

MINUTES

**SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2022, AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET, FAIRFIELD, CA 94533**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: **Tony Vaccarella (remote)**
Terry Connolly
Arnold Lenk
Mike Lewis
Jim Waters

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dennis Becker, SRCD Assoc. Dir.
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Nimal Jayasundara, DWR
Charlene Lenk
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Jamel Stewart, DWR
Sandy Sup, Fechter & Company
John Takekawa, SRCD
Larry Wyckoff, DFW

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Lenk called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:03 PM. Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953, Subdivision (b), it was announced that the following Board Member will participate by teleconference: Director Tony Vaccarella, from 2397 Goodwin Avenue, Redwood City, CA 94061 (open to the public).

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Lenk opened the July 13, 2022, Board of Directors meeting and asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the June 8, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes ~ A motion to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2022, Board meeting was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Lewis; all were in favor by roll call vote and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for June 2022 ~ Mr. Chappell reported the June 2022 General Fund vendor claims totaled \$123,778.17. These claims included 3 payroll periods and were normal SRCD operational expenses, Drought Response Fund reimbursements, and grant expenses. Mr. Chappell also reported the June 2022 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaled \$10,423.94. All expenses were normal LJI operational expenses with claim 63 includes purchase of an 18" coring bucket for the excavator, to be reimbursed under the carbon sequestration grant. Mr. Chappell reported the June 2022 Water Managers Program vendor claims totaled \$37,600.18. These were all normal Water Manager Program operational expenses. Mr. Connolly moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Waters seconded the motion, all were in favor by roll call vote, and the motion carried.

b) Approval of the May 2022~Special Revenue Vendor Claim Summary ~ Mr. Chappell presented the May 2022 Special Revenue vendor claim summary. This was for a vendor claim to Ramos Oil for off road diesel for the Portable Pump Program. Mr. Connolly made a motion to approve, Mr. Waters seconded the motion, all were in favor by roll call vote, and the motion carried.

c) Board Consideration of the SRCD Fiscal Year 22/23 Draft Budgets ~ Mr. Connolly requested to move this item below Item 5. Mr. Chappell presented the SRCD Fiscal Year 22/23 draft budgets after the audit presentation. Mr. Chappell presented the SRCD General Fund and discussed changes made since the draft budget was presented in June. The revised budget includes paying down a portion of SRCD's CalPERS retirement unfunded liability in the amount of \$100,000. Also, the Budget was modified to increase Worker's Compensation rate increase of 30% for the upcoming year. Ms. Perez noted that the size of SRCD's current payroll amount will likely trigger annual Worker's Compensation audits in the future. For this fiscal year we have added a seasonal position associated with grant delivery, to be funded by the grants. Mr. Chappell presented the Lower Joice Island

budget and projected operational expenses. This year a significant portion of the revenue to LJI is from the hunt lease and Blue Carbon grant. Mr. Chappell presented the draft budget for the Water Managers Program, which is a balanced budget with all staff and operational expenses reimbursed by the 2015 SMPA Agreement. The budget for the Special Revenue Fund Pump Program was significantly increased due to the high cost of fuel. Budgeted \$10,000 of the Enxco funds as grant matching funds for ongoing scientific studies. Mr. Connolly made a motion to approve the budget as presented, Mr. Waters seconded the motion, all were in favor by roll call vote and the motion passed.

5. SRCD FY 20-21 Draft Audit ~ presented by Sandy Sup, CPA, Fechter & Company. Ms. Sup presented the draft audit and SRCD's financial statements. Ms. Sup stated that it was a clean audit with no exceptions found. The District's net fiscal position is shown comparing the finances to the past fiscal year. She asked if there were any questions on the audit from the Board. Mr. Connolly commented on the utility of some of the financial statement's schedules, but they are required as part of the audit. Mr. Connolly did not have any significant questions about the audit. The District ended the fiscal year in the black with a positive fund balance. Mr. Connolly recommended that the Board accept the audit when the final is available by the next Board meeting in August. Mr. Chappell noted that SRCD is contracted with Fechter & Company will be auditing our financial statements for two additional years. We will be scheduling the 2021-2022 fiscal year audit to start in early fall. Some discussion ensued.

6. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ The DFW report was provided by Mr. Orlando Rocha and read by Mr. Chappell.

Elk Season: Elk season is fast approaching again. The Wildlife Area will be open until July 31st for public use, after that it will close. Our first hunt begins on August 6th. The general hunt season begins on August 17th and will extend until September 30th. For the 2022 Season, DFW has issued 33 tags.

Joice Island: The Joice Island bridge repair project is in the hands of DFW engineers, the project is moving forward. Even with the bridge weight restrictions, a couple of exterior water control structures were able to be replaced. Equipment was rented from a neighboring club to get the 2 structures replaced on Pond A. This was the last part of the Pond A enhancement project. Phragmites control will continue this season on Pond A, more mowing and spraying of Phragmites will happen this season. The reduction of Phragmites on Joice may have helped our hunters harvest more pigs this season, essentially making the pigs more available because they had less cover to hide in, purely a speculation though.

Grizzly Island: The Wildlife Area with CWA and DU have all contracts in place for work that will take place over the next 3-4 years. Contractors are now working daily on several different projects. Two new exterior drains were placed through a NAWCA grant, other ditch work, dirt work, and work on Pole Line Road continues. Hunters this waterfowl season should see a noticeable difference in wildlife area access.

Flood up: Once again water conditions around the state are not looking good again, luckily, we do not have to worry over water availability the way some of the other wetland basins do in California. DFW will be fully flooded for the fall season. The Wildlife Area plans to begin flooding a few units as early as August 1 for early season migrants. Starting September 1st, the wildlife area will begin our flood up schedule, and barring any major issues, we'll be ready for the opener of waterfowl season on the 22nd of October.

7. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Mr. Jamel Stewart provided the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of June, there were no salinity standards for the Marsh. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) Salinities in the Marsh ranged from 12.8 to 20.1 mS/cm. At the end of June, net Delta outflow was 4,904 cfs. The July 10th salinities ranged from 10.7 to 19.4 mS/cm. Delta outflow was 5,567 cfs.

The Roaring River Distribution System maintenance activity plans for 2022 are ongoing including ditch clearing and dredging and at the Hammond Pond intake for 2025 or later requiring multiple seasons and significant funding to complete. Levees are being monitored after high tides. Maintenance was initiated on mowing, spraying, and grading. Unknown leaks in the Roaring River Distribution System are causing stages to rise on high tides and both east and west drains are open to compensate with investigations underway. Morrow Island Distribution System routine maintenance planning for 2022 is ongoing. Levee monitoring continues after high tides. Goodyear Slough Outfall operations continued by removing debris at the intake as needed with clearing in June at the intake. Planning for 2022 routine maintenance is ongoing. Levees continued to be monitored after high tides. The Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates have ended operations since May 31, and one gate is out for refurbishment with flashboard in place for the summer. The Salinity Control gates may begin operating as early as September this fall. Russian Thistle is more prevalent throughout RRDS, MIDS, and surrounding, and DWR has been conducting a study on best practices for removal. The Phragmites study is being completed at Blacklock with treatment planned for the fall contracting through SRCD. Alligatorweed has been detected but only in small patches. A vegetation monitoring plan is in development.

California reservoir capacity ranged from 30-90% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 31-71%. All reservoirs are below historical averages. Precipitation year to date was 79% of normal in the northern Sierra and 62% in the southern Sierra. Discussion ensued.

8. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement ~ 2022 Drought Response Fund Allocation: Mr. Chappell reported that the SMPA agreement programs continue to be administered. Bi-monthly calls continue with DWR Branch Chief Mr. Dean Messer including updates on monthly payment of SRCD contract expenses. The 5-year review of the SMPA is progressing with regular meetings on June 1st and 20th. There was a clean

draft of the document for the June meeting. Mr. Chappell then reviewed the 2022 Drought Response Fund Allocation and requested Board approval. He noted that last year the drought response program was triggered. Based upon DWR modeling results, this year a smaller area of the marsh was affected. Therefore, the 2021 allocation for the second year of the program should apply. A new Roaring River Distribution System will be needed for the 2023 year. Mr. Waters made a motion to approve the 2022 Drought Response Fund Allocation, Mr. Lewis seconded the motion, all were in favor by roll call vote and the motion passed.

b) 2022 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update for the 2022 PAI Program. Agreements were sent to landowners in late May, and most of the agreements signed and returned. We had 11 new applications submitted for the June 30th deadline, and technical reviews were completed on July 11th. Discussion ensued.

c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. There was a SMP Principal's meeting on June 9th, and ECAT and Applicant Compliance Team meeting on June 14th. The July meeting was canceled since the Bradmoor Island and Arnold Slough restoration celebration event is being held on July 14th. Discussion ensued.

d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continued to administer the 2022 RGP 3 permit. The Water Managers prepared and submitted the RGP June application package on July 1st which was approved on July 11th. Landowners 2022 dredging application packages were submitted on the 21st of June, and to BCDC on July 5th. The RGP 3 renewal Public Notice was posted on June 30th. Discussion ensued.

e) Water Manager (WM) Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Water Manager program update. The Water Managers received RGP 3 approvals from the May package on June 13th, the dredging package was submitted to USACE on June 21st and to BCDC on July 5th, and Jeff prepared and submitted the RGP 3 requests for June on July 1st and received approval on July 11th.

On June 13th, we had the kickoff meeting of our blue carbon project conducted with CWA and USGS hosted at Miramonte Club. For the Phragmites Study, on June 10 and 14, Mr. Hagani assisted in hand wiping Phragmites with herbicide to control their regrowth in plant revegetation study plots at Lower Joice, Meins Landing, and Montezuma Club. On June 14th, Mr. Chappell, and the water managers, CDFW and CWA staff met with BCDC staff to discuss consistent responses to permitting questions and application information.

On June 15th, Mr. Hagani and I used a RTK GPS and elevation poles to conduct a High Tide Line survey at 2:30-5:00AM at Hill and Arnold Sloughs to estimate the restored tidal acreage for those restoration projects. On June 20th, Mr. Hagani conducted a monthly survey of the Tule Red project levee. On June 23rd, I attended a Board meeting of the

Delta National Heritage Area and on June 27th, met with the Phragmites socioecological study team. On June 30th, Ms. Collins completed her GIS cost-path analysis for 26 Suisun Marsh fish sampling sites, and I conducted a job walk at Mein's Landing for ditch and gate work. Mr. Hagani and I attended eDNA training with a UC Davis cooperator, and I met with Solano County Parks and WRA Consulting to discuss completion of a landscape plan for Belden's Landing.

The Water Managers assisted landowners in completing 11 PAI applications by the June 30th deadline which were reviewed by the PAI panel on July 11th. Pump invoices were completed for all pumping jobs before July 1st, and a diesel inventory for fiscal year end was completed. Through the end of June into early July, Mr. McKinney and Ms. Collins worked on SRCD website updates. On July 1st, Ms. Collins sent the 18th Annual Fun Shoot invitation was sent to landowners on evite. On July 5th, Mr. Hagani and Mr. McKinney conducted a levee survey of Walnut Creek Club in advance of use of their levees for access to repair the levee with Wings Landing restoration.

Mr. Hagani continued to progress on work on reports or manuscripts of previous projects on the spray drone, historic spread of Phragmites, and historic mouse trapping datasets. He spent most of the month preparing for the regionwide salt marsh harvest mouse survey, and on June 16th, we convened the final SMHM Regionwide Survey coordination meeting. He also wrote an article on the project for the next newsletter. On July 11th, the regionwide survey started with 6 sites surveyed in the first week.

Fish screens were pulled on July 6, 12, and 13. A few of the screens were buried in mud and difficult to remove, but eventually, all but two screen was taken out of the water. On July 11th, the very final individual management plans were distributed, and the update has been completed. Mr. Taylor drafted drought response letters that will be sent out after Board approval today. Mr. Chappell, Ms. Collins, and I are continuing work on a revision to an essential fish screen grant submitted last year and other consideration for reduced funding this year that is due on July 29th.

Water Manager Phelan McKinney has taken a job with the Western Region of Ducks Unlimited and will work his last day on July 29th. On July 6th, the Water Manager Biologist position vacancy was posted for applications.

f) Lower Joice Island Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Lower Joice Island update. Mr. Mouton continued to maintain the facilities and habitat on the island. On June 15-16, SRCD staff and Robert Eddings, CWA techs Madison Perry, Eric Nunez, Lisa Defillips, and I installed 4 canal gates on the pipes through the middle levee of the island. Mr. Mouton used the excavator to fill in some erosion holes behind the caretaker house, and he obtained new filters for the excavator. He installed new blinds in several rooms in the clubhouse, and he completed his chemical training with Mr. Edmunds.

g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ Mr. Chappell reported on our meetings. He noted the Delta Conservancy site visit mentioned in the Water Manager report. The fish screen grant resubmittal will be conducted on July 29th. The Suisun Conservation Fund Fun Shoot will be held 29th of July and SCF is seeking donations. September 21st is the date of the Fall Landowner Workshop. Mr. Chappell will attend the Delta Conservancy Board meeting in late July. Discussion ensued.

9). Suisun Resource Conservation District Committee Reports ~

a) Agency Committee ~ No report.

b) Legal Committee ~ No report.

c) Personnel Committee ~ There is a memorandum to raise the vacation accrual cap because a previous amendment allowing an employee to request a vacation leave payout if approaching the leave cap. We were informed by the Solano County payroll department that vacation leave payouts were against IRS code. We need to amend our personnel policy to raise our cap by 50 hours to cover SRCD staff from losing any earned vacation leave, and to amend our policy to comply with the IRS. Mr. Lewis made a motion to increase the vacation accrual cap, and Mr. Connolly seconded the motion, all were in favor by roll call vote and the motion passed. Lastly annual staff reviews will be on July 21st.

d) Finance Committee ~ No report.

e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.

9. Meeting Adjourned ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Waters and seconded by Mr. Connolly all were in favor by roll call vote and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 PM.