

## MINUTES

### Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta Resource Conservation District

#### Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, July 8, 2021 at 4:00 PM

Truax Building  
41923 Second Street, Fourth Floor  
Temecula, CA 92590

#### I. PRELIMINARY FUNCTIONS

Call to Order, 4:00 p.m., meeting recorded by Rose Corona

Flag Salute

Roll Call/Establish a Quorum

**Directors Present:** Rose Corona (President), Lisa Battiato (Vice President), Newt Parkes (Secretary/Treasurer), Teri Biancardi (Director), Randy Feeney (Director)

**Directors Absent:** None

**Associate Directors Present:** Rick Neugebauer

**Associate Directors Absent:** None

**Office Manager:** Deborah Getty – Present

**Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCS):** Robert Hewitt – Absent

**District Counsel:** Melissa Cushman – Present

**Guest Speakers:** None

**Public Guests:** Andrea Mares – District Supervisor Chuck Washington's office.  
Merl Johnson – Water System Management - Member of the public.

#### **Approval of Agenda**

President Corona called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Director Battiato moved and Director Parkes seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 5-0.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Merl Johnson introduces himself as a water distribution operator in the Anza area. He notes that there are a couple of problems going on that he would like the Board to look into. First item being the nitrate levels due to the septic systems. Secondly, the activity with the cannabis growers that are leaving behind fertilizers and illegal pesticides. Mr. Johnson is looking for someone to look into the state program to check the properties with ground water wells adjacent to the illicit groves. President Corona asks Mr. Johnson to put his request in writing and submit to the office manager or to her directly so the Board has concise information and may discuss further.

## **II. CONSENT CALENDAR, CORRESPONDENCE & GENERAL INFORMATION**

President Corona called for a motion to approve the consent calendar, financials, and correspondence. Director Biancardi requests to pull the minutes, President Corona requests to leave them in. District Counsel confirms that a motion should be made. Director Biancardi makes a motion to pull the minutes and the motion dies for a lack of a second. President Corona calls for a motion to approve the consent calendar, financials, and correspondence. Director Battiato moved and President Corona seconded.

- Rose Corona – Aye
- Randy Feeney – Aye
- Newt Parkes – Aye
- Teri Biancardi – Nay
- Lisa Battiato - Aye

**Motion passed 4 - 1.**

## **III. ACTION ITEMS/ DISCUSSION CALENDAR**

### **Item 1: Indoor public setting mask policy and end of remote participation ending September 30, 2021.**

President Corona addresses the COVID-19 prevention requirements of the California Department of Public Health that has put in place for indoor public settings, including local board and commission meetings. Our counsel, the Riverside County Counsel's Office has advised that unvaccinated individuals are required to wear masks at these meetings of the RCD. Vaccinated persons are not required to wear masks but may choose to do so. It's completely up to the individual if you're vaccinated and you wish to wear a mask and if there are any further questions they can be addressed with Melissa Cushman. President Corona requests if Ms. Cushman would like to elaborate.

Ms. Cushman states that the only elaboration she would like to add at this time is that the Department of Public Health recommendations, they're just guidelines at this point. They have not been adopted by Cal/OSHA, so they're not actual requirements more just guidelines from the Department of Public Health. If there's any problem with people not wearing masks, she is happy to address anything related to that as well.

President Corona adds as advised by County Counsel, remote participation will be ending September 30, 2021. President Corona reads the notification stating to please be advised that all legislative bodies which are currently holding virtual meetings only must return to in-person meetings no later than September 30th. Of course, the legislative body may continue to offer members of the public to participate remotely. For members of the legislative, they may appear by teleconference under the Brown Act provisions that address teleconferencing. Ms. Cushman adds that it goes back to the requirements as they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Item 2: Conflict of Interest clarification.**

President Corona states that as there was a request for copies of all the Form 700's of all the Directors on file, it might be beneficial for Melissa Cushman to clarify for all what is involved with the Form 700 submission. Associate Director Nuegebauer asks to know who made the request and Director Biancardi volunteered that it was she who made the request. Ms. Cushman briefly states the following:

"As you're all aware, every public official and public employee who "makes or influences governmental decisions" is required to submit a statement of economic interest, which we usually just call the form 700 when entering office leaving office and on an annual basis, while holding office. The records of all the completed form 700s are kept by both the county and by Team RCD.

When completing the form 700 it's important to consider that there's two primary purposes of that form. The first is to inform the public about the officials' personal financial interests, to ensure that the officials are making decisions that are in the best interest of the public and not enhancing their personal finances through the decisions. Because purpose is to inform the public, obviously the information provided is entirely public information that's available to anyone upon requests. Well, whatever ownership interests you may have must be disclosed as they're requested on the form 700.

If you have concerns about using your personal address or telephone number, you can use a business address or telephone number on form 700, instead, as long as it's something that identifies you and you can be contacted at. That is the one part of it that you don't necessarily have to disclose your personal information on. The second purpose of the form 700 is just remind you as public officials of the potential for conflicts of interests so that you can abstain from participating in any governmental decision that's deemed a disqualifying conflict of interest.

Conflict of interest is basically disqualifying if it's foreseeable that the decision will have a financial impact on the official's personal finances or other financial interests. These would be things like ownership, interests in business, entities in real property, ownership interest and other types of assets, as well as income sources or gifts above a certain amount. Those can all create a disqualifying conflict of interest.”

Associate Director Nuegebauer asks Director Biancardi as to why she wanted to see the Form 700's and Director Biancardi responded as follows:

“I wanted to see it because it came up in a conversation about whether or not some associate directors, where were, excuse me let me back up a minute. Rose told me that there was a ruling, some years ago or they would advise some years ago that voting directors could not serve on the board at SAWA, that it had to be someone who was affiliated with team RCD, but not actually voting director.

That the reason for that was because there could be a conflict-of-interest code, a conflict of interest there. That seemed curious to me because I don't think things normally work like that. I went through our policy manual to look up our conflict-of-interest code and discovered that it was actually the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District conflict of interest code. It wasn't ours. I started asking questions about are we actually in compliance with the code, conflict of interest code and what does that entail and so Melissa and Rose were helpful enough to send me copies of that, the amended code which was in 2020 which did update to include associate directors as being included as being required to form a file from 700 so I asked to see them.” No motion necessary.

### **Item 3: Election of Officers:**

Director Battiato motions to nominate Rose Corona for President with no further nominations a motion is made to close the nominations by Director Parkes and Director Feeney seconds. Director Biancardi asks for a discussion in which she states that she believes it is important that maybe the Board consider rotating positions. It gives everyone an opportunity to learn more about the district and make contributions and keep things fresh. With no further discussion the Board moves to a roll call vote for Rose Corona as President.

- Rose Corona – Aye
- Randy Feeney – Aye
- Newt Parkes – Aye
- Teri Biancardi – Nay
- Lisa Battiato – Aye

**Motion passed 4 – 1**

Nominations are opened for Vice President. Director Parkes nominates Lisa Battiato and seconded by Director Biancardi. With no further nominations a motion is made to close the nominations by Director

Parkes and seconded by President Corona. With no discussion the Board moves to a roll call vote for Lisa Battiato as Vice President.

- Rose Corona – Aye
- Randy Feeney – Aye
- Newt Parkes – Aye
- Teri Biancardi – Aye
- Lisa Battiato – Aye

**Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0**

Nominations are opened for Secretary/President. Director Battiato nominates Newt Parkes and seconded by Director Feeney. With no further nominations a motion is made to close the nominations by President Corona and seconded by Director Battiato. With no discussion the Board moves to a roll call vote for Newt Parkes as Secretary/Treasurer.

- Rose Corona – Aye
- Randy Feeney – Aye
- Newt Parkes – Aye
- Teri Biancardi – Aye
- Lisa Battiato – Aye

**Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0**

**Item 4: Report and Update on NRCS activity and ongoing projects.** – No report provided as Bob Hewitt was not present.

**Item 5: Discussion and approval of proposed 2021/2022 Budget.**

General review and discussion of proposed budget by Director Parkes. With no questions, Director Biancardi moves to approve the 2021/2022 budget as presented, Director Feeney seconds. **Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0**

**Item 6: Discussion and potential approval of proposed Nigro & Nigro audit at a cost of not to exceed 1,750.00 plus \$250.00 to complete the State Controllers Report.**

President Corona explains that this audit is completed every three (3) years. Due to the potential high costs TEAM RCD is part of a pilot which is now becoming a template for the smaller districts. TEAM reports their financials to the county official's quarterly keeping audit costs down. With no further discussion, President Corona calls for a motion to approve the audit costs for Nigro & Nigro. Director Parkes moves and President Corona seconds. **Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0**

**Item 7: Discussion and potential approval of recommendations from sub-committee on Annual Work Plan.**

Associate Director Neugebauer reports that he, Director Parkes and Director Feeney met on June 15<sup>th</sup> & June 30<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following.

1. How to improve our Districts Area's Erosion and Sedimentation Conservation?
  - a. Contact the City of Murrieta and Temecula with regard to their CE, Need list of them and status

- b. Contact PW/ Parks and Rec Directors
- c. Go to City Council Meetings with BOD approvals as a Directive.
- d. Our Streambed Agreements will help us
- e. Timeline 120-180 days to implement contact with the Cities.
- f. Rick Neugebauer to contact City of Murrieta and City of Temecula

2. How to implement and restore clean water to those in Anza and surrounding area (due to Illegal Cannabis Growing)

- a. Teri Biancardi was assigned this area by the BOD.
- b. Work with F&W to map impact areas. What are F&W protocols for information?
- c. Locate Grant monies either Local, Fed or State, bring info back to BOD or President Rose.
- d. Timeline 90-120-day implementation of plan submit to Sub-committee review.
- e. Sub-Committee submit to BOD for approvals.

3. How to promote NRCS mulching program and work with Crop Swap and Root stock programs.

- a. Add information on our WEB site. Advertising block.
- b. Contact Farm Bureau members, via email, or personal contact from our TEAM Members
- c. Timeline once new WEB site is operational and approved hopefully 90 days.
- d. Request RCWD link to TEAM RCE web site, and email contacts

4. Research and Collaborate with Mission RCD regarding and its Board President Scott Murray, re AGRI-Ecology program.

- a. This needs to be a pilot program; we will need a Director to head this program once approved by Subcommittee and BOD.
- b. Prepare written plan, review draft with Annual Work Plan subcommittee
- c. Timeline approx 90-120 day to submit to Sub-committee.
- d. Submit to BOD for Final Approvals

5. Work with Chris Gray/ WRCOG to identify grant opportunities that would ensure potential short term and permanent funding for full time Staffing of TEAM RCD.

- a. President Rose and Lisa to meet with Chris to initially to start the conversation and direction.
- b. Timeline, initiation 120–180-day, implementation and or as required.

6. Expand our collaboration with the City of Lake Elsinore homeless taskforce.

- a. Also work of restoration and funding sources with the City of LE.
- b. Director Newt Parks to head up.
- c. Timeline 90 days to report back to Sub-committee.

7. Encourage and support SAWA in obtaining and or preparing grant applications for regional project that would include TEAM RCD

- a. Rick Neugebauer to provide liaison to BOD.
- b. Timeline 60 days provide report.

The sub-committee with AD Neugebauer as the liaison will provide an updated report within the next sixty (60) days. No motion necessary.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Item 1: Riverside County Farm Bureau Membership.**

President Corona reports that after speaking with Stephanie at Riverside Farm Bureau anyone is allowed to join at the following levels.

- Ag Customer - \$230.00 annually
- Associate Account (non Ag with an interest in farming) - \$85.00 annually

- Business wanting to support the program - \$230.00 annually
- Student – 25 years or younger - \$25.00 annually

No motion necessary.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

### **Item 1: Discussion and potential approval of collaboration with Mission RCD on their Agri-ecology program.**

President Corona reports that she spoke with Scott Murray and they are in the middle of their programs right now. Once they have ended they will be looking to get into the new season in fall and would keep us updated. In the meantime, we can promote them on our website and gather information and see how the programs evolves such as how TEAM RCD started CropSWAP and AIEP. No motion necessary.

### **Item 2: Update on Homeless Task Force.**

Director Parkes reports upon receiving the June reports from SAWA in addition to the two locations at San Gertrudis Channel there was some activity at the Temecula Creek Channel which is new. He has forwarded the information over to Mike Wooten for further follow up and is hoping to schedule a meeting with him in the coming months. In regards to Lake Elsinore they are just plugging along and providing statistical analysis. They have received numerous grants that have been acquired for the task force or by SWAG the social action group that is focused specifically on the homeless and trying to get them off the streets. They continue to meet monthly and the next meeting will be in person in which Director Parkes plans to attend. No motion necessary.

### **Item 3: Update and discussion on AEIP and CropSWAP reports.**

Director Battiato reports that she had the opportunity to go out on a couple of post audit walk-throughs with Lance of Mission RCD. There is availability of new avocado rootstock and it seems people are taking advantage of the upgrades. We are starting to see some completion audits in terms of our CropSWAPs. Luis will be replacing Lance at Mission RCD and has been very responsive. A meeting is scheduled with Mission RCD the end of July to review reporting and invoice submittals as well as communication to help streamline processes. No motion necessary.

### **Item 4: Update on Anza/Aguanga area.**

Director Biancardi reports that the rural communities group that she has been working with is really starting to gel. They have done some valuable visioning exercises to understand what people would like to see Anza turned into which is limited by the fact that no new wells are being approved until the tribal legislation is worked out and that is going all the way to Washington DC. The real issue for them is finding a fundable entity so they can apply for grants. They don't have anyone who is nonprofit solid enough, which is where TEAM RCD could be really useful. No motion necessary.

### **Item 5: Update and discussion of the TEAM RCD website progress.**

Deborah Getty reports that we met our goal and the website is live along with ease of use. She requests for the Board to review and provide any feedback. At first glance, well received by all with a professional appearance. Director Biancardi mentions a few items such as the mitigation and Earth day comments which were moved over from the previous site. Updates to be made.. No motion necessary

## **VI. ORAL/WRITTEN REPORTS**

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS**

None

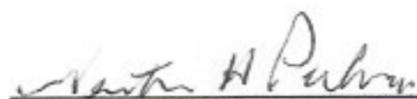
**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR REPORTS**

None

**VII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, President Corona calls for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Director Battiato moves and Director Feeney seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 5-0.** Meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.



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Secretary/Treasurer