

MINUTES

Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta Resource Conservation District

Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, July 9, 2020 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), Randy Feeney (Director), Lisa Battiato (Director), Stacy Kuhns (Director)

Directors Absent: Newt Parkes (Director)

Associate Directors Present: Rick Neugebauer

Associate Directors Absent: None

Office Manager: Deborah Getty – Present

District Counsel: Ward Simmons, Best, Best & Krieger – Absent

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

Guest Speakers: None

Public Guests: None

Approval of Agenda

President Corona made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Director Feeney seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 4-0.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

II. CONSENT CALENDAR, CORRESPONDENCE & GENERAL INFORMATION

President Corona made a motion to approve the consent calendar, financials, and correspondence. Director Feeney seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 4-0**

III. ACTION ITEMS/ DISCUSSION CALENDAR

Item 1: Discussion and review of letter sent to Board by Pam Nelson on June 15, 2020 regarding potential mitigation bank in the Watershed.

President Corona opened the discussion by reviewing the letter sent to the board by Pam Nelson dated June 15, 2020. Ms. Nelson had requested to be put on the agenda to discuss her letter in more detail however according to the Office Manager, Deborah Getty. Ms. Nelson had asked to attend the meeting and although there was e-mail correspondence sent to Ms. Nelson, there seemed to be some issues with her receiving e-mails from TEAM RCD. Since there appeared to be a problem, Ms Getty did reach out to her by phone and by text in order to clarify that she was welcome to come to the meeting and have her allotted time to speak on her letter. Ms Getty did speak to her directly and let her know her options for participation. She also offered for her to send in a summary of what she wanted to say which could be read to the board during the discussion of the agenda item and then the Board's sub-committee could review later and decide if it warranted being put on the next month's agenda for discussion should she choose not to attend. Unfortunately, Ms. Nelson decided not to attend and the e-mail with her summary arrived too late for the Board meeting so it could not be read until next meeting.

The President moved forward in discussing the agenda item. The President was asked to re-read Ms. Nelson's original letter of June 15, 2020 and TEAM RCD's response for the benefit of the Board. The Board was informed that Ms. Nelson stated that she did not receive the response (most likely due to the continuing e-mail issues) however, it was noted that it had been included in the Board Packet online on the TEAM RCD website on July 3, 2020 for review by the Board and the public along with Ms. Nelson's original letter.

The President then continued the discussion by offering the Board a response for the record to Ms. Nelson's letter, because she (the President) felt it important that she respond at a public meeting so the public and the new Board could hear information from both sides, and have all the facts in front of them if at any time there were questions regarding the comments made in the letter that the Board members may potentially need to respond to.

President Corona proceeded to address Ms. Nelson's letter and provided documentation and/or access to such documentation/information that exists in the records that substantiated her comments. All of this was outlined in a statement that was requested to be put in the record for public review.

In summary as to Ms. Nelson's preliminary questions, the President responded as follows.

1. TEAM RCD or its Board members never asked WRCOG to decline the grant and never stated that they were doing the needed work. What we did say was that there was already another group (IRWM) in the watershed doing this same work and therefore the proposal made another group duplicative.
2. The Board had found that not only were they not listed as a stakeholder in the proposal but many groups and organizations that were, had not been informed of the fact that they had been included in the proposal. Many of these organizations expressed opposition to the Board President regarding this proposal.
3. In response to Ms. Nelson's statement that AD Neugebauer said that TEAM RCD was lacking staff or resources, the President clarified that the statement was taken out of context. What AD Neugebauer was pointing out was that a mitigation bank already was being created by Rancho Water, that we do not tend to interfere or get into competition with sister agencies as a rule. Since organizations like big water districts have limitless staff and funds, it made no sense to have our organization try to compete on that level. The Board would prefer to spend what funds they have on many projects to help the community rather than spend years on one project that already was being handled in the community.
4. TEAM RCD offered assistance to the Meadowview project through offers to help manage funds, help find other grants that might be helpful in obtaining funds to complete the project and offering expertise. The Board did decline to give actual monetary assistance through their General Fund since they do not get tax based funds to support the District.

To close, the President gave a brief overview of the history of the former EMARCD and its lack of fiscal responsibility, accountability and capacity building. She explained how when the new Board and

District Counsel was installed in June 2015, the District worked to improve the state of its' inherited financial woes by implementing many cost saving measures. These actions saw the District's general account slowly but steadily built its' General fund up from around \$22,000 as of June, 2015 to almost \$200,000 in June of 2020. This was just the start of making the RCD a competent and well-functioning District. Those facts were confirmed by graphs showing the ending balance of the General account at the end of each fiscal year from 2008 to 2015 where the former Board had been in charge, then from June of 2015 to the present where a new Board was in place.

The Board members asked several questions about specific historical issues in regards to timelines for audits that were performed or not performed by the prior Board, documentation from CPA firms showing improper accounting and practices of the former Board, lack of yearly audit performance and mitigation and land purchases among other items which were briefly discussed. The President ended the discussion on this agenda item by letting all Board members and the public know that at any time if they needed any of the back-up documentation or facts as to her comments, she would be more than happy to provide them. At this point, she asked that her comments be submitted for the record and moved to the next agenda item.

Item 2: Discussion and potential approval of funding agreement for the Watershed Management Program for the Santa Margarita region.

General discussion and review of the funding agreement as presented. With no questions, President Corona made a motion to approve the funding agreement of the Watershed Management Program for the Santa Margarita region. Director Kuhns seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 4-0.**

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Item 1: Update on Homeless Task Force.

Director Parkes forwarded the following information via email and it was read to the Board. June monitoring reports have been requested and not yet received. Director Parkes attended the last Homeless Task Force meeting on June 25th and will be able to report to the Board at our next meeting on the status of the House of Siloam, at transitional homeless facility recently approved by the Lake Elsinore City Council. No motion necessary.

Item 2: Update and discussion on AEIP and CropSwap reports.

Director Battiato provided a summary of the questions that were asked of participants, results and conclusions. In summary, the main function or contribution what we can provide to the effort is to make sure we are getting the word out and make sure that were promoting how much water savings is actually occurring. There are a few things that Rancho Water can do, which include coming up with the schedule for those participating so they understand what steps need to be taken and the timing of those steps. An additional effort would be to get the word out on our website which has encouraged us to come up with some improvements that we would like to see so we may showcase these programs. No motion necessary.

Item 3: Update and discussion on CDFW cannabis program.

Director Kuhns reports that she has several messages into the AG Commissioner. President Corona reports she was contacted by Gary Warbeck. Director Kuhns explains that Gary is a member of a homeowner's group in Anza who is mobilizing a group to get control of the illegal and legal growers. The sheriff is going to try and take care of the illegal growers and there is concern in regards to the hemp growers and how it will impact the water usage. After general discussion President Corona recommends extending an invitation to Jeff Brandt who is in charge of the Cannabis division for Fish and Wildlife for the next meeting. No motion necessary.

Item 4: Update and discussion on Website.

Director Feeney reports that Director Battiato and Deborah Getty met on the website to review the administrative side of posting to the site. Director Battiato reports that during the meeting we discussed the platform the website was built on its capabilities. Best next steps were to reach out the Board members to find out the top three things each Board member would like to see. Then, map it out and present to the Board for additional input as we prepare for the potential awarding of the grant money for the website. President Corona mentions that an email was sent to the Board by Deborah Getty in error requesting a response by all as it relates to the website. In the future, Deborah will correspond separately with the Board members so even though it is informational a Board meeting is not conducted by email. No motion necessary.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1: Discussion and potential approval to appoint ad-hoc committee for hiring potential District Manager.

President Corona reports that Mandy Parkes from IERCD will help create a job description and be a part of an ad-hoc committee to work towards hopefully beginning the process of hiring an Executive Director. Once resumes come in the ad-hoc committee would review and interview potential candidates. President Corona, Director Neugebauer and Mandy Parkes to make up the ad-hoc committee with extending the invitation to Director Parkes at the next meeting.

VI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

VII. ORAL/WRITTEN REPORTS

NRCS

Bob Hewitt not present.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

President Corona reports that she received a call from Greer Ranch that the beaver habitat pond is now becoming a problem. James Law at SAWA has been contacted to take a look and provide a cost to clean the vegetation that needs to be removed.

No other Director Reports.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR REPORTS

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, President Corona made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Feeney seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 4-0.** Meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.


Secretary/Treasurer