San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District

Board of Director’s Meeting

January 15, 2015

CALL TO ORDER President Richard Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

ATTENDANCE Members of the Board present included Richard Rodriguez, Diego Olagaray, Phil Balmat, Bill Koster, John Herrick and John Thoming. Members absent excused included Jack Hamm, Molly Watkins and Marden Wilber. Staff members and contractors present included Ora Van Steyn, Mike Wackman, Ruth Mulrooney, and Jonna Spaletta. Guests present included Tim Pelican (Ag Commissioner) and Julianne Phillips (SJFB).

MEETING AGENDA Accept meeting agenda as amended, to include addition of personnel matters to executive session and Contra Costa MOU to the irrigated lands section of the meeting. Motion Mr. Balmat, second Mr. Thoming, approved unanimously.

Approve minutes from December 18, 2014 meeting. Motion Mr. Thoming, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

TREASURER REPORT Jonna S. presented the list of income and bills to be paid. Pay the bills. Motion by Mr. Herrick, second by Mr. Olagaray, approved unanimously. Complete financial reports were also presented. There were questions as to the general fund balance and expected income/expense; the new Administrator committed to having an update for the Board at the next meeting.

NRCS UPDATE Ora V. reiterated that EQIP is a continuous sign-up and that applications have been light this year, which is probably attributable to there being no deadline. She also noted that there is lots of funding for the tractor program.

 Ora reported that there is no building update; moving is still expected in May/June/July but plans are not finalized.

RESOURCES Ruth M. reported on CRAE from the meeting she attended in December. She noted the focus of the group was to arrive at aggregate data, as opposed to individual data, to be provided to the State. She also noted there was question as to the access of this information by the public and State agencies, and how secure the data being shared would be. There was general comment by those in attendance as to this data’s current and historical use.

Jonna S. provided an update on her Watershed Coordinator activities since the last meeting. She noted that she had attended a MokeWISE meeting as agreed to during the last RCD meeting, and that although time consuming, she thought they would be good networking opportunities.

GRANT UPDATES Ora reported that the RCPP grant proposal previously submitted by John was not funded (the email communicating this was also referenced in the meeting packet). She gave the Board an idea of what types of projects in California were funded, noting they were heavy in habitat focus. She also noted that the State will not receive 25% of the funding it normally would.

 Jonna S. presented the Board with an amendment to the Lower Mokelumne River Partnership Agreement administered by EBMUD. The contract was initially a three year agreement that would expire March 31, 2015; this amendment would extend the expiration of the agreement to December 31, 2015; all other terms and conditions remain the same. Accept the amendment extending the agreement. Motion Mr. Olagaray, second Mr. Thoming, approved unanimously. Jonna S. also informed the Board that John B. had recently submitted Watershed Coordinator invoices to EBMUD, so she would inquire with Rick Leong on funding that remains available during the extension.

Jonna S. also updated the Board that there was a change in NRCS funding for the 2015 Lockeford Plant Materials Center Cooperative Agreement. The initial request submitted by John B. was for $74,500; to date NRCS was only able to allocate $40,000; additional funding is expected however.

Jonna S. also updated the Board on the temporary renewal of the Farm Bill Assistance Cooperative Agreement by NRCS for 2015 mentioned during the last meeting. She noted the agreement had to be signed and submitted by the end of 2014, so the subcontractor working under this agreement could continue work as of January 1, 2015.

NEW BUSINESS Ag Commissioner Tim Pelican reported that there would be a public hearing on chloropicrin tomorrow; details on restrictions were discussed.

COMMUNICATIONS Jonna S. called the attention of the Directors to communication items in the meeting packet. Information contained in the packet relating to the following was discussed in more detail: Calaveras County forming an RCD (Board felt it most appropriate for it to be joined with another foothill county); GRAP (Grazing Regulatory Action Project; Board felt although it should stay informed, it did not need to take action at this time since CCA, SJFB and CA Rangeland Trust are among the many actively involved in the discussions); and pesticide handler training (NRCS has cost share programs available for chemical storage structures).

IRRIGATED LANDS Mike W. presented the QuickBooks financial report to the Board, noting that the $5,000 newly established debit card account for postage was not currently captured. He proposed to the Board that he present a revised Coalition budget at the next meeting for their review and consideration.

The Nitrogen Management Plan worksheet compiled by the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition (ESJWQC) was presented to the Board for review. Mike W. communicated that the ESJWQC was looking to partner with the District to print the worksheet for distribution to members, to significantly reduce printing costs (they will cost $0.16 each and 5,000 copies will be printed). It was discussed that only one worksheet will be mailed to each Coalition member, as the back page will allow copies of the actual plan worksheet to be copied and this page will also be available on the Coalition website for those growers that have multiple management units/fields. Accept the proposal to join the ESJWQC in printing the proposed Nitrogen Management Plan worksheets, as recommended by the Water Quality Coalition Steering Committee. Motion Mr. Thoming, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

The difference between the Farm Evaluations that had been recently mailed and the forthcoming Nitrogen Management Plans were discussed. Nitrogen Management Plan requirements (dealing with when and where it must be on file, and if it has to be certified based on vulnerability) were discussed. It was communicated that the map identifying high and low vulnerability areas should be completed by the end of January. It was also noted that HydoFocus is on track to have the Groundwater Assessment Report (GAR) draft completed the end of this month. State Board agreement on high and low vulnerability areas must occur by April 1st. It was noted that a whole section of the Delta will be excluded from being identified as high vulnerability due to the artesian effect present.

Planned events qualifying Coalition members who missed previous required grower meetings were discussed. A draft postcard notifying Coalition members of these event dates and their requirement to attend was presented to the Board for consideration. Approximately 2,000 copies will need to be printed. It was motioned to pay for printing and postage to send these postcards out. Motion Mr. Koster, second Mr. Wilber, approved unanimously.

Mike W. reported that the Regional Water Board will be changing the south boundary of the Coalition back to be the Stanislaus River (they had changed it against Mike’s recommendation which caused confusion by splitting growers in the Ripon area). Mike also gave an update on the Regional Monitoring Program.

Mike W. reported that the self-certification program being developed by Terry Prichard will now be funded by CDFA; they are arranging funding to the UC to contract with Mr. Prichard. The only downfall is the extended time it will take to get funding in place.

The MOU with the East Stanislaus Resource Conservation District was presented to the Board for review. It was clarified that the agreement was primarily for the purpose of allowing the San Joaquin and Delta Water Quality Coalition operate in the northeastern “triangle” portion of Stanislaus County. It was decided that action would be tabled until Board members had an opportunity to review the document, outside of this meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION Board members retired into executive session for conference on personnel matters. Upon returning from the executive session the Board took the following actions:

It was discussed that independent contractors working for the District must take a half hour unpaid lunch if working more than 6 hours. It was decided that Board President Rodriguez would address this with contractors not currently following this protocol.

The Farm Bill Assistant contract effective January 2015 for subcontractor Robin Simonich was reviewed. Accept the contract. Motion Mr. Herrick, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT The next meeting of the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District Board is scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2015 at the USDA Stockton Service Center at 12:00 noon. Adjourn meeting at 1:35 p.m. Motion by Mr. Thoming, second by Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.