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July 28, 2022– MEETING MINUTES—*Draft*

Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, July 28, 2022, 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

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

Directors Absent: Ritter (Associate), I. Mendoza (Associate)

Others Present: P. Robins (RCDMC), M. Errea (RCDMC), Aurelio Gonzales

Recorder: P. Robins, M. Errea

The meeting was intended to be held in hybrid form, both in-person and by Zoom conference, but Zoom did not function, so remote participants joined by conference call (J. Doud, A. Gonzales and J. Clarke (joined at 10:58))

Open Session: Director Jefferson called the meeting to Order at 10:22 am.

Public Comment: A. Gonzales, board applicant, introduced himself. He is a retired educator interested in community service, and sees areas of the RCD workplan—especially regarding outreach and education—that he would like the opportunity to help in any way he can. Director Jefferson asked for information on his prior service with LULAC – League of United Latin American citizens, for which Gonzales described his interest as being in scholarships and after school programs for kids, although he is not currently an active member. In general, he is very interested in education and minority opportunities in education. Before retiring, Gonzales served as a teacher or admin in most of the school districts in county (King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzalez, Salinas Unified HS District). His wife is also an educator.

Consent Items:

- *Approval of Resolution 22-12 to comply with AB 361 for remote meetings*
- *Approval of Draft Meeting Agenda*
- *Approval of Minutes from the June 23, 2022 Regular Board meeting*
- *Staff Activities Report for June 2022*

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

Reports

NRCS Report: no report.

Executive Director Report: Robins told Directors of recent discussions with the EDs of two neighboring RCDs regarding collaboration—Karminder Brown, the new ED of San Benito County, and Dina Iden of Loma Prieta RCD. He also spoke of new funding awards for 1) arundo control (US Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program, \$1.5M), 2) a \$20k augmentation and 1-year extension for NRCS forestry agreement, and 3) a new \$75k, 2-year agreement with NRCS for ag technical assistance (engineering, Spanish-language assistance, and outreach).

Robins also noted that Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program and arundo work has

begun, with schedules being reduced due to drought hastening onset of dormancy.

Director Reports: Director Plemmons noted that he would be attending the CARCD Quarterly board meeting the next Friday, and that CARCD ED Karen Buhr is leaving CARCD in August after having served there 12 years.

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 July 28, 2022. The accrual account balance on July 28, 2022 was \$232,924, with a balance of \$571,397 in the Chase Bank and County Treasury (including loans and advance payments), \$870,035 in liabilities, and \$531,562 due to the RCD as receivables from various grants and outstanding invoices. For comparison, the Accrual accounting balance for District Funds stood at \$244,068 on June 23, 2022.

Expenses: Errea presented the list of detailed expenses to be paid on July 28th, including bi-weekly salary through July 17th, one-time and recurring miscellaneous expenses, and reimbursement for expenses incurred during the months of June and July, totaling \$210,987.16.

Director Gularte moved to approve the June financial statements and the June and July expenses. Director Doud seconded the motion, and all voted to approve.

Review of New Contracts and modifications:

- Waterways Consulting, ICA 2020-04 modification #2 to extend to January 1, 2024 and sets a supplemental amount to the original agreement not-to-exceed \$54,322
- ALBA, ICA 2022-09, for an amount NTE \$83,339 to support water efficiency technical assistance activities among small-scale Spanish speaking farmers
- UC Santa Cruz, ICA 2022-10, for an amount NTE \$50,057.03 to support water efficiency technical assistance activities among small-scale Spanish speaking farmers
- Ecological Concerns, Inc., ICA 2022-11, for an amount NTE \$60,000 to remove iceplant to improve two sites of coastal dune habitat for various sensitive coastal plant and animal species on Fort Ord Dunes State Beach and Salinas River State Beach.

Board members confirmed they had no relationships or potential conflicts of interest with the contractors listed. After brief discussion of the different contracts, Director Plemmons moved to approve the new contacts with Director Doud seconding. There was no further discussion. All voted to approve.

New business

Introduction of Aurelio Gonzales, Board applicant: A. Gonzales thanked the Board again for inviting him to meet with them regarding his application. Robins noted particular interest in Gonzales' education background as a good fit for the Board as well as his ties to the Latino community and being bi-lingual.

Gonzales described how he learned about the RCD. He has a 20 acre farm on a slope near the Elkhorn School. He worked with A. Carter (RCD) and J. Flores (NRCS) to review his sediment pond capacity related to County runoff management requirements. They helped with increasing the pond's capacity and otherwise improving drainage management on the property and left him with a positive impression of the RCD.

Robins described the process for board appointment as being agendaized for consideration and vote at the next Regular meeting (August 18), after which, if approved, the request is sent on to the Board of Supervisors for their final approval. Gonzales requested that Robins give his phone number to any board member that might have more questions. Robins informed the board that he would follow up with his references.

Conflict of Interest Code: Robins reminded the board that the COI code needs to be updated every 2 years to keep up with any changes from the state. Robins indicated that he had reviewed the RCD's existing code along with County staff and they confirmed that there are no changes needed for this biennial review, so we are compliant for another two years.

Director Lipe asked about AB1234 biennial conflict of interest compliance status. Robins indicated that most directors are due to take the 2 hour online course as well as biennial Sexual Harassment Prevention training. Board members requested arrangement of a group training if possible.

Annual Work Plan for Executive Director:

Robins discussed his employee work plan that had been previewed a week before with the Executive Committee, making changes as needed – mostly adding a timeline for certain activities. He walked directors through a few points from the Plan:

- In partnership with the Groundwater Sustainability Agency and Salinas River RMU Association, there is interest in having the RCD exercise its power to form an Improvement District for flood prevention. Robins included investigation with those partners and the board regarding the viability and value of undertaking such an effort to help generate stable base funding for the Salinas River programs. Questions regarding funding and responsibility were noted, as well as need to document benefits, such as water savings.
- Robins asked for additional specific recommendations for keeping elected officials informed of RCDMC activities. Director Gularte recommended making sure County Supervisors are on the newsletter and general RCD mailing lists, and that we are linked with their social media. There was some discussion of working with neighboring RCDs to coordinate efforts. A director suggested making state officials outreach part of the CARCD annual conference as long as it's being held in Sacramento this year. Director Plemmons said he would share that with the CARCD Board at the next quarterly meeting.
- Robins will be developing a job description for an Program Assistant and transitioning tasks to them once hired – such tasks would include posting to social media and other non-field projects.
- Robins requested formations of an ad hoc business planning committee – the focus being fundraising, contacting donors and charitable giving organizations, and other base funding. Clarke, Gularte and Lipe volunteered to participate. The group will meet first in early August to review the business plan and discuss goals.
- Robins asked for confirmation from board members that the current timing of detailed meeting materials is acceptable (two days prior), for which most concurred, with comments that earlier is always appreciated.
- Robins included a task to ensure that all board members have tasks related to their skills and areas of interest.
- A major task for the new fiscal year will be to flesh out the updated Compensation Policy – he will work with E. Zefferman and will report to the Executive Committee as they progress.
- Robins is also tasked with formalizing and writing a 'standard operating procedures'

guide for RCD project management – His timeline is to complete the document this summer.

- Robins requested that Directors review Work plan on their own and provide feedback if possible.

Questions regarding the workplan:

Gularte proposed involvement with the National Ag Day for outreach in the state Capitol typically in March.

Robins intends to renew the quarterly supervisor tour meetings – starting in October if possible.

Announcements

Directors/ Robins

None.

11:41 P.M. Meeting Adjourned

Next Regular RCD meeting: Thursday, August 18th, 10am. Meeting will be held both in-person and by Zoom. The location will likely be at the American Ag Credit Office in Salinas. Gularte noted she will not be available.