

MINUTES

Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta Resource Conservation District

Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, November 10, 2022, 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), Newt Parkes (Secretary/Treasurer), Randy Feeney (Director), Pablo Bryant (Director), Teri Biancardi (Director)

Directors Absent: None

Associate Directors Present: Rick Neugebauer, Sebastian Valente

Associate Directors Absent: None

Office Manager: Darlene Gilbert – Present

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

District Counsel: Melissa Cushman – Absent

Guest Speakers: Scott Murray – Mission Resource Conservation District Director

Public Guests: None

Approval of Agenda

President Corona called for a motion to approve the agenda and minutes as presented. Director Feeney moved, and Director Bryant seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

II. ACTION ITEMS/ DISCUSSION CALENDAR

Item 1: Discussion and potential approval of going dark in December. President Corona reports that historically December is always a difficult time for all to attend a meeting and requests for a motion to go dark for the month of December. Director Feeney moved, and Director Parkes seconded. **Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.**

Item 2: Discussion and potential approval for Regional RCD meeting. President Corona revisits the postponing of the Regional RCD meeting from November 2022 to a later date. Typically, this meeting includes many of the surrounding RCD's and a presentation is made regarding something that will impact the region. General discussion regarding content that was provided in previous meetings was had. President Corona requests suggestions from the Board as well as recommends the meeting be held in February 2023 at Bailey's winery as there is no additional charge for the room use. Director Bryant suggests February 18th or 25th and President Corona will research speaker availability, food costs and venue availability for those dates and report back to the Board. No motion necessary.

Item 3: Discussion and approval to submit Annual Report for CDFW and pay appropriate fees. President Corona reviews the details in regard to the conservation easements being monitored. CDFW requires a fee on the flood control projects. That amount typically runs between \$3,500 and \$3,900 for the year. The report is typically completed right at the December deadline. President Corona requests a motion that she can sign the check and get them delivered to CDFW before the 31st of December to avoid having to pay next years increased fees. Director Feeney moved and Director Bryant seconded. General discussion – **Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.**

Item 4: Review of Annual Financial Audit. Director Parkes reports that audit is completed annually by Nigro and Nigro. They review accounting practices and how accurate they are. They evaluate our income statement and balance sheet, change in that position every year and give the values of the various investments we have. The good news is that, once again, it's clean and a good assessment that we received from them. Director Parkes touches on a few highlights of what transpired and what they made note of in the report. General discussion was had, and Director Parkes referred the Board to the 20-page report in the packet. No motion necessary.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Item 1: Update on Participation in the San Diego Agricultural Planning Program.

President Corona reports a zoom meeting was held earlier this week. RCWD is looking to expand their program into more of a regional program and looking for ways to share and potentially move into the San Diego area. Scott Murray adds that his takeaway from the meeting is this is a program that's established to reduce water consumption by agriculture, by improving basically the business status of farms. In San Diego County and here in Riverside County, we had a lot of growth planted in the 1970s because of a federal tax break that incentivized planting of those trees that are now 50 plus years old, and that's the economic lifetime of most trees. People are hanging on to some of those trees with declining yields and the water consumption doesn't go down with an old tree.

To improve the business of agriculture by helping incentivize the growers to change. Here, it started with the crop swap, but then it evolved into also root-stock swap. Avocado growers that are faced with old trees that are not resistant to root rot and salt can buy newer trees now that have a double graft. The root is resistant and they're more productive. Another way they can go is to increase the density and change the watering pattern. We need to keep agriculture alive, but we must partner with the changing supply of water. No motion necessary.

Item 2: Update on Participation in the Wildfire Workshop. Director Bryant gives some background on one of the jobs he does is to install microwave links across the county on high mountaintops to create a large public network that has sensors on it. These sensors are cameras, weather stations, seismology stations and water quality. They have found over the 20 years, they used to have a manned fire watch. Over the years, for whatever reason, those aren't manned anymore, and they fell into disrepair. Volunteers had rehabilitated and cameras have been installed. These cameras are helpful and Director

Bryant's team is looking to take it to the next level. Director Bryant donates his time to the non-profit called HPWREN or High Performance Wireless Research and Education Network. It is a public resource and maybe helpful in assisting with fires. President Corona adds that another main concern of the group is locating the fire to aid in evacuation of people and livestock. No motion necessary.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Item 1: Update on Flood Control projects. President Corona reports these projects are wrapping up the first week of December depending on the rain. We are waiting on one more check to come from Flood Control which has been delayed for about six months. No motion necessary.

Item 2: Update on Homeless Task Force.

Director Parkes reports there are two areas that continue to have homeless problems. That information is continually sent to Mike Wooten. Director Parkes has a voice mail into Mike Wooten to find out how they deal with or prioritize this information. In the latest homeless monitoring reports, a new camp was detected under Temecula Parkway when they started the VB channel removal. This location will be added to the monitoring list. Director Parkes attended the homeless task force meeting, and they are doing well with not a whole lot of change. The City of Fontana visited the Anchor due to its success. It will most likely be a model for other cities. As this was their last meeting of the year, there were updates from SWAG, Lake Elsinore mobile crisis team update and reporting on various grants. No motion necessary.

Item 3: SAWA Report. None – Associate Director Neugebauer reports that SAWA is dark this month. No motion necessary.

Item 4: Update and discussion on AEIP and CropSWAP reports.

Director Feeney reports that we have two pending CropSWAPs and nothing new on the water audits. No motion necessary.

Item 5: Update on Cal-Recycle grants and potential submission of applications and report on Anza/Aguanga area. – Director Biancardi reports there are no updates. No motion necessary.

V. GUEST SPEAKER:

President Corona introduces Scott Murray who is a Director for Mission RCD. Mr. Murray is working on a grant with Cal State Northridge on something that would definitely affect the wildfire issues that were discussed earlier. Mr. Murray adds that he has had the great pleasure to serve in the RCD role for 29 years. In his work, one part of what Mission RCD does is partner with organizations like TEAM RCD to accomplish projects.

Mr. Murray gave an in-depth discussion on a new varietal drought resistant plant that does not burn from South Africa which may be vital in fire prevention in Southern California. In collaboration with the Cal State Northridge team, Mr. Murray is working to test the plants fire resistance qualities in an experimental stage in an area called Chatsworth Lake Manor renewed for annual fire issues.

VII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, President Corona calls for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Director Parkes moved, and Director Bryant seconded. Motion passed unanimously 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

 Secretary/Treasurer