

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2018 AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Terry Connolly
Arnold Lenk
Mike Lewis
Tony Vaccarella

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Chappell, SRCD
Tim Edmunds, SRCD
Bill Gaines, Gaines Associates
Michal Koller, DWR
Shawn Overton, CDFW
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Orlando Rocha, CDFW
John Takekawa, SRCD
Jeff Taylor, SRCD

1. Call to Order ~ The Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ None.

3. Open Session ~

a) Approval of the April 11, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes ~

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2018 Board meeting was made by Mr. Connolly and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for April 2018 ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the April 2018 General Fund vendor claims total as \$148,146.39. Mr. Connolly made a motion to approve the April General Fund vendor claims for \$148,146.39 and Mr. Lenk seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried. Mr. Chappell reported the April 2018 LJI vendor claims for \$12,755.67 that included the Massey-Ferguson repair, rebuilding a cylinder on the excavator, and new water control structure for LJI. Mr. Connolly made a motion to approve the April 2018 LJI vendor claims for \$12,755.67 and Mr. Lenk seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried. Mr. Chappell reported the April 2018 Special Revenue vendor claims total as \$21,463.90. Mr. Connolly made a motion to approve the April 2018 Special Revenue vendor claims total for \$21,463.90 and Mr. Lenk seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

b) Amend LJI FY 2017/2018 Budget ~ Facility Improvements ~ On April 30th, the LJI Facilities Committee met and reviewed needed improvements to the LJI Club House facilities. The LJI Facilities Committee recommended needed improvements in this fiscal year for Board consideration. Mr. Connolly made a comment noting the LJI operational costs were already higher than originally budgeted. Mr. Chappell proposed a budget increase of \$24,000 for facilities improvement. Mr. Connolly made a motion to approve and Mr. Lenk seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ Mr. Rocha provided the DFW report. The Joice Island Pig Hunt is finished with 8 pigs taken. The hunt is very popular, and it will be expanded next year. He noted that USGS is well underway with nest searching. Searching has been slow, but there are lot of pairs of waterfowl currently on the Wildlife Area that are not yet nesting. 91 nests had been found, of those 58 are active, made up of 43 mallard, 3 gadwall, 8 northern harriers, and 3 American bittern nests. The breeding pair survey was recently flown by Orlando, and there are still many birds in large groups, not pairs, and several were flocks of green-winged teal. Orlando will fly NE California on 10 May. The spring CA breeding waterfowl numbers will be available from California Waterfowl Association. Locally, work is ready to go on the Wildlife Area with the 2018 RGP 3 permit applications submitted. At the end of his

report, a question was raised on numbers of pigs at Joice Island. He noted that they are hard to survey, but the groups of pigs seem to be larger from historical observations. He would like to increase 2019 tags and help reduce habitat damage. Some discussion ensued.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Koller distributed the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. In the month of April, the salinity standard of 11 mS/cm was met at all compliance and monitoring stations. Current Salinities are ranging from 0.1-4.2 mS/cm. Net delta outflow was 15,000 cfs, which is relatively high for this time of year, resulting in relatively low Marsh salinities.

Planning for a Roaring River Distribution System (RRDS) west drain is ongoing with construction planned for 15 June and 31 July, and construction staging will be 1-15 June. DWR real estate staff is working with landowners on access issues. RRDS mowing will begin on 7 May and pre- and post-emergent will be applied. At the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates (SMSCG), stop logs were removed on 8 May, and refurbishing the SMSCG gates now will be delayed until next summer. The Morrow Island Distribution System will have levee mowing in mid-June with pre- and post-emergent applied after mowing. Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) was cleaned on 30 April and 9 May, and GYSO intakes will be cleaned monthly as needed. Levee mowing will begin in early June, and pre and post emergent applied after mowing.

A Drought Response Fund Update was provided. A table was provided showing trigger values for each month (October: 20.0; February 9.0; March 9.0; April 12.0, May 12.0), but only one reading in February exceeded the trigger (S-35 PDM = 9.17). With increased precipitation through the late winter, overall salinities have decreased, and the drought response will likely not be triggered this control season.

The reservoir storage was reported. Most reservoirs are at or above historical averages with the exception of Oroville (80%). Precipitation for the current year in the Northern Sierra is 38.8" or 80% of historical average, and the Southern Sierra is at 29.4" or 80% of the historical average. A question was asked about selection of the RRDS western drain contractor – Michal was unaware of final selection of a vendor.

Mr. Bill Gaines of Gaines and Associates was in town, so he provided an update on current legislation.

Assembly Bill 2670 – Establishes 2 free hunting day each year. Although the director DFW may currently allow this, it has never done it. The estimated cost DFW about \$150K annually, and the Bill is currently on suspense; however, the bill is moving forward.

AB2697 – This is a California Waterfowl Association supported bill encourages retaining

cover crops for breeding birds on fallowed crop land as a result of water transfers. The bill is in appropriations and needs to be forwarded by 25 May.

AB2805 – This bill address wild pigs, including depredation issues and revision of tags (~\$23) to a pig validation stamp (~\$15). The intent is it encourage increased pig harvest but will reduce funding to the DFW Big Game management account. The assembly is working on adjusting the language of the bill for cost savings. It is currently in appropriations committee and in suspense.

AB3199 – This bill that would prohibit firearms in raffles. This Bill is dead and is no longer under consideration.

AB3117 – This legislation would allow the Fish and Game Commission to suspend the lead ammunition ban, if alternative suitable ammunition was not available. The bill failed in subcommittee.

Tuesday May 22nd, 2018 Is the annual CA Legislature Sportsman Caucus trap shoot. SRCD will be in attendance.

7. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

a) Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement Update and PAI Grant Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell reported that SRCD recently met with Mr. Cliff Feldheim to establish regular meetings to improve SRCD DWR coordination. Mr. Feldheim asked SRCD if we would be willing to complete new monitoring and scientific activities under the Article V of the SMPA? When SRCD was included as a signatory to the SMPA Mitigation and Monitoring agreement, it enabled SRCD to assume this new roll and partnership in Marsh preservation. Moving forward, Mr. Chappell anticipates increase in SRCD activities to implement SMPA biological monitoring activities (e.g. waterfowl, vegetation, rails, salt marsh harvest mouse). The SRCD discussed this with counsel, and she concurred that this type of work is covered under the existing agreement.

Mr. Takekawa reported on the PAI Grant Program. SRCD processed 36 - 2018 PAI Cost Share Proposals that were submitted in April and some of those were carried over from 2017. The 36 proposals included 20-75/25 proposals, 9-50/50 proposals, and 7-Joint Use Facilities proposals. The PAI Review Committee met on 1 May 2018. The Committee reviewed and approved 28 applications: 16-75/25, 6-50/50, and 6-JUF proposals and asked for further details on 7 proposals (1 proposal was submitted on 1 May and will be reviewed in the next round). The PAI Review Committee determined project eligibility and recommend funding approval to DWR and Bureau of Reclamation. DWR and USBR's concurrence was obtained on Monday, 7 May and SRCD notified landowners on Tuesday, 8 May. Total landowner PAI requests this year have been for \$979,749. Therefore, we don't foresee any limits in available program funding in 2019.

PAI Project Agreements will be drafted and sent to landowners for signature.

a) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ SRCD and DWR will host a BCDC retreat and tour of Suisun Marsh of ~43 people on Friday, 18 May 2018. CWA is hosting the event at the Denverton duck club. The fieldtrip will provide a basic understanding of managed wetland activities and the Bradmoor Island tidal restoration site. Also, Mr. Chappell will help host the Water Education Foundation Bay Tour in the afternoon of the same day.

b) USACE Permits -- RGP3 Renewal, LOP Permit Update ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the March application package (60 applications) was approved on 8 May 2018. The April package was nearly as large (40 applications), and USACE should be able to turn it around more quickly after some administrative changes in processing. The water managers currently are working with clubs on 2018 dredging applications. These applications should request a similar total volume of dredging as was requested last year.

c) Water Manager Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa reported on the Water Manager Program. The Landowner Workshop was held on 18 April and was well-attended with 104 people registered. Twelve presentations were provided, and there was a strong positive response from the landowners in attendance. We will be posting presentations from the meeting on the SRCD's website this month. Also, we announced another landowner workshop to be held this year on September 5th focused on the recent results of the applied studies in the Marsh.

The water managers continued their work arranging numerous in-person meetings to help landowners with permits and applications. Ms. Tortosa continued working on the Managed Wetland Assessment and sent permission requests for participation to clubs in Priority Areas 2 and 3. Elevation surveys of the water control structures have been moving forward and are nearly complete for Priority Area 1. The Water Managers continued to deploy pumps at the request of clubs, and the pump repaired at John Deere in Dixon was returned this week. Pepperweed or *Lepidium* now should be coming into peak flowering. Mr. Edmunds initiated work with the spraying contractor to begin *Lepidium* treatment this week. A SRCD quarterly staff meeting and staff reviews was completed on 25 April that included staff updates, a safety discussion, and performance reviews. In the office, we started working on an effort named "the Purge" to sort and archive the old files that have accumulated at SRCD over the past 55 years. Mr. Lewis participated on behalf of the SRCD Board.

d) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Major repairs on the excavator were successfully completed on 13 April, and the excavator is ready for summer work. Mr. Mouton completed the first round of mowing the tall vegetation on the exterior levees and completed the second leach cycle to bring water up to shoot level in mid-April for the LJI Habitat Committee review. The Habitat

Review Committee (Mike Lewis, Dennis Becker, Kurt Black, Mike Kelly, Steve, John, Marque) met on 12 April and reviewed area conditions in advance of summer work. A draft recommendations report was developed to establish the priority for work, and based on those recommendations, a USACE Work Application was prepared and submitted in the April package. The Facilities Review Committee (Tony Vaccarella, Jim Waters, Steve, John) met on 30 April to assess the facilities. The group reached unanimous agreement to move forward with needed facilities improvements as soon as possible and prioritized other facilities tasks. Also, Mr. Mouton cleared the palm fronds from the trees in front of the clubhouse, but he ended up with a few palm fronds tips burrowing under his skin which required treatment and a minor worker's compensation claim. On 30 April, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa met with Anne Slaughter of SFSU on zooplankton sampling. Their crew set up nets and sampled zooplankton during the drain cycle in the north unit on 4-7 May and were scheduled to sample drain water from the south end through 14 May. Mr. Takekawa met with USGS (Dr. Karen Thorne, Dr. Kevin Buffington) at LJI to discuss their work on sea-level rise effects on tidal marshes and managed wetlands and projected losses in the next decades. We discussed the importance of managed wetlands as areas where habitats may be managed with rising waters and increased storm events.

e) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell reported that he attended the SF Bay Restoration Advisory Committee meeting on 4 May. The \$12 per parcel tax is dedicated to habitat restoration. He will attend a Delta Conservancy Board meeting on 23 May. The SRCD Board meeting on 11 July will be moved to Rush Ranch to accommodate renovations at the Supervisor's Chambers.

8. Suisun Resource Conservation District Committee Reports ~

a) Agency Committee ~ Mr. Lenk reported on the difficulty of dealing with FEMA for the 2017 Suisun Marsh damage claims. Several additional disasters since January 2017 have made it very difficult to obtain responses from FEMA. Discussion ensued. During the Landowner Workshop, it was mentioned that restoration was starting on the Tule Red parcel including building islands. Recently, the road has been used by more people, so questions have been raised about parking, trash, and public access at this site. Mr. Chappell indicated that SRCD previously drafted a letter to BCDC identifying that this site is not suitable for public access and that existing facilities closer to town are more suitable. DWR is currently conducting a Public Access Study that SRCD is participating in. Individuals should call him about any concerns. Discussion ensued.

b) Legal Committee ~ No report.

c) Personnel Committee ~ Mr. Lewis provided an update on quarterly staff reviews and the SRCD office Purge 1.0 project, which he felt was a valuable work tool, and should be done again sometime.

d) Finance Committee ~ Mr. Connolly passed out a report to the Board on the Suisun Conservation Fund. The report provided information on the current investment status of the Lower Joice Island and Wheeler-Gillette Funds. A Statement of Activities was reviewed including revenues and investments, but the fund balance decreased overall in 2017. The rate of return was reported for the Lower Joice Island and Wheeler Gillette Funds. Discussion ensued. Yearly average payment over 18 years was \$88,422/year. Based on average expenses, operations this year will be nearly \$200K. Mr. Chappell suggested a meeting of the previously organized subcommittee look at future uses for Lower Joice Island. Discussion ensued.

e) Associate Directors Report and Public Relations Committee ~ No report.

9. Adjourn ~ 3:39 PM