

MINUTES

Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta Resource Conservation District

Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

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), Teri Biancardi (Director), Pablo Bryant-(Director) Darlene Gilbert-Temporary Office Manager.

Directors Absent-None

Associate Directors Present: None

Associate Directors Absent: None

Office Manager: Darlene Gilbert-Present

Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCS)

District Counsel: Melissa Cushman-Absent

Guest Speakers: None

Public Guests: Sebastian Valente

Approval of Agenda

President Corona asks for a motion to approve the agenda to include the Consent Calendar, correspondence, financials and minutes as presented. Director Parkes seconded. With no further discussion, President Corona calls for a vote. Unanimous vote-5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS-NONE

II. ACTION ITEMS

Item 1: Nomination and election of officers for year 2022-2023- President Corona asked for nominations for the position of President. Director Parkes nominated Rose Corona. President Corona asked for any other nominations there were none. Director Bryant asked for discussion to learn the duties of the officers and their authority. After a back and forth regarding discussion, President Corona proceeded to explain the responsibilities of the President, Vice-President and the Secretary/Treasurer and although every member of the Board has an equal vote, not everyone has equal authority. Much like the government has a President, Vice-President etc. with those below the President with ultimate authority, then next in command takes that authority if the President isn't available and down the chain. TEAM RCD has a chain of command that runs similarly including the process of election that is done by majority vote of the Board for all the officer positions.

Director Parkes spoke about the fact that the President does far more than just running the meetings and creating agendas and that she basically is running the organization like a business and all the things that have to happen in the background in order for the organization to run smoothly. He informed the board that the President works with meeting the people who want to retain our services such as Flood Control, collaboration with other RCD's for our water audits and sharing services which also benefit ourselves and other RCD's along with speaking to non-profits and even members of City Councils. The President also monitors and coordinates all the monitoring and reporting done to CDFW and other agencies. He noted that the reason he nominated Ms. Corona was because she has more experience than the rest of the Board. President Corona went on to explain how TEAM RCD's structure is a little different than most because TEAM does not get tax funds to run the organization that it must be run on a fee-for-service basis. Therefore, at this time there aren't the funds to support an Executive Director who would normally take care of a lot of the responsibilities that the President now does but since we don't it is a bit of a hybrid position.

Director Bryant asked if the potential monies from the potential passage of legislation of Division 9 could be monies we could use toward that position and the President responded by saying yes and having the ability to do that would free up a lot of the Board members time and allow more to get accomplished. She also reminded the Board that the approach to most everything that is presented at the Board level is done with the idea that all of the members are volunteer and have other jobs and lives to tend to so much of what goes on the agenda keeps in mind the available time that the Board Directors have to get things accomplished.

With that, discussion was completed Director Parkes made a motion to close the nominations. Director Biancardi seconded. President called for a vote for those in favor. Unanimously approved-5-0.

The President moved on to the nominations of Secretary-Treasurer and nominated Newt Parkes . Randy Feeney seconded the motion. There were no further nominations so the President asked for a motion to close the nominations. Randy Feeney made the motion to close nominations. Teri Biancardi seconded it. No further discussion. Call for a vote. Unanimously approved 5-0.

The President then moved on to nominations for Vice President. She made the motion to nominate Randy Feeney who, she noted, had been beside herself and AD Neugebauer with the Board the longest. President Corona asked for further nominations. No new nominations. Newt Parkes made a motion to

close the nominations. Teri Biancardi seconded the motion. Call for a vote. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Item 2: Update on current and future projects with Cal-Recycle Grants- Director Biancardi proceeded to catch the Board up on the progress of the Cal-Recycle grants. Director Biancardi proceeded to discuss the handout of the flyer for the program saying that much of this needed just a few items like the phone number, e-mail for callbacks and perhaps a boundary map would also be good to have on the flyer. She then asked for ideas and suggestions to improve the program. She also included a list of names of people that she had been in contact with who may be able to help get the word out about the program and said that she even had the County Code Enforcement that is willing to post the information on their website in order to hit a broader group of people and has already posted the fact sheet on their website that was provided by Cal-Recycle. President Corona asked if Director Biancardi could give the Board about a week to come up with additional ideas that might help the program and she thought that a good idea. President Corona was wondering how TEAM could get that information out to the ag community at a low cost besides putting it on our website. Another Director mentioned Facebook and Instagram and it was said that Facebook doesn't cost anything. President also suggested that when TEAM has their ducks all in a row for the program, that Director Biancardi ask Bill Donohue who is the President of the Sage Townhall if she could speak to this at one of their meetings. Guest Sebastian Valente also suggested to go to the Board of Realtors local in Murrieta and they have a great website that goes to everyone and they have booster banners for programs such as these that might be helpful.

Director Biancardi continued to note that Cal-Recycle has a lot of grant money but much of it depends upon how many applicants they get in each round. The homeowner has to apply and then Director Biancardi would do the follow through. The question did arise as to whether the property owner on any of these was required to put in funds at all or was there some kind of required match. Director Biancardi did inform the Board about the previous grant that TEAM almost received however the owner of the property backed out at the last moment. Going forward the Board wanted to know how much the landowner would be required to pitch in if the grant was accepted. Director Biancardi also walked the Board through the process, how the property qualifies for agricultural zoning and what if anything the property owner may have to put in monetarily. The last item Director Biancardi is going to find out and report back at the next meeting.

Item 3-Discussion and potential approval of 2022-2023 Budget-Newt Parkes- Director Parkes presented to the Board the 2022-2023 Budget for TEAM RCD that needed submission to the County by July 2022. He discussed the expenses and income and explained that the total income that the Board shows this year of \$93,474 is 17.4% higher than the income that was in the budget from last year. The total expenses that we're showing is 5.1% greater than the budget presented last year. However the real good news is that the net income that we show is 28% higher than what we showed last year. He noted that we are getting pretty efficient with the expenses and that the Crop Swap, Water Audits and Rootstock income has increased this year so therefore the numbers have increased. Director Biancardi asked who did the Water Audits and the President explained the collaboration with Mission RCD and how the program works. She also asked if these water audits that the NRCS performed. President Corona noted that NRCS would do similar audits but they did not do them within the area that the Rancho Water District covers because it is basically the same program. NRCS audit programs covers much of what is outside the Rancho Water District area.

The President asked for a motion. Director Feeney made a motion to approve the budget. Seconded by Director Corona. No further discussion. Unanimously approved 5-0.

Item 3-Discussion and potential approval of Annual dues to the CARCD. – President Corona explained that the CARCD charges their annual fees based on the size of the District's expenses for the year. So, the District will get charged based on 2% of their expenses. In this case, TEAM RCD would be paying \$778.00 this year. She encouraged the value of CARCD and asked for discussion. Positive feedback for CARCD was given and a motion was made to pay the annual fee of \$778.00 by Randy Feeney, seconded by Director Biancardi. With no further discussion, call for a vote. Unanimously passed 5-0

NEW BUSINESS

Item 1: Report and overview of SALC (Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation) Grants – Director Biancardi reported that she had spoken to a Chandra Richards who is the liaison for the SALC grant for Southern California. It is called SALC which is administrated by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Agency. What the grant is trying to achieve is multiple benefit objectives of preserving agricultural land, which a lot of it is being turned over to development and also meet some of the states goals because agricultural land tends to emit less carbon than urban land.

Director Biancardi also saw this as an opportunity under the capacity-building portion of the grant to potentially hire an Executive Director or some staff to do not only the work of the grant but other work for the District. President Corona asked if the grant monies could only be used for work under this specific grant and not for other work that the District was working on (i.e. water audits, crop swap, administrative work for the Board etc.) because it was her understanding that grant monies could only be used for the grant project in which the monies were given for and that would not include other projects or other work that the District was doing. That was something that still needed to be determined. Director Biancardi also said that Ms. Richards would also help to write the grant.

AD Neugebauer noted that if the Board were to talk about an Executive Director position that historically that has always been a full time job and that if this position would only take a few hours a week would it be justified and therefore perhaps the Board would have to clarify exactly what that role would be and the responsibilities entailed.

President Corona noted that she would like to know more about the project than the information presented and although the information reads well, she suggested that since the Board exists in a large agricultural community she could speak to the ag side of this if the Board wanted her to. She went on to explain that as a farmer herself, that most ranchers and farmers work very hard and go as long as they can economically continue to farm. When it gets too expensive to farm, the farmer or rancher has to make a decision. He/She can put it into conservation if they choose or more than likely most farmers will sell out for the highest and best price, whether that be for real estate, development or an amusement park. President Corona said that she cannot speak for every farmer but a lot of the reasons besides soaring water prices, and death taxes is the aging out of the American farmer and although there is the option of putting your land in conservation, President Corona did not feel that there would be enough farmers or ranchers in Riverside County that would be open to participating in this program. President Corona wanted to be clear that she wasn't saying this was not a good project but could not see how to justify taking \$100,000 to hire a staff person or Director that would only work a few hours a week to try an gain interest from farmers and ranchers who probably not going to be interested in the project and

how does the Board justify that. Director Parkes noted that we would have to stipulate what the person would do if we were granted the money and he assumed we couldn't wait until after the grant was awarded to tell them what that staff person would do. Director Biancardi noted that she would hate to presuppose that no one in the County would be interested. President Corona noted that she didn't say no one would be interested but had a good feeling that a good majority would not. She gave an example of someone she knew that might be interested but his case was one where he ran cattle because he couldn't grow a thing on his ranch. But he also lived in Wyoming. Real estate prices are much higher here than in Wyoming. AD Neugebauer also suggested that many might look at this as a land grab and is there viability to a conserving their land in an easement. But exactly where is that getting back to our general location. President Corona said that this grant was not to be misconstrued with the Williamson Act which is about protecting ag land for a specific amount of time. Director Biancardi said to participate as a landowner in the SALC grant, you would have to have at least 100 acres. Director Corona asked who has to come up with the money for the easements (meaning the endowments to keep them in perpetuity) and the answer is the RCD does although that would be through the acquisition arm of the Grant. The farmer gets 75% of the monies and the RCD or applicable agency who did the acquisition would have to come up with the endowment to keep the easement in perpetuity which would take more money than the District has. President Corona offered to take unofficial poll test at Riverside County Farm Bureau and get back to the Board.

Director Biancardi felt the Board was putting the cart before the horse and that she was only focusing on the capacity building. The planning and acquisition stages were well down the road and if the Board even decided at any time, they could bail out. Some other questions were asked including the tax advantages to the farmer if they put their land in the SALC program. The Board eventually decided that there were many questions that needed answering and the President asked Director Biancardi to get a conference call with Ms. Richards so some of these answers could be provided to the Board and if a Special meeting was necessary to be called due to the short timeline, President Corona would be willing to do that but not until more information could be provided to the Board and a draft grant application was provided for the Board to vote on. Director Biancardi noted that time is of the essence and understandably noted that since it does take a lot of time to do these things that she was not prepared to invest a lot of time and energy if she did not feel there was a lot of support at from the Board. It was agreed that a meeting would be made with Ms Richards to get more information before going forward. No motion necessary.

Item 2: Potential Discussion and approval of Annual Flood Control Projects- President Corona provided spreadsheets for all members of the next year projections of the budgets for all Flood Control projects for the year 2022-23 to include the VV Channel by the Temecula Hospital. She noted that after the last meeting that Flood Control had called and was concerned about being able to reach the numbers recommended which at that time included the Murrieta Creek projects. President Corona also cleared up a misunderstanding from the last meeting which caused some confusion in the locations of cleanups for the Santa Margarita project. The Board had understood that the area between Rancho California Road and Winchester had been turned back to Flood Control from Army Corps however, this was not the portion that had been turned back to Flood, but the area south of Rancho California Road was the location that had been turned back. Therefore, there was still a waiting period for the area between Rancho California Road and Winchester where most of the work needs to be addressed. Flood decided that at this time they did not want to include that in their project costs with TEAM. As well there were

concerns about the existing contract which stated that the contract had a cap of \$400,000 and therefore would need to be re-negotiated at the end of the contract term which was next year. Therefore, TEAM has submitted a budget that keeps us under the cap and still provides us with another project. With that said, President Corona moved to accept the budget of \$399,982.05 and the authority to sign any and all paperwork to extend the contract into the final year. Seconded by Randy Feeney. With no further discussion, motion passed unanimously 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Item 1: Update on Homeless Monitoring- Director Parkes proceeded to inform the Board on the monthly Homeless Monitoring. He mentioned that there are three sites that continue to be of issue which continue to all be in Temecula. One, the Tualota Creek III seems to be devoid of any activity and has been for some time. While Temecula Creek AD159 and Sta Gertrudis seem to have a bunch of activity. He said they are beginning to see some cleanup happening which is a good thing but it continues to be a fairly involved process and we have no enforcement responsibilities. Only reporting so we're hoping that is helping with those enforcement agencies that are involved. Director Parkes noted that there still is no replacement for Nicole Daily but that the Task Force is continuing their street outreach activities and SWAG is looking at how they are going to move forward without Nicole and who will be taking over the various responsibilities.

Item 2: SAWA Update- A.D. Neugebauer said there was one exciting piece of news that the Representative from the Orange County Water Authority announced for the first time recorded there is a nest of bald eagles in the Prado Basin and while AD Neugebauer also said that he had spotted a bald eagle flying over the Glen Oaks area.

Item 3: Crop/Swap and AIEP Program Report- Director Feeney noted that there was a bit of problems with getting appointments made and that in addition the server for e-mails for TEAM RCD went down so it had to be fixed. So there were about 25 people that fell through the cracks and so a new system was created between RCWD , TEAM and Mission to get the appointments scheduled and to streamline things. Things are now back on track and most all the people missed except for one have appointments and Rancho is now having all applicants sign digitally on their website before scheduling appointments with Mission.

Item 4: Report on Flood control Santa Mararita Outreach Program-Director Bryant stated that he had been tasked with following up with the cleanup initiative through Flood Control and Darci Kuenzi. Flood Control has agreed to give us a check for \$5300.00 which TEAM RCD should receive within the next couple of weeks and Director Bryant is looking to potentially move the clean up to October sometime. He was advised to call James Law at SAWA and see if another date would work than what was originally scheduled. He also said that it was suggested that SAWA do an initial sweep to remove the worst things in the clean up which may make it a little bit more easy for the public when and if they come to help clean up. Once Director Bryant has the dates, he will complete the flyer and bring it to the Board for approval.

Item 5: Report on Anza/Aguanga Area- Director Biancardi had nothing to report.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None reported.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items, President Corona mad a motion to adjourn. Director Feeney made the motion. Director Biancardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting ended at 5:22 p.m.

Kevin M. Carlson

8/11/22

Secretary/Treasurer-Date