San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District

Board of Director’s Meeting

November 20, 2014

CALL TO ORDER President Richard Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 11:08 p.m.

ATTENDANCE Members of the Board present included Richard Rodriguez, Bill Koster, Phil Balmat, Jack Hamm, John Herrick, and Molly Watkins. Members absent excused included Diego Olagaray, Marden Wilbur and John Thoming. Staff members and contractor present included Ora Van Steyn, Mike Wackman, and Ruth Mulrooney. Guests present included Jonna Spaletta (SJCRCD new hire), Lee Tecklenburg (Tech Ranch) and Julianne Phillips (SJFB).

MEETING AGENDA Accept meeting agenda as amended, with movement of the irrigated land update to the beginning of the meeting, following the executive session. Motion Mr. Koster, second Mrs. Watkins, approved unanimously.

Approve minutes from October 16, 2014 meeting with corrections. Motion Mrs. Watkins, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION Board members retired into executive session for conference on personnel matters as listed on the agenda. Upon returning from the executive session the Board made the following motions:

It was motioned to hire Jonna Spaletta as both the new RCD Administrator and Watershed Coordinator. Motion Mr. Koster, second Mr. Herrick, approved unanimously.

It was motioned to accept the draft contract provided by Mike Wackman of Wackman Consulting. Motion Mr. Herrick, second Mr. Hamm, approved unanimously.

TREASURER REPORT Ruth M. presented the lists of income and bills to be paid. Pay the bills. Motion by Mr. Hamm, second by Mr. Koster, approved unanimously. Complete financial reports were reviewed as provided by Mr. Brodie.

IRRIGATED LANDS Mike W. presented the new QuickBooks financial report to the Board; it was requested that a percentage of budget column be added to the report. He also reported that grower meetings have been going well, and a general timeline of grower requirements to maintain membership in the Coalition was presented. He also described the process being used to collect the farm-specific data necessary to complete the required plans. The Board discussed that it may be beneficial to partner with Farm Bureau, during Farm Center Dinners, to provide growers resources to complete the required packets/plans; the potential for cross-training Farm Bureau staff was also discussed. Steering Committee meeting minutes were reviewed. Ruth reported that letters will be mailed to members who have enrolled invalid APN’s. Valid APN’s are necessary to generate maps that will be mailed to members, to assist them in completing their farm plans. Mike W. discussed the grower self-certification program, currently being designed by Terry Prichard. An additional $3,500.00 will be necessary to complete the project. Mr. Hamm made a motion to add $3,500.00 to the previously approved funds, second from Mr. Koster, unanimously approved.

It was discussed that the MOU’s with the Contra Costa RCD still have not been received; the new Administrator was instructed to follow up.

NRCS UPDATE Ora V. reported that California is a pilot for a new EQIP rolling, batching process. This process uses a planning worksheet, number scoring, site visit, screening/ranking and immediate funding approach. She also explained that the NRCS State Office has predetermined certain practices as low priorities, which include dairies with no CMP on file, converting pasture to permanent crops, and previously canceled contracts.

She explained the new requirement of Receipt of Service for both NRCS and FSA customers; it requires entering the details of each customer being helped into an online tracking system. She mentioned the Client Gateway concept for both NRCS and FSA as well, noting that it has been in the works for a few years. It will allow customers to access conservation planning, maps, eligibility, etc. online with a user name and password login.

Ora gave a brief report on personnel, noting the Farm Bill Assistant grant will expire December 31, 2014 and that she has made a request to fund another year. The Board questioned if a letter by the RCD and Farm Bureau might help secure renewed funding. Ora concluded by addressing the Bay Delta Initiative, noting that Eric Harper, an NRCS Civil Engineer Technician, is working with the NRCS public affairs representative on a story reporting the successful implementation of a local BDI funded project.

RESOURCES There was no CRAE or Watershed Coordinator report given.

GRANT UPDATE Upon the Farm Bill Assistant grant update provided above by Ora, the Board directed the new RCD Administrator to write a letter of support addressed to Kay Joy Barge, Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations for Area 2, in hopes it would help secure renewed funding.

NEW BUSINESS The RCD Christmas party will be held at Dave Wong’s following the December meeting. It was also noted that the Board of Supervisor’s Open House will be December 16, 2014.

COMMUNICATIONS Ruth M. called the attention of Directors to communication items in the meeting packet.

ADJOURNMENT The next meeting of the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District Board is scheduled Thursday, December 18, 2014 at the USDA Stockton Service Center at 11:00 a.m. with Christmas Party to follow at Dave Wong’s. Adjourn meeting at 12:52 p.m. Motion by Mr. Koster, second by Mr. Hamm, approved unanimously.