



**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 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 6:30PM on October 11, 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 Robert Ketley Howard Liebenberg Mike Manfre Jim McKenna
Directors Absent:	Mike Eaton John Ricker
Associate Directors Present:	Vasiliki Vasil
RCD Staff Present:	Laurel Bard, Recorder Lisa Lurie, Executive Director Ari Rettinger, Director of Finance
NRCS Present:	Drew Mather, District Conservationist

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM, 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 present; 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

Drew Mather gave updates on Emergency Watershed Protection projects and Environmental Quality Incentive Project contracts. NEPA has been completed for all EWP, of which there are 18 sites in the county. NRCS has awarded 14 EQIP throughout the county as well. One of them, a potential pond restoration project for wildlife habitat, that is happening in partnership with RCD. Drew shared that he has put out a call encouraging small horse facilities with up to 3 or 4 horses to apply for Comprehensive Nutrient Management plans. Additionally, construction is under way for a stormwater management project funded through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program and in partnership with RCDSCC and RCDMC.

5. CONSENT AGENDA



Jim McKenna made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, including approval of the September 13, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes and the RCD's Q4 Financial Report and Vendor Expenditures from July-September 2023. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. Review and consider approval of updated payroll and vendor claims authorized signatures.

Lisa Lurie presented to the board an updated list of approved staff who may perform functions like approving and picking up payroll and authorizing vendor claims. The rationale for expanding this list is to increase redundancy in the approval process by expanding capacity so that business may continue while some authorized staff are away or otherwise unavailable. Mike Manfre moved approval of the updated payroll and vendor claims authorized signatures. Robert Ketley seconded the motion. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

6.2. Review and consider approval of a Policy 2000 - Minutes of Board Meetings

Lisa Lurie presented a policy for approval that formalizes the current RCD practice of maintaining long term records of board meeting minutes on the RCD website. Meeting times, location of the meeting, a summary record, and descriptions of any resolution or action will continue to be included on long term records on the RCD website. Robert Ketley asked if the record would be searchable, and Lisa Lurie agreed that that would be helpful and will see if that is possible. Robert Ketley moved approval of Policy 2000. Kelley Bell seconded. The ayes included Kelley Bell, Robert Ketley, Howard Liebenberg, Mike Manfre, and Jim McKenna. There were none opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1. Speak-off Competition

Lisa Lurie shared that there were no interested student participants for the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts Speak-Off Competition, although outreach was conducted. Kelley Bell mentioned that she received feedback that outreach should have been conducted earlier so teachers could fit the speak-off topic into their curriculum calendar. Robert Ketley suggested that perhaps CARCD should modify the competition to more closely follow the structure of an informational video rather than an old-fashioned speak off. Jim McKenna, Kelley Bell, Vasiliki Vasil, and Robert Ketley discussed the possibility of the RCD hosting its own competition, event, or internship intended to increase youth participation in RCD affairs, including the potential creation of a board seat for a youth ambassador. Lisa suggested the Karen Christensen fund as a possible avenue for funding, and Kelley Bell and Robert Ketley indicated interest in pursuing this topic further.

7.2. Executive Director's Report

Lisa Lurie shared highlights from the past month. A staff member, Laurel Bard, was promoted from Program Assistant to Program Specialist. The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County is moving forward with forming a 501c4 to support a local measure to institute a tax that would provide a stable source of funding for land stewardship.



The NRCS recently awarded funds for CARCD that will support forest management planning over the next few years. The RCD is also working on a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration proposal regarding transformational restoration for coho recovery across the North Coast. The funding opportunity also supports capacity building for tribal engagement, especially supporting indigenous youth in accessing land in their ancestral territories.

On the administrative side, the RCD is scoping out an additional administrative assistant position. Lisa also recommended developing a new process and schedule for reviewing employee policies and benefits, as reviewing the whole policy every year is not feasible beyond making sure that everything is legally up to date. Jim McKenna suggested that the board take on one policy item every few meetings, and Kelley Bell suggested that this policy item could be determined via employee survey for areas that need review.

The RCD is hosting a workshop on November 6 called Living on Rural Properties at the Felton Community Hall. The workshop will cover topics like ecologically-minded defensible space creation, maintenance of rural roads, and others.

7.3. Director/Associate Director Reports

There were no reports given.

8. CALENDAR DATES

- October 25, 2023 8:30AM – 12PM Pajaro Compass Meeting at San Benito Ag Land Trust Nyland Property. Property tour after 12PM.
- November 6, 2023 6PM Living on Rural Properties Workshop at Felton Community Hall
- November 8, 2023 9AM Board Tour in Felton
- December 13-15 CARCD Annual Conference in Sacramento. Business meeting is 12/13.

9. ADJOURN

The next regular meeting of the RCD Board will be hybrid November 8, 2023, at 1:45PM at Felton Library and via Zoom meetings: <https://zoom.us/>, Meeting ID: 708-386-048, Meeting PW: 599600. Robert Ketley moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:42PM. Mike Manfre seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

(TC:JM)

James J. McKenna

2023-10-11 - Minutes

Final Audit Report

2024-01-05

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