

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES**Date: Thursday November 21st, 2019****Time: 9:00 AM****Location:** 202 Mira Loma Dr., Klamath Conference Room, Oroville, CA 95965

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER** – Dave Lee, President
- 2) **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** – Dave Lee, President. Also present: Directors John Christofferson, Colleen Hatfield, and Allen Harthorn. Staff Shepard Smith, Tim Keeseey, Thad Walker, Wolfy Rougle, Amanda Chaney. Visitors/Partners Carrie Wendt, Dan Taverner, and Mike Crump.
- 3) **REVISIONS TO AGENDA** (only emergency situations requiring the need to take immediate
 - i) actions may be added as action items pursuant to Gov. code 549954.2(b))
- 4) **PUBLIC COMMENT (on non-action items)**
 - (1) (3 min. limit per speaker/topic, 15 minutes/person/meeting total)
 - (2) *Public comment is encouraged. Any member of the public may address the Board with any comment related to the Resource Conservation District's areas of concern. However, no action can be taken by the Board on such items at this current meeting. The Board may direct staff to agendize such items for consideration at a future meeting.*
 - (3) **Please note that all action items will have time set aside for public comment prior to the vote occurring. After a motion is made and seconded by two BCRCD Directors, the Chair will first ask for any further discussion from the Directors and Associate Directors and then Chair will open up the item for brief public comment limited to 2 minutes/person. After the public comment period closes a vote will be held.*
- 5) **ACTION ITEMS** – Dave Lee, President
 - a) Review and approval of the minutes of the Regular meeting held October 17th, 2019 – John moved, Allen seconded, motion passed
 - b) Review and Approve Outstanding Bills – Allen suggested switching our DigitalPath subscription to an annual fee rather than monthly, which might save about 16%. Board agreed to look into this. Allen motioned to pay the outstanding bills, John seconded, motion passed.
 - c) Audit – RFP and 2019/2020 Budget – Director Hatfield – John met with County CAO Shari McCracken, who recommended he speak with Graciola Gutierrez. Gutierrez recommended BCRCD reach out to some additional auditor candidates, including the recently-retired former chair of the CSU Accounting dept (who declined the opportunity) and two others, one of whom indicated he might be willing to submit a bid in January, although he had seen and declined the initial RFP. Graciola indicated to John that rules allow her role to waive 5 years of audits but not 6. John says Graciola told him, “We will get you an audit, even if the County has to join in.” For her part, Shari says she would be willing to take a proposal to the BOS to fund part of the audit if BCRCD can secure match from other sources. Mike Crump offered to speak to John Clark about the matter, and Thad and Colleen proposed approaching LAFCo.

- d) Bookkeeper position – Director Hatfield circulated two proposals, one from Heather’s Bookkeeping and Tax Service, one from Kathleen Altenburg, CPA. Colleen recommended accepting the lower bid from Heather. While not a CPA, Heather has ample experience with T-Sheets and comes from the trades (construction etc) which could bring needed know-how about topics such as procurement and prevailing wage. John moved the Board accept Heather’s proposal, starting with a 3-month trial period and then re-evaluating in February or March.
- e) Resolution for CAL FIRE CCI Grant – Wolfy provided a narrative and draft budget, as well as a draft liability explainer, for her proposal to fulfill a DOC grant deliverable by applying for CAL FIRE funds to support a BCRCD-coordinated Prescribed Burn Association. Wolfy asked for additional ways to support VFDs and other feedback. Allen suggested adding a chipper to the grant but it is unclear where to store it or how to transport it. Board asked about liability; Wolfy responded that PBAs are not meant to assume or reduce liability and that the landowner always lights the match and assumes responsibility for the burn. The PBA just provides a way to coordinate volunteer labor, apply for grants, and borrow equipment (which it is always the landowner’s responsibility to check before using). The Board asked about maintenance of equipment. Wolfy agreed that adding some funds for maintenance, particularly of radios, would be smart esp. since it is a 4-year grant. Tim pointed out that some RCDs have equipment they lend out such as a no-till drill, where the borrower puts down a deposit and if the equipment is not returned in perfect shape, some or all of that deposit is retained by RCD and used to maintain the equipment. Colleen made a motion that Dave sign the resolution and the Watershed Coordinator or a designee be empowered to sign the final application and other documents, with Board oversight. Allen seconded, motion passed.
- f) State Parks RFP Approval – Still don’t have a signed agreement from State Parks.
- g) Needs for CAL FIRE existing contract – Botanical/monitoring contractors – Wolfy explained that BCRCD has \$180,000 left on a fee-for-services contract with CAL FIRE and that CAL FIRE wants to use up those hours. However, to do so BCRCD needs to retain additional professionals. John moved Wolfy develop a job description and solicit proposals from botanists, ideally those who also have extra skills, and spend up to \$350 advertising the position, Allen seconded, motion passed. Position could be contractor or staff. Wolfy also promised to confirm whether a forestry tech with the CAL FIRE arch survey training could perform the archaeology for these VMP contracts. **(Update: Yes, with a CAL FIRE archaeologist as final supervisor.)**
- h) SNC Grant for NEPA in Concow area – Approve request for advance – Wolfy had prepared a request for \$32,000 advance on the \$64,000 grant. This request had already been positively reviewed by Lynn Campbell. John moved to sign and submit the advance request and to set up an interest-bearing account that complies with SNC terms. Motion passed.
- i) Letter of support for Fire Safe Council – John moved, Colleen seconded that Board sign the letters. Motion passed.
- j) City of Chico upper park road agreement draft – Still waiting on it
- k) City of Chico PSA – Still waiting on it
- l) Update from state conference. – Director Hatfield – Pacific Policy Group, CARCD’s lobbyist, is promoting baseline funding for RCDs. This is a critical need, the Legislature is starting to listen, and a survey will be forthcoming soon to gather RCDs’ input on what would be a reasonable amount for baseline funding and how we would justify it. Dave suggested that when this survey comes out, Board may want to call a special meeting to discuss this important and potentially time-consuming subject.

Division 9 of the Public Resources Code is up for revision. This revision may become the task of the CA Special Districts association.

Pacific Policy Group is also trying to secure advance payments for grants as a statewide standard.

Other news: CA NRCS revised its MOU with RCDs, it’s kind of a handshake agreement that spells out the terms of our partnership with NRCS, it’s currently in DC being reviewed and CA RCDs are looking forward to reviewing it. NACD also has \$10M in grants forthcoming, we may be able to apply for this; Prop 68 has \$8.5M for riparian/ag corridor projects that can ONLY go to RCDs. However, with Prop 68 there may be restrictions forcing an RCD to pay

contractors *before* asking for reimbursement – a serious cash flow issue we need to steer around. Finally, we'll start hearing a lot more about DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) from CARCD. Some DEI initiatives may have funding attached. The goal of DEI initiatives is to make RCDs more representative of their constituents, as well as more effective, relevant, excellent, and visible.

Staff added that Director Hatfield was honored as CARCD's "Director Of The Year" for 2019.

- m) Line of credit – Director Hatfield – Right now, for every dollar in our bank acct we have almost \$2 in outstanding invoices. Colleen stated that a line of credit is likely the best strategy for our RCD. Experienced DOC staff agree with her. Wolfy researched various line of credit options that are cheaper than the original Rabobank (now Mechanics Bank) option RCD had previously investigated. All the options will cost us money (if we use them), but less money than being stuck without access to credit when we need it. It is better to have a line of credit set up so it can be used quickly when it is needed, rather than waiting until it is a critical issue. Colleen strongly recommended Board decide on a line of credit option at December meeting and strive to implement the selected option by the 1st of the year. **Placed on agenda for December.**
- n) Approval of Section 4 of Policy and Procedure Manual – Director Christofferson – This section discusses ethics training (which we already do); board compensation (which does not apply to us since our board isn't compensated); reimbursement policy (John attached a draft sample request for reimbursement form for staff and Directors to look over). John recommended Board adopt the revised Section 4; motion passed.

Staff and the board offered suggestions for John's draft sample request for reimbursement form. (A) Staff requested a section specifically for requesting mileage reimbursement. (B) Staff requested a column where we can write in the Project associated with that reimbursement.

Allen mentioned it would be good practice to start keeping track of miles Board members travel and hours Board members spend on RCD business – not so that they will be reimbursed, because they won't, but simply to show the volume of volunteer time that goes into supporting the RCD. This volunteer time can be used as match toward certain grants.

To comply with Section 4, RCD now needs to designate a Secretary and a Vice-Chair. Board Packet needs to be printed out monthly and put into binder, as well as stored on Drive. John will serve as Secretary. As of today, Nov. 21st, 2019, position of Vice-Chair will shift from Colleen to Allen. However, for those projects on which Colleen is already a duly authorized signer, Board agreed she will continue to be able to sign invoices etc. as needed.

- o) Appointment of Associate Directors – Board accepted for consideration Mike Crump's application to be an Associate Director. Board will formally approve or reject this application in closed session (see below).
- p) Next meeting date December 19th, 2019 at 202 Mira Loma Drive Oroville at 9:00am.

6) RCD PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

- a) Update – Thad Walker – Nothing to mention other than what was mentioned in the Board packet; Thad and Shepard were up in Granite Basin last week and finished up the frog/stream surveys.
- b) Update – Tim Keesey – Tim is working with Thad to transfer the North County Roads project to Thad because Thad is the trails and roads expert. Thad had a meeting this week with Radley Ott to revise the RFP for this project to a time-and-materials format, hoping for more competitive proposals. BCCER – Have not secured an archaeologist yet; for fire modeling, contractor has switched from Terra Fuego (which may be dissolving as an organization?) to Deer Creek Resources (which is only growing). EFRP- Tim has requested FSA double the initially proposed payment rates to meet the standard that "Financial assistance levels **must** be set based on the minimum incentive needed to encourage producer participation and solve the problem." (EFRP Handbook, p. 1-83, emphasis in original). Also, FSA reversed its earlier statement that small

residential lots with some forest could be eligible for the program. RCD will try to advocate for these affected landowners as much as possible; for those who can't qualify, RD may have a "home improvement/repairs grant and loan" program that can help them. Also, FSA has stated each project needs maps as part of a forest management plan including NEPA and arch review. Tim can perform the arch work IF the landowner has merchantable timber that will trigger a CEQA CatEx under the Forest Practice Act. Most parcels do have merchantable timber, except lower Pentz Rd area (oak woodlands only) and Concow area (where trees were vaporized). We currently have 90 applicants but over 2 months, Tim has been able to complete only 28 site visits. Some of those 90 will be eliminated under the new exclusion for residential parcels. Staff observed the RCD could be put in an unfortunate position by being the face of a program that has experienced so many reversals and drastic changes in who qualifies – changes which were beyond RCD's control. Important to keep following up on those people with smaller, now-excluded parcels to try our utmost to get them the help they need. Parcels that qualify must be rural and >1 acre. (**Update: RCD has been directed to prioritize parcels >5 acres.**) Also, project must be ranked in priority from most productive timberland to least (even though it's a noncompetitive program).

- c) Update – Wolfy Rouble – Not much to report beyond what is in packet; attended City of Chico Natural Resources Committee meeting last night in support of Linda Herman; VFMP agenda item actually went over better than all other agenda items, with positive comments from Mechoopda Tribe Rouble had reached out to in advance.
- d) Update – Amanda Chaney – Organized a SWEEP workshop no one came to, but was able to show that the deliverable of holding a workshop had been completed. SWEEP application deadline is 12/19. All her hours are currently going to engineering to try and use up all the NACD contract hours before end of month. Dan and Amanda need to talk about recruiting growers to enroll in SWEEP because it is time-sensitive.
- e) Update – Terry Adelsbach – Still getting up to speed; reported last week's meeting with Oakland EIR consultants and City was very productive.
- f) Funding opportunities – nothing to add
- g) Other Projects – **Items for next meeting agenda: Review audit line item in BCRCD budget overhead. Revisit fee-for-service rates.**

7) PARTNERS' REPORTS (5 minute limit per group)

- a) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – Engineer position will be re-flown as an engineering tech position. Thad asked if Tony Sunseri had considered filling the position through the RCD, which has already made an investment in an engineering tech through Amanda, rather than hiring an entirely new federal employee for whom there may not even be sufficient workload? Dan responded that no, this hadn't been considered yet; he sees Amanda as key to follow up on existing contracts but also believes a new engineering tech would be important for increasing the workload (growing the pool of contracts). Thad and Dan agreed that further pursuing the RCD-NRCS partnership, esp with NRCS state and federal direction to do more with partners, could be a sustainable way to continue filling engineering needs.

Dagoberto's Soil Conservationist position closed on Friday so Oroville FO should soon get a panel of candidates to review!

Local Work Group meeting – Used to happen each year to set EQIP program priorities. Worked better back when Oroville FO was given an annual EQIP authorization (\$ amount) we could work off of, and there hasn't been one of these meetings in a while, but there should be another one next year. Also next year, we have a new planning tool coming online, called Cart, which replaces Toolkit. The new tool is likely to have bugs and bring delays. There's a set of consplanning trainings online in the AgLearn program which can train and certify the next generation of conservation planners. Tim K. is signed up for CART training Jan 14-16, 2020.

- b) Butte County departments
- c) Community groups and agencies
 - FOBC-** Submitted CDFW grant for developing fire recovery guidance for Butte Crk Cyn residents including ecological restoration assistance. Also submitting a Prop 68 grant for restoration of Butte Creek Ecol. Preserve and about 300 adjacent acres, to resolve issue of extensive tailing piles left over from mining era, restore functional fluvial morphology and fire-resilient vegetation, as well as improve groundwater recharge capacity of lower floodplain. Working with a consultant out of SF called FlowWest.
 - Point Blue, Carrie Wendt** – Received TA grant for Healthy Soils program from CDFA – if you know growers interested in applying for that program, send them to Carrie!

8) **CLOSED SESSION – Directors only**

- a) Continuing Personnel Discussion. The Board accepted Mike Crump as an Associate Director. Welcome, Mike.
- b) Discussion – Litigation

9) **BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS**

- a) Butte County RCD Directors and Associate Directors are welcome to report

10) **ADJOURNMENT**

***NOTE:** The Butte County Resources Conservation District (BCRCD) distributes its Board meeting agendas electronically at least 24 hours in advance of meetings. If you would like to be added to, or removed from, the email list, please notify the Butte County RCD at (530) 534-0112, ext. 122 or by email to: bcrd@carcd.org. The BCRCD also publicly posts notice and agenda of meetings 72 hours in advance of meetings at the Butte County RCD office located at 150 Chuck Yeager Way, Suite A, Oroville, CA. **Reasonable Accommodations:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Butte County RCD Manager at (530) 534-0112, ext. 122.*

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