed by the Board. Sharon Corkrean explained that the small amounts expended to Kelli Camara and billed to several different grants reflected a QuickBooks error that has been corrected, the October expenditures contained a misspelling of John Deere; this was corrected. The Homeland Security expense was due to sponsoring an employee’s visa.

The November 2014 expenditures were reviewed by the Board. Mike Manfre moved approval of the expenditures as presented. Gordon Claassen seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The motion carried.
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ACTION ITEMS

Program Discussion Items

Director/Associate Director Policy – Chris Coburn reported on the background of the Associate Director’s policy. The Board reviewed the policy and made several changes. It was decided that the changes would be incorporated and a final draft would be presented with an Associate Director application for the next Board Meeting.

REPORTS

Staff Reports

Chris Coburn reported that the RCD received a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant through a NRCS Cooperative Grant for \$636,000. Lisa Lurie did an excellent job of executing and submitting this grant application. Additionally, the RCD was awarded a grant for \$425,000 for Pajaro Integrated Regional Watershed Management for agriculture programs. A Community Water Dialogue meeting in December was facilitated by Kelley Bell. Kathy Violeta with California Water Foundation talked about groundwater regulation. Kathy announced that they would fund \$25,000 to further the Community Water Dialogue. Finally, Chris told the Board that the District received additional funding for the Irrigation and Nutrient Management program. The District is looking in to hiring an Agricultural Technician to work on these programs and there may be opportunities to share resources with other RCDs. The specific skill set has yet to be identified. The Board encouraged Chris to find someone who can provide technical and communication/reporting skills.

Chris also mentioned that Sacha Lozano finalized the publication Healthy Lands & Healthy Economies: Nature’s Value in Santa Cruz County for the Ecosystem Services Program. The work done on this project has been tremendous and both Sacha and Jim Robins did excellent jobs. Chris mentioned that the District is currently coordinating an additional case study with the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County on the Watsonville Slough Farms property. The RCD has met with State Assemblyman Mark Stone, the County and others and will continue to meet with other legislatures regarding the Ecosystem Services Program. When Sonoma County finishes their report then there will be a large scale roll-out. This report was largely funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. The Board was impressed with the quality and information in the report.

Chris gave an update on the Workings Lands Resolution passed at the December Board meeting. He reported that the LTSCC policy committee considered the resolution. However, they did not adopt them. He said that the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau did adopt the resolution. The County of Santa Cruz will be considering the resolution at a future date.

Finally, Chris Coburn mentioned some upcoming staffing transitions. He told the Board that Susan Pearce will be leaving the RCD at the end of January, as well as Alicia Moss who will be leaving in mid-January. The Board expressed their gratitude for the hard work both have done on behalf of the District. The Board discussed future capacity needs.

Chris met with consultants regarding the Cost Allocation Plan, this is a document required by many funders show the methods for allocating costs across grants. He is hopeful that the document will capture administrative needs of the District. The Board then discussed future funding opportunities given the new groundwater legislation and cap and trade funding.

Director Reports

Gordon Claassen reported on a meeting in San Luis Obispo with the Regional Water Quality Conservation Board. The meeting was attended by Dr. Brian Dietterick, Director of Cal Poly’s Swanton Pacific Ranch as well as others from the university. The goal of the meeting was to look at establishing a statewide grazing policy. There was much participation and interest.

Howard Liebenberg reported that the Federal Aviation Administration has approved drones for agriculture. They are using them to fly vineyards to identify pest problems. Gordon said that they also are planning to get drones on Cal Poly San Luis Obispo campus for agriculture. Mike Manfre said they are being used them for monitoring water and fertilizing in agriculture fields.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Tangi circulated a letter from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

NEXT MEETING

Date/ Agenda Items

The next meeting will be the February 11, 2014. Gordon Claassen moved to adjourn the meeting. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17PM.

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

