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RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136
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www.rcdsantacruz.org

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 10, 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 August 10, 2022,** the meeting was conducted virtually per AB 361 and Executive Order N-35-20 via Zoom, Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present:	Mike Eaton
	Robert Ketley
	Howard Liebenberg
	Mike Manfre, Vice President (arrived late)
	Jim McKenna, President
	John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Kelley Bell
Associate Directors Present:	Vasiliki Vasil
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder
	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
NRCS Staff Present:	Drew Mather, District Conservationist
	Allen Curry, NRCS Area State Conservationist – Field Office
Others Present:	Yoshi Almog, County Resident

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 absent; Mike Eaton present; Robert Ketley present; Howard Liebenberg present; Mike Manfre absent; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made, county resident Yoshi Almog introduced himself and shared that he has organized a FireWise USA group in his neighborhood and was interested to hear what the RCD is working on currently.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

4. NRCS REPORT

Drew shared highlights from his report. He was pleased to tell the Board that Alanna Burnhans was hired as the new Soil Conservationist with NRCS. She will be starting at the Capitola Local Partnership Office September 12, 2022. Drew continues as acting District Conservationist in Vacaville in addition to his duties at the Capitola LPO. He further mentioned that there will be new Farm Bill assistant positions opening in October locally to help with contracting. These new positions are the outcome of restructuring of that position, and they hope to promote within the agency. Drew was pleased to announce that the first Conservation Stewardship Program grower applied and the application has been converted to a five year NRCS contract for improving soil organic matter on their managed cropland acreage.

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Drew said that there is a technical assistance Memorandum of Agreement being worked on a the NRCS State Office level and should be rolled out to partners including RCDs. Additionally, a new NRCS vehicle, a hybrid 4x4 pickup truck, should be delivered soon to the office. The NRCS has been contacted by Dr Arun Jani from California State Monterey Bay to see if local partners would be interested in hosting some student interns. Drew then introduced Allen Curry who took over for Kay Joy Barge. Allen is originally from Mississippi where he worked closely with Soil and Water Conservation Districts. He is very interested in creating partnerships and supportive mechanisms to get the work done. Additionally, he supported the request by local RCDs to get technical assistance training wherever possible. He requested feedback from the Board and staff of how the NRCS can support the RCDs better. The Board was happy to meet Allen and thanked him for taking the time to attend the RCDs Board Meeting.

(Mike entered the meeting)

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board reviewed the consent agenda items, including the June 8, 2022, Minutes, the June 30, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes, the FY 2021-2022 Quarter 3 Financials and Resolution RCDSCC 2022-13 to extend remote meetings per AB 361 for an additional 30 days. Robert Ketley moved approval of the consent agenda items. Mike Eaton seconded the motion. The vote was by roll call; the ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Consider support of Memorandum of Understanding between RCD and California Department of Parks and Recreation regarding Natural Resource Enhancement Projects in Santa Cruz County

Lisa Lurie shared the Memorandum of Understanding between the RCD and the California Department of Parks and Recreation; she explained that the RCD has completed several projects with them and each time the District has had to complete a separate Landowner Agreement. This MOU serves to replace that requirement and solidify our broader partnership county wide. The MOU references three projects that are currently in the planning stages, including the Fall Creek Truck Trail, Aptos Truck Trail Fuel Load Reduction Projects and Aptos Creek Streamwood Enhancement projects as well as including the broader collaboration on future projects. After discussion, John Ricker moved support of Memorandum of Understanding between RCD and California DPR regarding Natural Resource Enhancement Projects in Santa Cruz County. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The vote was by roll call vote; the ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

6.2. Consider staff recommendation memo to approve entering a construction contract for the Quarry Road Sediment Reduction Project

Lisa shared the procurement memo for the Quarry Road Sediment Control Project; a project to remove and upgrade three existing culverts. The project is currently out to bid, the construction estimate is just over $100,000 and falls within the Informal Bid Process of the 1080 Procurement Policy. The project will be paid for using State, Federal and private funds. The memo outlines the project and the steps taken to ensure competitive bidding and will award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder upon bid opening on August 31. Due to permitting and the tight timeline for completion the project will need to be awarded prior to the next Regular Board meeting. After discussion, Mike Eaton moved approval of entering into a construction contract with the lowest responsible bidder for the Quarry Road Sediment Reduction Project.

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John Ricker seconded the motion. The vote was by roll call vote; the ayes included Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. The motion passed unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. Memorial planning for Director Roberta Smith

Vasiliki Vasil requested that people look through their photographs to see if they have any photos of Roberta through the years. Vasiliki said she will be reaching out to folks who may have photos to share. Vasiliki discovered an old geological society mailing list from years ago and will reach out. She requested photos be collected by mid-September, and a tentative Celebration date was set for a November 4, 2022 to coincide potentially with a Blue Circle event.

7.2. Executive Director Report

Lisa shared that she is just returning from a month vacation with family out of the country and expressed her gratitude towards staff for stepping up during her absence. She mentioned that the Forbearance Agreement she hoped to bring to the Board this month will be pushed off to September. She shared that the Board will need a volunteer to attend the CARCD Conference which will be held in late November early December. She shared the great news that Sacha Lozano received an award from California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN) for his statewide leadership related to climate solutions in agriculture. There will be a formal recognition in Sacramento this November and coordinated communications to follow. Lisa shared that one of the positive outcomes of the Board of Supervisor meetings was county support for the RCD for grant writing was included in this year's County budget. This helps the RCD to build capacity and bring in additional resources to expand our programs to meet community need.

Lisa also shared that the RCD has hired a new Agriculture Program Assistant, Cameron McDonald and Alfred Cortes is now in a permanent position. With the two new program assistants in place, Dan Hermstad will be replacing the vacancy left by Erin McCarthy's departure, shifting some of his time to providing leadership related to MAR, stormwater management, and other projects. Lastly, Lisa reported that the chipping rebate program is in full swing and will run until September 30 or until the funds are expires and that the the Last Chance Road project will be going out to bid again as the previous bid was over budget and it was not feasible to meet the gap in funding to award the contract.

7.3. Director/Associate Director Reports

John Ricker asked through which department the District will be receiving additional county funding. Lisa said that she has reached out to Rachel and Dann of Supervisor Coonerty's office for details which are pending. It is thought that the new funds will likely flow through the OR3 to the RCD.

Mike Eaton inquired about the Rispin property open space development, Lisa said she had reached out to the City of Capitola with no response and would follow up. Mike attended a Homeless Garden Project dinner where there was discussion and updates regarding their future permanent location. He inquired if the RCD has worked with HGP, Lisa indicated that Sacha Lozano has been in contact in the past on an urban farming grant and Drew Mather has coordinated with the farm operation staff. Finally, he shared that he has heard about a NOAA/NMFS field trip along Scott Creek and that NOAA has coastal resiliency funding that could be transformative for the scale of funding that will be required at the Scott Creek Bridge replacement and lagoon restoration. Lisa shared that RCD staff helped coordinate that field visit and are working with partners with an eye for submitting a proposal to the NOAA coastal resiliency program for

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restoration work in Scott Creek (and possibly additional watersheds) next year. The RCD is looking at a big proposal with multiple partners to provide programmatic funding for IWRP planning and project implementation.

8. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be September 14, 2022, at 6:30PM via Zoom.

DocuSigned by:
Jim Mckenna
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(TC:JM)