



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

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## July 23, 2020– MEETING MINUTES—Approved 8/27/2020

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, July 23, 2020, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Directors Present: R. King, J. Doud, B. Lipe, B. Plemmons, J. Clarke, J. Gularte

Directors Absent: B. Jefferson

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Barker (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), E. Boyland (NRCS), M. Ritter

Recorders: M. Barker, P. Robins

*Because of shelter-in-place orders for the COVID-19 outbreak, the meeting was held by Zoom conference.*

Open Session: Called to Order at 10:03 am

Public Comment: None.

### Consent Items

- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the June 18, 2020 Regular Board Meeting*
- *Accept Staff Activities Report for June 2020.*

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

### Reports

*Executive Director Report:* Paul Robins provided a recap on the intensive Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training that he attended last week that included a session by the Racial Equity Institute. Robins also met with various RCDs and CARCD about strategic planning and incorporating themes of DEI into our organizations' strategic plans. Robins expects RCDMC's strategic planning will most likely have to occur remotely this year.

Two new Associate Director applications are being submitted. Ignacio Mendoza (works for Strawberry Commission and his family's berry operation) has expressed interest in serving as an Associate Director. Marissa Ritter (with Naturipe Berry Growers) has also been a valuable participant in board meetings and sub-committee meetings. She has submitted her application for an associate board member position for board review.

*NRCS Report:* District Conservation Erika Boyland reported that this has been the largest year for volume of requests with \$3.2 million dollars in conservation requests for Monterey County. Due to an error in USDA allocations to the state of California, only about 10% of those requests were able to be funded this year. Unfunded applications will be rolled over to next fiscal year (starting October 1) in hopes of additional funding coming available. There is plenty of funding available for RCPP (over 1 million dollars remaining) projects for arundo control and native revegetation on the Salinas River. Boyland announced that Soil Conservationist John Warner will be retiring July 28<sup>th</sup> so NRCS is trying to arrange a virtual

or goodbye party for him. There are not currently any plans to backfill his position in the Salinas office as the office is already technically over-staffed according to the allocations referenced earlier.

*Directors' Updates:* Directors Plemmons shared that the CARCD conference will be held virtually this year in November and will be spread over 12 days rather than the usual three in-person days. There is a call for presentations with a deadline date of July 31<sup>st</sup>. CARCD is also accepting recommendations for suggested topics. More staff can potentially attend workshops because the conference will be held online.

Old or Standing Business

P. Robins / Directors

No items pulled from the Consent Agenda.

*Monthly Financial Statements:* M. Errea presented the financial statements regarding Accounts Receivable, Payables and Bank balances for the period ending July 23, 2020. The accrual account balance on July 23, 2020 was \$178,569.56 with \$8,862.64 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury accounts (taking into account checks to be signed at the meeting), \$283,682 in liabilities, and \$453,388.73 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$222,879.04 on June 18, 2020.

*Expenses:* Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on July 23, including bi-weekly salary through July 19, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of June and July, totaling \$163,978.64.

Director Lipe moved to approve the July financial statements and the June and July expenses as presented. Director Clarke seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

*RCDMC Procurement Policy:* Robins discussed a change to the procurement policy that had been presented to the board in October 2019 but never finalized. The proposed modification increases the threshold for requiring competitive bidding for state-funded professional services contracts from \$60,000 to \$100,000, which would give the RCD flexibility for moving quickly with time-sensitive design and permitting work. This would not limit the RCD Board of Directors' oversight of awards and approvals. After brief discussion, Directors had no concerns with the proposed change and requested the modified policy be brought to the August meeting for finalization and approval.

*Review of New or Revised Independent Contractor Agreements:* The following two contract modifications and new contract were reviewed:

- Wildlands Conservation Science ICA 2019-15, modification 1: Contract modification establishes new NTE amount of \$151,599.68 and scope of work for 2020 Arundo Program Work Season. WCS will build on the arundo, tamarisk, and tree tobacco mapping and treatment work they did in the Salinas River upper watershed in 2019. They will complete six treatment tours of five days each with four workers. WCS will provide their own "in-house" biological surveys. Work will extend from King City to San Ardo, and possibly all the way to Bradley if time and landowner permissions allow. Costs cover labor, materials, travel, and lodging.
- California Reforestation Inc. ICA 2019-14, modification 2: Contract modification establishes new NTE amount of \$250,000 and scope of work for 2020 Arundo Program Work Season. CRI will spray arundo re-sprouts over the entire footprint of work that was completed for our Wildlife Conservation Board 2016 grant (apx 340 former arundo acres from Greenfield to Soledad). They will also conduct initial treatments of arundo downstream of Soledad for our 2019 WCB grant. Costs are to cover labor, materials, travel, and lodging for eight 5-day

tours with 10 crew members.

- Santa Lucia Conservancy ICA 2020-03: New agreement NTE of \$1,174,641 for conducting Roadside Fuel Modification on ~280 ac on the Santa Lucia Preserve per CALFIRE Grant Agreement 5GG19106 for Los Padres Strategic Community Fuelbreak. The Agreement term is 6/17/2020 - 3/15/2024. \$1,145,001 of the Agreement will fund contracted fuels reduction work, and the remaining \$29,640 will cover SLC employee wages to oversee the work. They have also committed to provide \$275,709 in matching in-kind expenses in the form of staff time, the creation of a property-wide Forest Health Plan and a detailed Sudden Oak Death Forest Management Prescription to guide implementation, and roadside mowing.

Director Plemmons moved to approve the New or Revised Independent Contractor Agreements as presented. Director Clarke seconded and all motioned to approve.

### New Business

### Directors/ Staff

*Fundraiser Planning:* Robins and board members discussed whether the BBQ fundraiser should be postponed this year and also evaluated some ideas for how the event might still be able to be held this fall. These ideas included holding a drive-thru event in October or offering an online auction. Prior to the Board meeting, Board members reached out to sponsors to assess their comfort level about RCDMC keeping their sponsorship donations without attending an in-person event, and also gauged how they would feel about missing out on an in-person networking opportunity. Director Gularte expressed that her contacts preferred to have an in-person event. Gularte also suggested the possibility of a '50-50' raffle as another auction idea.

All directors supported postponing the BBQ fundraiser until spring 2021. Director Lipe suggested working on a pitch to donors about the specific benefits of tax-deductible donations. Director Doud shared an idea which was that donors should receive a letter or thank you card from one of the scholarship recipients who attends Range Camp.

*Outreach Planning:* Robins discussed that the outcome of the June and July outreach committee meetings was development of an outreach plan and 52-week calendar for the year. RCDMC staff has been populating a social media calendar and identifying and contacting partnerships to collaborate with on social media outreach efforts. Possible partnerships named included the Grower Shipper Association, Western Growers Association, Elkhorn Slough Foundation, Strawberry Growers Commission, and SIP Certified, among others.

*Staff presentation of Hillslope Farming video by Megan Barker:* Project Administrator and Environmental Scientist Megan Barker showed a video she recently produced called "Hillslope Farming: Keeping Soil in its Place". The video was funded by the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner. It features interviews with three North Monterey County farmers (Javier Zamora, Berta Magaña, Dean Sakae). The video explores three effective erosion control measures that can be used in hillslope farming: cover crops, row alignment and sediment basins. Aerial footage was shot by Barker (a licensed drone operator) with the RCDMC drone. Overall, the piece received positive feedback from board members.

### Announcements

None to report.

### Directors/ Robins

12:00 P.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting:

Date: Thursday, August 27, 10am  
Location: Meeting will be held by teleconference