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RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 12, 2022 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 **6:32PM on January 12, 2022,** the meeting was conducted virtually per AB 361 and Executive Order N-35-20 via Zoom, Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present:	Kelley Bell
	Mike Eaton
	Robert Ketley
	Howard Liebenberg
	Mike Manfre, Vice President
	Jim McKenna, President
	John Ricker
Associate Director Present:	Vasiliki Vasil
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder
	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
NRCS Staff Present:	Drew Mather, Soil Conservationist

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32PM, with a quorum present. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. Roll was called and connectivity confirmed; Kelley Bell present; Mike Eaton present; Robert Ketley present; Howard Liebenberg absent; Mike Manfre present; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

(Howard Liebenberg Entered the Meeting)

4. NRCS REPORT

Drew Mather gave the NRCS Report. He shared that Whit Haraguchi submitted his resignation back in December, his last day was December 30, 2022; Jim Howard has stepped in as the acting District Conservationist until the position is filled. Drew has been in contracting mode. There are 9 applications in the queue to get funded, including 8 cropland and one forestland applications. Drew said that he has appreciated the collaborations with the RCD, including providing Technical Assistance to a large berry operation in Watsonville with Kelli Camara and Erin McCarthy. Additionally, Drew is seeing an uptick in interest in biochar amendments. He reported on dynamic soils from the rainy December. He has been on a couple of site visits for landslides. He has several forestry project site visits scheduled in the coming weeks. Jim McKenna asked if there is any plan for recruiting a new DC for Santa Cruz County. Jim suggested a letter from the RCD might help with the process. Drew suggested contacting the new Area Conservationist, Allen Curry; Drew will send his contact information. The Board directed Lisa to reach out to Allen and let him know just how important the DC is to the District's success. Additionally, the Board requested that Drew let Whit know how much they appreciated his service the past few years.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

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The Board reviewed the consent agenda items, including the December 2021 Minutes and the Memo regarding subawards to San Mateo RCD and RCD of Monterey County for the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program. John Ricker moved approval of the consent agenda items. Ketley seconded the motion. The vote was by roll call; the ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Consider approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2022-01 to extend remote meetings per AB 361

Lisa presented the Board with Resolution RCDSCC 2022-01 to continue remote meetings under a state of emergency per AB 361 requirements. The vote was by roll call; the ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. 100 Employee Handbook Update

Lisa worked with BBK to address some of the issues identified at the previous meeting. Lisa then went into detail with the outstanding items that need further input from the Board prior to adoption, which the Board discussed, including:

A. PTO Liability and restructuring of PTO accrual caps. It was suggested that a more equitable way to apply the cap might be to allow staff to accrue at 1.25 or 1.5 times their annual earned PTO.
B. Compensatory Time Off, Overtime and exploring exempt vs. non-exempt employee status.
C. Adding a Professional Development benefit.
D. Considering providing Workers Compensation for volunteers. The Board will need to decide what type of volunteer activities to cover and pass a resolution prior to starting coverage.
E. Outlining the grievance process for grievances that involve the Executive Director.
F. Holidays and comparison of RCD observed holidays to those observed by other agencies. The RCD has aligned holidays with those observed by the county of Santa Cruz and will continue to do so.

7.2. Illness, Injury Prevention Program and COVID addendum Update

This discussion item was postponed for a later meeting.

7.3. Executive Director Report

Lisa shared health related news regarding her predecessor and wanted to make sure the Board was aware in case they wanted to reach out. She reported on the hiring of a new Program Specialist, Angela Richman. Angela will be working on the Restoration Team, specifically on forestry related projects. Additionally, a job announcement has been posted for a temporary Program Assistant to support the Ag Team while Dan Hermstad is out on paternity leave and to increase our field assistance capacity for the irrigation efficiency program. Lisa announced that Sharon is transitioning into a new role as the Finance Manager and Arianne Rettinger is moving into the Director of Finance role. Sharon will be taking on some of Ari's tasks and handing over the Audit and FY Budget Development tasks among other things. Lisa recognized the California Special District Association for advocating for COVID relief funding for special districts, of which the RCD was a recipient. In addition, the RCD received an end of the year donation from a private citizen for $10,000. Matt has been coordinating the distribution of 63,000 redwood seedlings to landowners affected

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by the CZU Lightning fire, a project in collaboration with CALFIRE. Lisa requested the Board look at the new website and provide any feedback. Lisa and RCD Board members continue to meet with Board of Supervisors for each of the five Districts in the county. The feedback has been very supportive, and it has provided an opportunity to highlight specifics of projects and efforts in each District. Her follow-up will be to provide details on next priorities and how the county and RCD can continue to work together to help meet these needs.

7.4. Director/Associate Director Reports

Howard Liebenberg suggested and Robert Ketley agreed that the RCD should be looking into possible upgrades to the air filtration system to limit the spread of COVID and other airborne pollutants for when staff return to the office. Tangi will coordinate with the property owner.

Mike Eaton reported on the Coastal Commission rail trail hearing in Davenport and community concerns. Mike suggested that there may be a role for the RCD to play in the coordination with the Regional Transportation Commission on this process.

8. ADJOURN

The next meeting of the RCD Board will be February 8, 2022, at 6:30PM via Zoom. The vote was by roll call; the ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:19PM.

(TC:JM)

DocuSigned by:
Jim Mckenna
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