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RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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www.rcdsantacruz.org

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 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 **6:31PM on October 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
	Howard Liebenberg
	Robert Ketley
	Mike Manfre, Vice President
Directors Absent:	Jim McKenna, President
	John Ricker
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder
	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
NRCS Staff Present:	Drew Mather, District Conservationist
	Alanna Burhans, Soil Conservationist

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM, with a quorum present. Mike Manfre chaired the meeting. Roll was called and connectivity confirmed; Kelley Bell present; Mike Eaton present; Robert Ketley present; Howard Liebenberg present; Mike Manfre present; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Mike Manfre welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments given.

4. NRCS REPORT

Drew introduced the new NRCS Soil Conservationist Alanna Burhans. He shared that the Program Specialist/Analyst position has closed and that they hope to hear soon about the new hire. Jim Howard has been stepping in for Drew while he has been out on leave. NRCS has obligated $204,000 through EQIP and the CSP programs. He has been working with RCD staff on Regional Conservation Partnership Program and the program continues to identify potential projects. The Emergency Conservation Agency will be going out to do an inspection on an irrigation project implemented in response to the CZU Lightning Fire. He reported that the Chevy Malibu vehicle is out-of-commission, and they hope to get the new Ford F150 soon. He is also working on getting new RCD staff authorized to drive the NRCS vehicles. Alanna gave a brief introduction to the Board, she has been with NRCS out of the Merced Office since 2021 where she was predominately working on air quality projects. Her background is in horticulture and forestry.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board reviewed the consent agenda items, including the September 14, 2022, Minutes and Resolution RCDSCC 2022-15 to extend remote meetings per AB 361 for an additional 30 days and Quarter 4 Fiscal Year 2021-22 Financials. Mike Eaton moved approval of the consent agenda items. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The vote

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was by roll call; the ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, and Mike Manfre. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Consider approval of Staff Recommendation Memo to enter a contract with Steve Barnes Excavation for Implementation of the Last Chance Road Forest Health Project per Procurement Policy section

Lisa Lurie presented the Board with the Staff Recommendation Memo regarding procurement for implementation of the Last Chance Road Forest Health Project. She reminded the Board that the Board had considered another Memo earlier in the summer for the same project when the first round of bids were received. The bids had come out over budget and while the District hoped to find additional funding to cover the project, it was not possible. Therefore, the project was rescoped and rebid. Additionally, in the interim the Governor vetoed legislation that would have considered fuel load reduction projects prevailing wage covered work. Two responsive bids were received and Steve Barnes Excavation was the low bidder at $398,585.09. Additionally, the contractor was able to reduce the bid as much of the work will be done mechanically. Lisa mentioned that there may also be some chip depth test plots with California Department of Fish and Wildlife to address the unknow impacts of chip depth on the landscape. Howard Liebenberg mentioned that he has observed some negative impacts from chips being too deep. Lisa will have Matt Abernathy follow up on this topic and said that technical advising may be requested. After discussion, Robert Ketley moved to approve the staff recommendation to enter into a construction contract with Steve Barnes Excavation for the Last Chance Road Forest Health Project. Mike Eaton seconded the motion. The vote was by roll call; the ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, and Mike Manfre. None opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

6.2. Nominate a voting delegate to attend the CARCD 77th Annual Conference and Business meeting and an alternate delegate to the CARCD Business meeting

The Board discussed attendance to the CARCD conference at the end of November beginning of December. Lisa shared that she along with Sacha Lozano, Dan Hermstad, Alfred Cortes and Daniel Nylen will be attending. Mike Eaton said he would consider attending. Mike Manfre may also be able to attend the business meeting which will be held separately. A delegate would be nominated at the next regular meeting in November.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. Memorial planning for Director Roberta Smith

Mike Eaton reported that the Founders event and garden rededication would be happening in the spring of 2023 and could be a good target for the plaque and honoring of Roberta. It was suggested that at the next Blue Circle (this fall/winter), the silent auction could be a fundraising event for an annual scholarship at Pacific Elementary School and the first annual scholarship could be presented at the Founders event for the school in the spring.

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7.2. Executive Director Report

Lisa reported that the Scott Creek Coastal Resiliency Project will hit a huge milestone later this month when the Project Initiation Document will be completed. The RCD along with Caltrans and the Regional Transportation Commission will be hosting a tour with Senator Laird and leadership of the natural resource transportation agencies. The Last Chance Road Forest Health project will be breaking ground in the coming weeks along with the Summit Road Fuel Load Reduction project. Sacha Lozano will be honored at the upcoming California Climate and Agriculture Network meeting held at UC Davis for his contributions to climate resiliency. The November Board meeting will include a tour of projects with sites to be determined. The Board meeting will be held at the UCSC Marine Campus and on Zoom.

Lisa gave a policy update. She shared that AB 1902 was signed into law. This legislation seeks to modernize Division 9 of the Public Resources Code. Additionally, AB 1776 was signed into law and includes the RCDs for prompt payment and add RCDs to the list of entities eligible for late payment penalties under the Prompt Payment Act. Finally, AB 1717 was vetoed by the Governor; the law would have included forest health and fuels management work as prevailing wage. Finally, Lisa reported that the current budget surplus at the state level there are multiple budget bills which will include money for wildfire and forest health, climate smart ag and pollinators, drought and watershed resiliency, extreme heat and urban greening and park equity access projects.

7.3. Director/Associate Director Reports

Howard Liebenberg has noticed that the moles and gophers are ransacking the mountains; he cautions that this activity breaks the surface tension of the soil and allows water to go deeper and can result in mud slides. Additionally, turkeys are tearing up the roads. Mike Eaton added that it has been hypothesized that the rodent population has ballooned due to decreases in predator populations like coyotes.

8. CALENDAR DATES

- October 18, 2022 Automated Irrigation System Demonstration, Strong Agronomy Field Watsonville, CA
- October 26, 2022 Central Coast Area RCD Meeting hosted by Loma Prieta RCD, Gilroy, CA
- November 2, 2022 Blue Circle (tentative), Location TBD
- November 9, 2022 Board Tour, Location TBD
- November 11, 2022 CARCD Deadline for resolutions submission CARCD Business Meeting
- November 14, 2022 CalCan Summit, Davis California Conference
- November 30-December 2, 2022 CARCD Conference, Folsom CA
- December 8, 2022 CARCD Business Meeting 5PM – 7PM, virtually

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9. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be October 12 2022, at 6:30PM via Zoom.

Howard Liebenberg moved to adjourn the meeting. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The vote was by roll call; the ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, and Mike Manfre. The meeting was adjourned.

DocuSigned by:
Jim Mckenna
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(TC:MM)