



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

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## March 23, 2023– MEETING MINUTES—*Approved April 18, 2023*

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

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

Directors Absent: A. Gonzalez, B. Lipe

Others Present: A. DeLara (NRCS), P Robins (staff), M Errea (staff), A. Garcia (staff); D. Chavan (guest); two other members of the public joined via Zoom

Recorder: A. Garcia

Open Session: Director Jefferson called the meeting to Order at 10:25 once quorum was met.

Public Comment for items not on agenda: None

### Consent Items:

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda with addition of discussion regarding Salinas River prior to receiving financial reports*
- *Approval of Minutes from the Feb, 2023 Regular Board meeting*
- *Staff Activities Report for February 2023*

Director Clarke moved to approve the Consent Items. Director Gularte seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

### Reports

*NRCS Report:* District Conservationist Ariel DeLara reported on progress with conservation and emergency assistance programs and noted the following:

- ~20% success rate of Monterey County applicants for general EQIP funds. \$600k under 13 new contracts this year: six cropland, four wildland, and three in rangeland.
- Farm Services Agency's (FSA) Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) expects over 300 applications and has brought in four (and may bring in more) temporary employees to help facilitate processing.
- Directors Jefferson and Gularte asked DeLara about funding for removal of excess soil for farmers. DeLara noted that sediment removal is covered but limited by a payment rate. The ceiling per applicant is \$500k.

*Executive Director and Board Director Reports:* Deferred to Salinas River discussion item

### Old or Standing Business

P. Robins / Directors

*No items pulled from the Consent Agenda.*

*FY 21\_22 Financial audit report by Chavan & Associates:* Derek Chavan briefly walked Directors through the Audit Report, noting that they provided an unqualified opinion that the RCD financial statements fairly reflect its activities. His team did not find significant weakness or issues in the RCD's records. After brief discussion, Director Clarke moved to approve, Director Plemmons seconded the motion, and all present voted to approve the motion to accept the audit

report.

*Salinas River emergency response:* Robins provided a brief summary of discussions underway regarding farmland and levee impacts and needs from this winter's flooding. Directors Jefferson and Gularte have engaged Supervisor Lopez, MCWRA personnel and the Salinas River Management Unit Association in order to assure a coordinated effort among landowners, farmers, and agencies. They recommended that Robins draft a letter to cities along the river to engage them in that response. Those impacted will need guidance and permission for both short-term and long-term remediation work.

*Monthly Financial Statements:* Finance Manager Errea presented the financial statements regarding Accounts Receivable, Payables and Bank balances for the period ending March 23, 2023. The accrual account balance on March 23, 2023 was \$315,608.82, with a balance of \$311,541.18 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury (including loans and advance payments), \$712,861 in liabilities, and \$716,928 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$344,709.26 on February 23, 2023.

*Expenses:* Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on March 23, 2023, including bi-weekly salary through March 12<sup>th</sup>, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of February and March, totaling \$279,435.52.

Director Clarke moved to approve the March financial statements and the February and March expenses. Director Plemmons seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*New Contracts and Agreements for review:* Robins briefly outlined the five new agreements, noting that all were under the threshold requiring Board approval and requesting confirmation from Board Members that no potential conflicts of interest existed with the named contractors. Directors noted no conflicts with any of the entities for ICA 2023-01 with Fire Safe Council for Carmel Valley Fuelbreak; ICA 2023-02 with Provost & Pritchard for NEPA assistance; ICA 2023-03 with Burleson Consulting, ICA 2023-04 with Rincon Consultants, & ICA 2023-05 with Dawn Reis Ecol. Studies for biological monitoring at Salinas River Lagoon; and ICA 2023-06 with Alnus Ecological for Hastings Reserve fish passage project biological services on Finch Creek.

#### *Spring BBQ Fundraiser Update*

Garcia provided an update on ticket sales and sponsorships received. Directors agreed to each purchase at least five tickets or raise sponsorship donations that bring in a similar amount of seats. Robins also requested concurrence from the Board for a staff-generated request to share a portion of the fundraiser proceeds with the Community Foundation of Monterey County's Storm Relief Fund. After brief discussion, board members concurred with sharing 10% of the BBQ proceeds with the CFMC fund.

#### *Board Member term renewals and new Board Member application consideration*

Directors considered a new Board Member application from Ignacio Mendoza and a term renewal request from Director Lipe. There were not enough board members for a vote to consider Director Clarke's reappointment request, so her submission was postponed to a later meeting. After brief discussion, Director Clarke moved to approve the appointment requests by both Mendoza and Lipe. Director Plemmons seconded the motion and all voted to approve.

#### New business

*Resolution 2023-05:* Robins briefly described the grant application to the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) for Urban Conservation Assistance grant and requested the Board's authorization per the grant application requirements. Board members voted unanimously to approve Resolution 2023-05.

*Draft Project Specific Analysis (PSA) for Rancho Rico Community Fuels Treatment (Big Sur):* Robins provided a summary of the first PSA to be submitted to the Coastal Commission for approval under the RCD's new Public Works Program (PWP). The forest health and fire resilience project proposed in the Rancho Rico community west of Highway 1 and Pfeiffer-Big Sur State Park will include a mix of manual and mechanical work informed by biological and cultural resource surveys and consultations. The PSA in draft will be circulated for public review in early April and need public hearing at the April 18 board meeting before going to the Coastal Commission for final approval in June.

Adjournment

Next Regular RCD meeting: Tuesday, April 18th at 10am. Location to be confirmed.

Director Jefferson adjourned meeting at 12:21pm