San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District

Board of Director’s Meeting

February 19, 2015

CALL TO ORDER President Richard Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

ATTENDANCE Members of the Board present included Richard Rodriguez, Diego Olagaray, Jack Hamm, Bill Koster, Molly Watkins, John Herrick and John Thoming. Members absent excused included Phil Balmat and Marden Wilber. Staff members and contractors present included Sonya Miller (NRCS), Fanny Ye (NRCS), Mike Wackman, Ruth Mulrooney, and Jonna Spaletta. Guests present included Tim Pelican (Ag Commissioner), Steve Deverel (HydroFocus) and Lee Tecklenburg (Tecklenburg Ranch).

PUBLIC COMMENTS Mr. Koster proposed that the RCD meeting agenda/packet be emailed, instead of mailed, to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. Hard copies will be present for each director at the meeting, available to the public upon request, and mailed to any director upon request. Motion for 3 month trial of emailing meeting agenda/packet. Motion Mr. Hamm, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

MEETING AGENDA Accept meeting agenda as presented, including approval of January 15, 2015 meeting minutes. Motion Mr. Olagaray, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

TREASURER REPORT Jonna S. presented the list of income and bills to be paid, along with new financial reports generated by QuickBooks. The new reports included a Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activity which included Scholarship Fund activity; it was noted that this needs to be separated from the General Fund (this will be done by the next meeting). The reports also included an Accounts Payable Summary and Accounts Receivable Summary. There was concern that the amount presented as due from the Coalition ($28K) was incorrect. It was determined that the RCD Administrator would work with Mr. Wackman to determine the correct amount for presentation to the Board at the next meeting. The Budget to Actuals Report was also reviewed; Ms. Spaletta noted that she would work on revising the budget (so actual and budgeted expense categories match) and present to the Board for their review. She also drew attention to financial items needing action.

It was discussed that PMC subcontractor Fowler had been overpaid by $645, but this money could be offset by the amounts now owed her for work completed in January and February.

There was discussion that Wackman Consulting had been overpaid by $360 in January 2014 (an error due to transposing numbers) which was found when 1099’s were calculated. This overpayment had not been caught by Mr. Wackman because the additional money had been applied to an outstanding DPR grant invoice from January 2011. It was motioned that the amount be settled by $60 being credited to the next Wackman Consulting invoice.

The overpayment of John Brodie (net amount of $1,992.50) as watershed coordinator was discussed. The overpayment occurred because of errors in John's timesheets/invoices that he had submitted to the RCD for payment; Rick Leong at EBMUD identified them when John submitted this same information for partnership fund reimbursement. Mr. Brodie’s letter containing proposed repayment of this amount was also reviewed by the Board. Motion to request repayment of the $1,992.50 by Mr. Brodie over 3 months, via monthly installments. Motion Mr. Herrick, second Mr. Olagaray, approved unanimously.

Motion to accept the Treasurer’s report as detailed above. Motion Mr. Koster, second Mr. Thoming, approved unanimously.

NRCS UPDATE Sonya M. reported in Ora VS.’s absence. She shared a building update, noting that moving is not likely until July. She provided the Board with EQIP batching period information. She reported that two grower meetings for WHEP had been held, facilitated by Audubon of California. She provided details on available practices and their respective rates. She also noted the concerns growers present at these meetings voiced, as much of the practices were modeled off the use of rice fields. Eligibility specific to AGI (adjusted gross income) limitations was briefly discussed, noting the change from the 2008 Farm Bill to the current Farm Bill.

RESOURCES Ag Commissioner Tim Pelican reported that a San Joaquin County Drought Task Force meeting had been held last week. He detailed information on New Melones, noting that the lake will be dry by October. He also shared that East San Joaquin will not be getting any surface water allocations this year. Lake Tullock is also expected to be dry. He mentioned there is some legislation occurring that will allow growers practicing no-till to get paid for carbon banking. Lastly, Mr. Pelican brought the Board’s attention to GRAP, referencing the letter that was submitted by the Kern County Board of Supervisors to the Water Board. Ms. Watkins provided the Board with copies of GRAP information compiled by CFBF/CCA/CWGA. The Board discussed their position on GRAP. Motion to write and submit a letter opposing implementation of GRAP, copying the Ag Commissioner and SJFB. Motion Mr. Hamm, second Mr. Thoming, approved unanimously. Ms. Watkins asked the Ag Commissioner to provide an update on the death of chickens in Stanislaus County. Mr. Pelican shared details of the incident, noting that over 100,000 chickens and turkeys had died. Prop 2 was discussed, with relation to production standards for eggs within CA, and the sale of eggs in CA produced by other states.

 In the absence of Ms. Phillips from SJFB, Mr. Hamm reported on SJFB. He noted that SJFB would also be writing a letter in opposition of GRAP.

 No CRAE report was available; the next meeting is scheduled for the beginning of March.

Jonna S. provided an update on her RCD Administrator and Watershed Coordinator activities since the last meeting. She noted that approximately $10K remains in Partnership funds to cover watershed coordinator hours through the rest of 2015. She reported that Ms. Grant, Chair of the LMRWSSC, had contacted her requesting that both the Watershed Owner’s and User’s Guides be linked to the SJCRCD website homepage; this is because the City of Lodi is developing an interpretive panel to accompany their downtown watershed displays that will link directly to the RCD website, when the guides are featured (they are currently temporarily housed on the City of Lodi’s website). There was no objection by the Board.

GRANT UPDATES Jonna S. presented the Board with information on a CIG pre-proposal being submitted by East Stanislaus RCD and UC Davis. Options for SJCRCD involvement were discussed. Motion for SJCRCD to be listed as a “project collaborator” on the pre-proposal, with details of level of SJCRCD involvement still to be determined. Motion Mr. Hamm, second Mr. Olagaray, approved unanimously.

Ms. Spaletta also reported that Ora had shared with her information on Prop 1 containing $50mln in grant funds strictly for Ag sustainability projects. There will be a call for grant proposals this summer, with funding likely in the fall or spring of next year. Jonna committed to keeping informed of any developments reading these grant opportunities.

NEW BUSINESS Jonna S. presented the Board with information about the Lockeford Plant Materials Center Open House scheduled for April 21st. She reported that the Manager there had mentioned that lunch has previously been sponsored by the RCD, and that she had inquired if that might be possible again. Motion to sponsor the PMC Open House lunch, with expense not to exceed $800. Motion Mr. Koster, second Mr. Thoming, approved unanimously.

 The contract for the new PMC contractor, Jeff Borum, was presented for Board consideration. It was discussed that Jeff had already worked 30 hours before the contract could be approved (hours and description of work included in the meeting packet), although the PMC Manager had been informed that these hours may not be paid by the RCD. Motion to accept the contract for Mr. Borum and pay him for the 30 hours worked to date. Motion Mr. Hamm, second Ms. Watkins, approved unanimously.

 There was discussion that the SJCRCD does not currently have a contracting policy, nor General Counsel retained. There was discussion of other resources available to the RCD such as CARCD, Department of Conservation and County Counsel. Motion to contact Spaletta Law regarding general counsel items, including drafting policy for implementing contracts and providing attorney review of contracts. Motion Mr. Herrick, second Mr. Koster, approved unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS Jonna S. called the attention of the Directors to communication items in the meeting packet. It was decided that the SJCRCD would wait another year or so to pay any dues to the National Association of Conservation Districts.

IRRIGATED LANDS Mike W. introduced Steve Deverel from HydroFocus who was in attendance to discuss the draft groundwater assessment report. Mr. Deverel provided those in attendance with draft maps identifying the high and low vulnerability areas. There was discussion as to the information used to develop the map and what was required to be monitored. The GAR will have to be updated every 5 years. The Board suggested changes they would like to see, which included: developing area boundary lines consistent with APN boundaries and roads, identifying Ag wells, correction of the west side boundary near the intersection of I-205 and I-580, and deriving a tolerable percentage that would allow the parcel to be considered low vulnerability. The percentage of crop types encompassed by the area currently identified as high vulnerability was reviewed; concern was voiced as to its accuracy. Mike W. requested the Board email him of any other concerns they may identify after the meeting.

Mike W. presented the Coalition QuickBooks financial report to the Board. He specifically drew attention to the revised budget and its respective changes. The revised overall expenses totaled $2.2mln, with $232K less of expenses, and would result in a net increase to the contingency fund of approximately $575K. Mr. Wackman mentioned that expenses should be less on next year’s budget, and that Coalition fee could likely be reduced by $0.75 to $1/ac, from the current value of $5.50/acre.

There was discussion of when Coalition billing should occur, given the recent change of the Coalition accounting period from calendar year to fiscal year (to match the RCD). It was decided this would be talked about in greater detail at the next meeting.

Ruth M. reported that membership activity has been busy, with lots of Coalition members walking in to receive assistance with their Farm Evaluation Plans. She mentioned that previously invalid APN Farm Evaluations are still being mailed out in batches.

The MOU with the East Stanislaus Resource Conservation District was presented to the Board for action (reviewed by the Board following the last meeting). Motion to accept the MOU, with correction of the President to Mr. Rodriguez. Motion Mr. Koster, second Mr. Olagaray, approved unanimously.

Mr. Herrick added a drought update, noting that curtailment notices are being issued.

EXECUTIVE SESSION Board members retired into executive session to briefly discuss personnel matters.

The Board returned from executive session.

ADJOURNMENT The next meeting of the San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District Board is scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2015 at the USDA Stockton Service Center at 12:00 noon. Adjourn meeting at 2:35 p.m. All in favor, approved unanimously.