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RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136
Capitola, California 95010
tel 831.464.2950
www.rcdsantacruz.org

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 11, 2023 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 **6:34PM on January 11, 2023,** 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
	Robert Ketley
	Jim McKenna, President
	John Ricker
Directors Absent:	Mike Eaton
	Howard Liebenberg
	Mike Manfre, Vice President
Associate Directors Present:	Vasiliki Vasil
	Kathryn Tobisch
RCD Staff Present:	Tangi Chapman, Recorder
	Dan Hermstad, Program Specialist
	Sacha Lozano, Program Manager
	Lisa Lurie, Executive Director
	Cameron McDonald, Program Assistant
NRCS Staff Present:	Drew Mather, District Conservationist

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34PM, with a quorum present. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. Roll was called and connectivity confirmed; Kelley Bell present; Mike Eaton absent; Robert Ketley present; Howard Liebenberg absent; Mike Manfre absent; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker present.

2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments given.

4. NRCS REPORT

Drew Mather gave a brief oral report. Since his return from vacation, he has been responding to requests for assistance following the storms. Tomorrow he will be on four site visits in Watsonville, Corralitos and Aptos. The response will be providing technical assistance, recommendations, and connecting landowners with EQIP and the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP). This program provides resources where there is imminent threat to life or property and requires a public sponsor. Additionally, the Capitola LPO has been gearing up for contracting 17 applications. He reported that there will be considerable funding coming to California from the federal Inflation Reduction Act, all of which must be spent in the next five years.

5. STAFF PRESENTATION – Update on Pajaro Valley Irrigation Efficiency Program

Sacha Lozano and Dan Hermstad gave a slide show presentation progress report on the Pajaro Valley Irrigation Efficiency Program. They shared interesting data over the life of the effort that began years ago with the Community Water Dialogue in close partnership with PV Water, UC Cooperative Extension, and the NRCS.

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Funding for the program has come from various sources over the years and is currently supported with PV Water and CDFA funding. In addition to seeing results in an overall reduction of groundwater pumping the effort has worked to create relationships with farmers, farm managers, and irrigation managers to share knowledge, expertise and technology. Sacha reported that the Basin is near its goal of reducing pumping by 5,000 acre feet per year compared to baseline. Dan Hermstad shared the take aways from the last 10 years, evaluating what is working and what needs to be adjusted moving forward. He said that they have learned that they need to meet each operation where they are, and make sure they don't overcomplicate the message. The Board engaged Dan and Sacha with questions. The Board felt encouraged on the progress of the program and the tangible results.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board reviewed the consent agenda items, including the November 11, 2022 Board Tour Minutes, the November 11, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes, FY 22-23 Q1 Financials and Resolution RCDSCC 2022-18 to extend remote meetings per AB 361 for an additional 30 days. John Ricker moved approval of the consent agenda items with the addition of the UCSC Marine Campus physical meeting location in the November 11, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes. Kelley Bell seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. There were none opposed; the motion passed unanimously.

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1. Consider adoption of 2023 Important Dates Calendar

Lisa Lurie shared the 2023 Important Dates Calendar including the Holidays, Board Meetings and Holiday office closure. She explained that in the past the office closure was mandatory and that staff could use personal time off or unpaid leave. In recent years this has been difficult as some staff would like to work during this time to catch up on tasks, while others may need to work if construction projects are in progress. Lisa suggested that the office would be closed, but staff could telework during that week. After discussion, Robert Ketley moved approval of the 2023 Important Dates Calendar, John Ricker seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. There were none opposed; the motion passed unanimously.

7.2. Review and consider approval of updates to the Organizational Chart

Lisa Lurie presented the Board with the Draft Organizational Chart. She explained that she has created a leadership team consisting of herself, the Director of Finance and the Program Managers from both the Ag and the Restoration teams. As part of this process, the group has identified the need to articulate opportunities and pathways for staff to progress in their careers. Including within titles. The group has suggested incorporating Senior designations to each of the titles to differentiate progression as well as increase in responsibilities within the title. She said that the solid lines indicate direct supervision, and the dotted lines indicate relationships that may include day to day guidance but not direct supervisory reporting. The Board commented that the Restoration Team looks to be heavy on Forest Health, but light on other Restoration area staff. The Board suggested that rather than have the existing staff in the boxes, it might make more sense to put boxes that are vacant and need to be filled or to put boxes in line with the various roles and responsibilities. After discussion, the Board requested that Lisa make revisions based on the comments and bring back to a subsequent Board meeting.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1. Returning to In Person Meetings; State of Emergency sunsets February 28, 2023

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The Board discussed options for returning to in person meetings. Tangi reported on alternate locations and indicated that she would contact the City of Capitola about their community room. They shared that they would be willing to change the meeting time and date if necessary.

8.2. Memorial planning for Director Roberta Smith

Vasiliki Vasil shared that she has not had much progress since the last meeting given the holidays and the storm events. The Board requested Tangi reach out to Mike Eaton regarding any updates from Pacific Elementary School. Lisa indicated that a March Blue Circle would be a good target for holding a Roberta Smith fundraiser.

8.3. Executive Director Report

Lisa Lurie gave a verbal report. She returned from vacation this week and has been very busy with the emergency storm response. She has been in contact with the County of Santa Cruz Stream Wood response team who have been assessing log jams and removing where needed. She reported that Angie Gruys and Matt Weld (Waterways Consulting) have been out in the field conducting site visits from folks that have contacted the RCD. Requests for Assistance have been coming in from Agriculture operators and homeowners and the RCD has been coordinating the response and visits. Rich Casale has been contracted by NRCS to help with the effort, as well as RCD staff, NRCS staff, and Waterways Consulting. Lisa and staff have been checking in with partners to get feedback on projects. Andy Fisher at UCSC has been sampling the recharge basins, all of which are currently full. Partners have also been reaching out to schedule volunteer efforts as well. Kelley Bell requested information on where to point people towards available resources. Lisa indicated that she would share the resource list and webinar information when available. Lisa indicated that common problems reported are downed trees, erosion and landslides of various degrees and plugged culverts that have caused flooding. Cameron MacDonald reported that a couple growers have reached out regarding flooded fields. Drew indicated that there will be funding available from the Farm Services Agency due to the federally declared emergency disaster declaration. Lisa reported that there has been conversation with Partners in Restoration agencies to use the PIR program to streamline the permitting for disaster relief.

8.4. Director/Associate Director Reports

Mike Manfre sent in a report regarding the well-attended CARCD business meeting he attended on behalf of the RCD.

9. CALENDAR DATES

- January 28, 2023, from 9:30AM to 12:00PM How to Safely Pile Burn hosted by CC Prescribed Burn Association and the RCD in Boulder Creek
- January 18, 2023, from 10:30AM to 2:00PM CropManage Hands-on Workshop hosted by UC ANR and the RCD at the Watsonville Public Library

10. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be February 8, 2023, at 6:30PM via Zoom. John Ricker moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15PM. Kelley Bell seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Jim McKenna, and John Ricker. There were none opposed; the motion passed unanimously.

(TC:MM)

DocuSigned by:
Jim McKenna
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