



**MINUTES OF THE JULY 19, 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 **6:50PM on July 19, 2023**, the meeting was conducted in person at the City of Capitola Community Room and virtually via Zoom, Meeting ID: 708-386-048.

Directors Present: Kelley Bell  
Mike Eaton  
Mike Manfre, Vice President  
Jim McKenna, President

Directors Absent: Robert Ketley  
Howard Liebenberg  
John Ricker

Associate Directors Present: Kathryn Tobisch (Zoom)

RCD Staff Present: Tangi Chapman, Recorder  
Lisa Lurie, Executive Director  
Arianne Rettinger, Director of Finance

Others Present: Mr. Derber

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:50PM, with a quorum present. Jim McKenna chaired the meeting. Roll was called and connectivity confirmed; Kelley Bell present, Mike Eaton present; Robert Ketley absent; Howard Liebenberg absent; Mike Manfre present; Jim McKenna present; John Ricker absent.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS & WELCOME**

Jim McKenna welcomed everyone to the hybrid meeting.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were none given.

**4. NRCS REPORT**

There were no NRCS reports given.

**5. CONSENT AGENDA**

Mike Eaton made a motion to approve the consent agenda items including the May 10, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes and the 2022 Annual Statements of Water Diversion and Use from the City of Santa Cruz in accordance with the Agreement for the Forbearance of Water in the Pogonip Creek and Redwood Creek Systems for Fisheries Enhancement in the San Lorenzo River Lagoon. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre and Jim McKenna; there were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. ACTION ITEMS**

**6.1. Review and consider approval of the Draft FY 2023-2024 Budget**

Lisa Lurie explained that she, John Ricker, and Arianne Rettinger have met to review and discuss the Draft FY 2023-2024 Budget; John could not make the meeting tonight due to a prior commitment, but his comments have been incorporated into the current draft. Ari and Lisa concurred that the funding



forecast for the next fiscal year is quite good; the budget is similar to last year at approximately 8 million. The budget reflects a perfect world scenario of all projects being implemented as planned. This can change depending on many factors including natural disasters, permitting and contractor availability and bid costs. Ari shared that this past year, the RCD has taken advantage of Advance Payment from funders where possible to make implementation funds available to pay contractors in a timelier manner. Additionally, there is a contingency category that is not anticipated to be spent but is available if needed. The Board discussed various aspects of the budget including if the RCD has the capacity to complete that much work. Lisa explained that the RCD has a new employee who will be part of the Restoration Team. She explained the RCD is at a transition point where we are assessing the need for additional staffing (programmatic and administrative). Once sufficient funds are secured to round out more full position(s) we may be bringing on more staff. Jim McKenna acknowledged that contracting with funders can take longer than anticipated, permitting can also push projects into the following year. Ari reminded the Board that this is a draft and that there may be some fine tuning that takes place over the next month and a half as we find out a but funding on some grants. Mike Manfre moved approval of the Draft Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget as presented. Kelley Bell seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. The motion passed unanimously.

**6.2. Consider approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2023-04 to enter into grant agreement and designate a representative with the State Coastal Conservancy for Expanding Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Capacity in Santa Cruz and San Mateo Counties**

Lisa presented the Board with Resolution RCDSCC 2023-04. The resolution authorizes the RCD to enter into an agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy (CC) and designate a representative to act on the RCD's behalf. The \$1,131,500 agreement will include expanding forest health and wildfire resilience capacity in Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties (in partnership with San Mateo RCD) and administration of the regional grant. Lisa shared that the concept for this grant would be similarly structured to the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program; and would provide core funding for Forest Health staff; expand the regional prioritization planning network similar to the IWRP Technical Advisory Committee. This planning grant will aim for a consensus-based suite of forest health projects to develop with partners and then seek implementation funding. The grant includes planning and permitting for projects as well as implementation of demonstration projects and chipping funding. The grant will be split between Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties with additional time for the RCDSCC to administer the grant. After discussion, Mike Eaton moved approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2023-04. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. The motion passed unanimously.

**6.3. Consider approval of Resolution RCDSCC 2023-05 to enter into grant agreement and designate a representative with the State Coastal Conservancy for Scott Creek Coastal Resilience Planning**

Lisa shared that the Resolution before the Board is also with the Coastal Conservancy. This grant will fund the next phase of the planning for the Scott Creek Coastal Resiliency Project and signifies a huge step in the process to replace the HWY 1 bridge at Scott Creek with a more resilient, integrated ecological restoration and transportation infrastructure. CalTrans has committed \$4.5 million to this next phase of the project and this grant between the RCD and the Coastal Conservancy will support both the RCD and our hired



consultants for the next two years. Lisa was pleased with this commitment from both CalTrans and CC which further demonstrates the shared investment in this project between transportation and conservation agencies. Mike Eaton moved to approve Resolution RCDSCC 2023-05 as presented. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. The motion passed unanimously.

**6.4. Consider approval of staff recommendation for the procurement of California Department of Parks and Recreation for Fall Creek Shaded Fuel Break per 1080.8.1 of the Procurement Policy**

Lisa shared the staff recommendation memo approving an exemption from formal bidding process to sub awardee CDPR. The funding for this agreement is provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFire) and will fund \$150,000.00 for CDPR to complete the Fall Creek Shaded Fuel Break project. This constitutes the next phase in the Henry Cowell Redwoods Fall Creek State Park fuel load reduction efforts and is adjacent to the project completed earlier in the year. The Board discussed the longevity of these types of projects and how the project will be maintained. Lisa explained that the expectation is that the RCD brings the public funds to complete the heavy lift and that part of the planning process includes outlining maintenance obligations that the Landowners will commit to after the project is completed. There is a recognized need, however, for ongoing collaboration between agencies and landowners to support that long term maintenance. After discussion, Mike Eaton moved approval of the staff recommendation for the procurement of CDPR for the Fall Creek Shaded Fuel Break per 1080.8.1 of the Procurement Policy. Kelley Bell seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

**6.5. Consider staff recommendation for the procurement of a contractor for the Conley Creek Road Sediment Reduction project per 1080.7.2 of the Procurement Policy**

Lisa shared the staff recommendation memo for the Conley Creek Road Sediment Reduction project. The bid is currently out to bid using the informal bid process; the cost estimate for the project is between \$175,000 and \$215,000. The bid packet was sent to three contractors and bid opening will be on July 28<sup>th</sup>. The project will be co-funded by the State Water Resources Control Board 319(h) grant and the Integrated Regional Water Management grant. Several projects have been evaluated for implementation and depending on bid results there may be tasks added or subtracted to the overall project. Kelley Bell moved approval of the staff recommendation to contract with the lowest responsible bidder for the Conley Creek Road Sediment Reduction project. Mike Eaton seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

**6.6. Consider staff recommendation for the procurement of the San Mateo Resource Conservation District per 1080.8.1 of the Procurement Policy**

Lisa shared the staff recommendation memo for contracting with the San Mateo Resource Conservation District for \$994,881.40 to conduct restoration planning on State Parks lands impacted by illegal cannabis operations. Funding has been secured from the California Department of Parks and Recreation to fund this subaward. Per procurement policy 1080.8.1 San Mateo RCD, a public agency carrying out a public purpose is exempt from competitive bidding as a Sub-awardee. Mike Eaton moved approval of the exemption to competitive procurement as presented in the staff recommendation memo. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

**6.7. Consider and vote for candidates to sit on the Special District Risk Management Authority Board of Directors**



The Board reviewed and discussed the qualifications of the candidates and the merits and experience of each. After discussion, Mike Eaton suggested voting for Robert Swan, Jesse Claypool, and Acquanetta Warren. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Mike Eaton, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

## 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### 7.1. Executive Director Report

Lisa shared that the PV Water received a California Department of Water Conservation grant. This is a huge win for the Pajaro Valley. The grant supports a multi-benefit land repurposing program to restore marginalized lands at highest risk from drought and flooding, improve groundwater recharge and floodplain function to support ecosystem health and agricultural sustainability in the Pajaro Valley. The grant is a collaboration between PV Water, the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency, the RCD, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and Watsonville Wetlands Watch and will include broad stakeholder engagement and partnership with additional entities including the Amah Mutsun Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, and others. The grant supports a regional planning effort as well as planning and implementation of a suite of multi-benefit repurposing projects.

Lisa reported that there has been interest from staff to participate in the CARCD Speak off Competition. This is an excellent opportunity to engage youth. The theme this year is groundwater recharge and the Ag Team is excited in participating with local schools on this topic. Lisa said that staff will be reaching out to the Board for involvement. The aim will be to have participating students present their speech at the October RCD Board meeting. The top contestant would then go on to present at an area meeting, with one regional finalist advancing to the statewide competition at the CARCD Conference in Sacramento in December.

### 7.2. Director/Associate Director Reports

There were none given.

## 8. CALENDAR DATES

- July 24, 2023 Chipping Webinar Scheduled
- July 25, 2023 Chipping Applications Open to Firewise Certified neighborhoods
- August 1, 2023 Chipping Applications open to all other neighborhoods

## 9. ADJOURN

**The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be held at the at the City of Capitola Community Room and via Zoom on September 13, 2023, at 6:30PM. Kelli Bell moved to adjourn. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion to adjourn.**

(TC:JM)

*James J. McKenna*