



Minutes of the Board Meeting

January 28, 2021

Meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

- 1. Call to order, Determination of a Quorum, Introductions:** Board Chair Abelli-Amen called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

Directors Present: Jennifer Kuszmar, Ron Rolleri, John Nagle, Bruce Abelli-Amen, Ariana Reguzzoni

Associate Directors Present: Beth Bruzzone, Dennis Murphy

Staff Present: Valerie Quinto, Adrienne Pettit, Shannon Drew, Christine Kuehn

Others Present: Chris Howington (NRCS), Liz Lopez (public - works at Sequoia Ecological Consulting)

- 2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda:** No changes.
- 3. Consent Calendar:** Approval of January Board meeting agenda, December Board meeting minutes, October & November Monthly Transactions for Board Review, and October & November Financial Reports. Board Chair Abelli-Amen stepped away during this item and Vice Chair Nagle acted as chair during the item in his absence. Motion to approve consent calendar M: Kuszmar, 2nd: Rolleri. Motion Passed, 4 ayes (Abelli-Amen absent).

- 4. Public Comment:** None.

5. Information Items

NRCS Report. NRCS soil conservationist Chris Howington provided an NRCS Report. There is a job opening for an entry-level forestry position at NRCS Petaluma. Jeff and Drew are filtering through applications and conducting interviews for an expedited hiring process. EQIP update: March 3 will be the deadline when NRCS will submit EQIP applications for a funding determination. A second round of EQIP applications will be looked at after that. The contract obligation period is occurring now for the Emergency Post Fire EQIP applications.

6. Action Items

- A. Election of Chair and Vice Chair.** The Board discussed the reelection of Board Chair Bruce Abelli-Amen to the position of Board Chair, as well as the reelection of Vice Board Chair John Nagle to the position of Vice Board Chair. Motion to elect Bruce Abelli-Amen as Board Chair and John Nagle as Board Vice Chair M: Rolleri, 2nd: Kuszmar. Motion passed, 5 ayes.
- B. Acceptance of FY20-21 Q2 Staff Report.** Valerie presented the Staff Report. The board asked questions, and there was brief discussion of post-project monitoring and maintenance. Motion to accept the report M: Rolleri, 2nd: Nagle. Motion passed, 5 ayes.

- C. Approval of mid-year budget revision for FY20-21.** Director of Finance Adrienne Pettit presented this item. Adrienne summarized the need for various budget revisions related to causes like recent administrative staff hiring, education program changes during the pandemic, and the timing of various intergovernmental grants. An increased use of assigned fund balance has also occurred. Motion to approve revision M: Nagle, 2nd: Kuszmar. Motion passed, 5 ayes.
- D. Approval of updates to Emergency Personnel Manual Addendum.** Adrienne Pettit gave a history of the disaster payment that with no active federal emergency declaration, such payments are subject to income tax. The RCD will extend this payment through March 31, though no longer on a tax-free basis until an active emergency declaration for COVID-19 can be confirmed. Emergency Paid Sick Leave will continue to be available to staff through March 31, 2021, for those who have not the hours available to them. The Board asked questions which Adrienne Pettit and Valerie Quinto responded to. Motion to approve the updates to the Emergency Addendum and delete the sentence which states an expiration date for when the authority of the Executive Committee can be invoked to approve further necessary updates to this section M: Kuszmar, 2nd: Rolleri. Motion passed, 5 ayes.
- E. Approval of updates to Personnel Manual.** Adrienne Pettit presented this item. There are new updates to the types of leave that can be used by employees under certain circumstances, including qualifying military events. Updates to crime victims leave section. The board asked questions and discussed. Motion to approve updates M: Nagle, 2nd: Rolleri, Motion passed, 5 ayes.
- F. Adoption of Resolution No. 2021-004 authorizing an application to the Bureau of Reclamation's Water Smart Grant Program.** Valerie Quinto presented this item. The grant would last for two years and would be used to coordinate stakeholders to set watershed conservation priorities and address significant forest health concerns in the Gualala River Watershed and the Coastal Drainages west of it. The partnership would draw on the existing knowledge and connections of the Gualala Watershed Council. The grant would provide funding to support the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians in participating in this council, as well as financial support to enlist the help of a private forester in the area. The Board asked questions and discussed. Deliverables are to set up a group of people who will collaborate together in the future once the grant is over, and to make a watershed priorities plan. Motion to authorize M: Nagle, 2nd: Rolleri, Motion passed, 5 ayes.
- G. Consider support of Senate Bill 45 (Portantino, Allen, Hurtado, and Stern) Wildfire Prevention, Safe Drinking Water, Drought Preparation, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2022.** Valerie Quinto presented this item. \$5.51 Billion Bond measure to fund work in a variety of categories. Government agencies would be the initial recipients of the funds and would use some of the funds to distribute grants to organizations like the RCDs. Letters of support of this bond would show the leadership at the senate that there is momentum and interest to help it move forward. The Board and associate directors Bruzzone and Murphy asked questions, shared perspectives, and discussed. Motion to send a letter of support M: Nagle, 2nd: Kuszmar. Motion Passed, 5 ayes.

H. Board committee membership – review and update as needed. The Board and Executive Director Quinto opened a discussion to touch base on current Board committee memberships among Board members, and to allow an opportunity for a shifting in roles on these committees. Board Chair Abelli-Amen appointed Director Ariana Reguzzoni to the Strategic Planning Committee.

7. Update Items

A. GSA Updates (GSA Directors & Alternates)

Board Chair Abelli-Amen attended the Sonoma Valley GSA meeting as an alternate for Director Mulas last week. They are making decisions on the sustainable management criteria. The plan needs to be finished this year. Later today, Vice Chair Nagle will attend a meeting of the Santa Rosa Plain GSA board. Vice Chair Nagle also provided an update about recent work that has been underway by the agricultural community to seek some authority to inform the agriculture-related portions of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

B. Executive Committee – no meeting was held.

C. Board Development Committee – no meeting was held.

D. Strategic Planning Committee: Valerie Quinto provided an update on strategic planning activities looking ahead. Associate Director Beth Bruzzone and RCD Education and Communications manager Christine Kuehn both spoke on the forward thinking reflected in the board and staff responses to the 2020 strategic planning survey.

E. Technology Committee: Valerie Quinto summarized the actions that have been taken towards interviewing technology contractors for the upcoming technology undertakings at the RCD.

F. Director Updates: None.

G. Executive Director & Other Staff Updates: A mailer from the Santa Rosa Plain GSA regarding a new online groundwater user registration system will go out the week that ends in February 12. Form 700 statement of economic interests needs to be submitted to the county by each of the Directors (does not apply to assoc. directors). The RCD successfully hired Kristopher Ballard, new Office Assistant. Among his responsibilities will be supporting board meetings.

8. Future Agenda Items

Continue to discuss GSA developments

Christine highlighted the RCD's 75th anniversary this year and asked for board feedback on ways to commemorate.

9. Adjournment. Meeting was adjourned at 11:54 am.