



744 La Guardia Street, Building A, Salinas, CA 93905

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February 23, 2023— MEETING MINUTES—Approved 3/23/2023

Regular Board Meeting, February 23, 2023, 10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Directors Present: B. Jefferson, J. Doud, B. Plemmons, A. Gonzalez, B. Lipe, J. Clarke, & J. Gularte, I. Mendoza (Associate)

Directors Absent:

Others Present: Monterey County District 3 Supervisor Chris Lopez, Monterey Co. Agricultural Commissioner Juan Hidalgo, Trey Elizondo (Aide to Congressman Panetta), A. DeLara (NRCS), P Robins (staff), M Errea (staff), A. Garcia (staff), E. Zefferman (staff)

Recorder: A. Garcia

Open Session: Director Jefferson called the meeting to Order at 10:15 am.

Public Comment for items not on agenda: New Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner Juan Hidalgo briefly introduced himself to the Board.

Consent Items:

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the January 19, 2023 Regular Board meeting*
- *Staff Activities Report for January 2023*

Director Lipe moved to approve the Consent Items. Director Doud seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Introductory comments of Supervisor Lopez

Supervisor Lopez introduced himself to board and offered assistance with any issues moving forward. Lopez spoke briefly about hopes for the new Farm Bill in process and making sure fits needs of Monterey County's rural communities. Lopez also addressed concerns regarding recent storm damage and his efforts to bring attention to what happens when maintenance in preparation of flooding is not done. Director Jefferson asked Lopez to please continue to advocate for farmers.

Reports

NRCS Report:

District Conservationist Ariel DeLara reported briefly regarding 'Joint Chiefs' fire resiliency contracts, contracts for technical support to Spanish speaking farmers, newly-awarded Lower Salinas watershed water quality planning funding. He also noted that the Emergency Conservation Program is available for recent storm damage disaster assistance, administered by the Farm Services Agency (FSA). Payments are generally limited to repair of ag infrastructure such as irrigation lines and fencing. The Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) is only helpful for imminent protection of life and property, so not useful for the type of post-

flooding impacts experienced this winter. DeLara noted that he and his staff are working hard towards meeting the March 3 EQIP ranking deadline and that an additional \$7M from the Inflation Reduction Act will be available for California farmers to support implementation of 'Climate Smart' practices.

Executive Director Report

Robins provided a brief overview of current RCD programs for the meeting guests and described upcoming engagement with the Groundwater Sustainability Agency's and Central Coast Wetlands Group's 'Multi-benefit Land Repurposing Program' grant for which he'll be serving on both the coordinating committee and land acquisition committee.

Director Reports

Director Plemmons stated that the next board meeting for the CA Association of RCDs will be 4/12/2023 and that the CARCD virtual conference is 3/6/23-3/30/23, with different subject areas on different days of the week.

Old or Standing Business

P. Robins / Directors

No items pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Monthly Financial Statements: Finance Manager Errea presented the financial statements regarding Accounts Receivable, Payables and Bank balances for the period ending February 23, 2023. The accrual account balance on February 23, 2023 was \$344,709.26, with a balance of \$491,711.75 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury (including loans and advance payments), \$837,728 in liabilities, and \$690,726 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$320,732 on January 19, 2023.

Expenses: Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on February 23, 2023, including bi-weekly salary through February 12th, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of January and February, totaling \$134,475.21.

Director Gonzalez moved to approve the February financial statements and the January and February expenses. Director Lipe seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Spring BBQ Fundraiser Update

Robins and Director Gularte briefly noted that arrangements are set for the event location and that the sponsorship solicitation form and coordination spreadsheet are updated and ready for use. Directors briefly discussed potential donors for outreach.

Mid-Year WorkPlan Review

Item postponed due to lack of time.

New business

Resolution 2023-03

Robins briefly reviewed Resolution 2023-03 authorizing entry into CDFW Fisheries Restoration Grant Agreement # Q2240402 for Fish Passage Improvement Project on Cachagua Cr. After brief discussion, Director Gonzalez moved to approve the resolution; Director Plemmons seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Resolution 2023-04

Robins briefly reviewed Resolution 2023-04 authorizing CALFIRE grant application for Mapping and Database development in Monterey and San Benito Counties 2023-04. Director Lipe moved to approve the resolution, Gularte seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Expiring Board Member terms and renewals

Robins noted that the terms for Directors Lipe, Clark, and Doud must be renewed or replaced and presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Directors Lipe and Clark indicated that they would like to continue to serve on the board, pending approval.

Director Doud indicated that he would not request to serve an additional term, has and indicated that he reached out to a potential interested party for joining the board, Kevin Tottino of Castroville. He noted that Tottino has experience in research and development as well as traditional production methods.

Robins noted that Associate Director Ignacio Mendoza had expressed interest in stepping into a full board member position and reintroduced himself to the board. He works as part of his family's berry farming company and also served until recently with the CA Strawberry Commission providing assistance to farmers throughout the Central Coast region. Robins indicated he would follow up with interested candidates so that the board could consider term renewals for Directors Lipe and Clarke and appointment for Doud's open chair at the March board meeting.

Salinas River Arundo Program Update

RCDMC Ecologist Emily Zefferman gave a brief review of the program's accomplishments during the 9 work seasons between 2014 and 2022 as well as an overview of program methods and funding. Following the powerpoint presentation, Zefferman led a site tour along the Salinas River levee at the Soledad Water Reclamation Center to view the work directly and for more detailed discussion regarding project benefits and challenges. River.

12:30 P.M. Meeting Adjourned at end of site visit

Next Regular RCD meeting: Thursday, March 23 at 10am. Location to be confirmed.