

MINUTES

SUISUN RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY, November 8th, 2023, AT 2:00 PM
SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS
675 TEXAS STREET
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Jim Waters
Kent Hansen
Mike Lewis

OTHERS PRESENT: Laureen Barthman-Thompson, DFW
Steven Chappell, SRCD
Kevin Clark, DWR
Tim Edmunds, SRCD
John Eudy, SRCD Assoc. Director
Marina Guzman, SRCD
Kelli Perez, SRCD
Jamel Stewart, DWR
John Takekawa, SRCD
John Telfer, SRCD Assoc. Director
Dick Vanderkous, SRCD Assoc. Director

1. Call to Order ~ Mr. Waters called the Suisun Resource Conservation District Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:04 PM.

2. Public Comments ~ There were no public comments.

3. Open Session ~ Mr. Waters opened the November 8, 2023, Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Waters asked for consideration of agenda Item 3a.

a) Approval of the October 11, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes ~ Mr. Waters asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2023, Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Hansen; all were in favor and the motion carried.

4. Financial Reports ~

a) Approval of Vendor Claims for October 2023 ~ Mr. Chappell reported that the October 2023 SRCD General Fund vendor claims totaled \$208,309.73. Claims 45, 46, 48, and 49 were landowner drought response claims reimbursement. Claim 47 for DWR's Arnold Slough levee repairs. This expense is reimbursable under the DWR FRPA contract. The remaining claims were normal monthly SRCD operational and salary expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the October 2023 Lower Joice Island vendor claims totaling \$10,211.99. All expenses were normal LJI operational expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the October 2023 Water Managers Program vendor claims totaled \$23,919.25. All expenses were normal Water Managers operational expenses. Mr. Chappell reported the October 2023 Special Revenue Department vendor claims for the portable pump program expenses, which totaled \$9,619.95 that include Van Sickle Island pumping costs. Mr. Lewis moved to approve the vendor claim summaries as presented, Mr. Hansen seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

b) FY 23-24, 1st Quarter Budget Summary Review ~ Mr. Chappell presented SRCD's 1st Quarter Budget Summary Review. The financial report from Solano County was provided for 25% of the fiscal year. Revenues in most Departments are zero or very low because most SRCD grants require reimbursement of incurred costs. Most of these 1st quarter expenses have not yet been billed. Lower Joice Islands expenses are at 19% year-to-date and 26% with operational expenses. Mr. Chappell reviewed the Delta Stewardship Council, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation study, pest weed control program, DWR Support grant the PAI cost share fund expenses, the Delta Conservancy, and the DWR Mein's Landing support grant expenses. For the SRCD Water Manager Program salary expenses are at 18% and operational expenses are at 20% of the budget. For SRCD's General Fund salary expenses are at 22% and operational expenses are at 29% of the budget. The SFB Restoration Authority grant for the fish screens has a zero balance. Other small grants have yet to be billed, and SRCD portable pump usage will be billed in the future.

5. Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) Report ~ There was no DFW report.

6. Department of Water Resources Report ~ Jamel Stewart presented the DWR Suisun Marsh briefing packet. For the month of October, salinity standards were 19 mS/cm. The Progressive Daily Mean (PDM) salinities in the Marsh ranged from 2.6 to 10.9 mS/cm. At the end of October, net Delta outflow was 9,622 cfs. As of November 5th, salinities ranged from 2.9 to 9.7 mS/cm with Delta outflow of 4,664 cfs with a salinity standard of 15.5 mS/cm at the eastern stations and 16.5 mS/cm at the western stations. We remain in a drought deficiency period based on the previous year drought conditions. Delta outflow was 4,664 cfs. DWR has installed a buoy near the Volanti station, but no data is currently available outside of salinity. Ibis salinity monitoring station is offline with repairs being addressed. Discussion ensued.

The Roaring River Distribution System water levels continue to be monitored following high tides, and both drains have remained open since June 5th. Environmental staff conducted levee erosion surveys on October 16th and 30th. Screen cleaning was conducted every other day in early October. For the Morrow Island Distribution System, DWR continues working with Union Pacific – there have not been updates to DWR since early September. Goodyear Slough Outfall (GYSO) maintenance was completed on October 2nd. At the Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates, tidal operations ceased, and gates remain in the open position since June 5th. Gate 1 is out for refurbishment and will be swapped with Gate 2 from November 8-17. There was no update for the Montezuma Day Use Area. Russian Thistle remains prevalent at several sites in the Marsh, but there are no new plans for combatting it. Discussion ensued.

California reservoir capacity in October ranged from 50-89% in the northern Sierra and in the southern Sierra 27-93%. For the new water year beginning on October 1st, precipitation year to date was 21% of average in the northern Sierra and 9% in the southern Sierra. Discussion ensued.

7. Suisun Resource Conservation District Reports ~

- a) 2015 Suisun Marsh Preservation Agreement: Mr. Chappell reported that the SMPA agreement programs continues. Monthly calls continue with DWR Branch Chief Dean Messer including updates on monthly payment of SRCD contract expenses. The SMPA 5-year review remains in review, and DFW provided their comments. If it is determined that the 2015 SMPA needs to be revised, the SMPA Negotiators group will be convened and SRCD will engage SRCD counsel to assist in document and contract amendment review.
- b) 2023 PAI Program Update ~ Mr. Chappell provided an update for the PAI Program cost share program. We are awaiting completion of 2023 projects and have

processed receipts for 3 projects. Water Managers are conducting post construction project reviews, and they must be able to see the project after completion prior to flooding for approving payment. The program will likely have reduced funds available in 2024, and that may require prioritization of funding certain types of projects.

- c) Suisun Marsh Plan Update ~ There have been no changes with the Suisun Marsh Plan Implementation. Regular monthly meetings for the SMP Principals continue. The last Principal's meeting was October 12th with the next call scheduled for November 9th. The quarterly AMAT meeting has been cancelled.
- d) USACE Permits – RGP 3 & LOP Permit Update ~ SRCD continues to administer the RGP 3 permit. Letters have been sent to landowners to complete actual work reports by November 15th. The 2023 BCDC Marsh Development permit was issued for levee maintenance dredging. Also, the State Lands Commission 10-year dredging lease is expiring, and SRCD has initiated the renewal process.
- e) Water Manager (WM) Program Update ~ Mr. Takekawa provided the Water Manager program update. All of the Water Managers completed flood-up coordination on their clubs, and Ms. Guzman attended the weekly DWR flood-up coordination call for the Roaring River Distribution System which went well this year and ended on October 17th. Mr. Taylor and the water managers began requesting photos and documenting completed work under the RGP3 permit. Mr. Taylor coordinated the RGP3 permit reporting and managed the water quality sondes and data.

Ms. Guzman mailed out the quarterly West Wind newsletter on October 17th. She repaired and maintained all of our fire equipment used for marsh management burning. She worked on a schedule for flooding clubs along Peytonia Slough to benefit the water quality. She arranged for maintenance oil changes, installation, and daily refueling of 2 pumps on Van Sickle Island to respond to a special request for assistance in drainage at the request of the Reclamation District after their levee breach was repaired. Finally, she completed the first gate monitoring survey on November 7th.

Mr. Edmunds continued to work on the repair of fish screen systems including wiring damage caused by rats. The proposal that he submitted to the Solano County Fish and Wildlife Propagation fund was accepted to cost share efforts for an updated vegetation guide, and he is planning to attend the County Parks meeting on November 9th when the award is finalized. He installed a new bilge pump and repaired the bottom of the gate monitoring boat. He also worked with a mechanic to remove the hydraulic pumps from the boom truck to have them rebuilt or replaced.

On October 13th, Mr. Takekawa conducted a job walk at DWR Mein's Landing levee repairs and awarded the contract to a pre-qualified vendor on October 19th. Levee repair work at Arnold Slough was completed on October 20th. On October 23rd, Mr. Takekawa hosted a Phragmites Study project meeting, and on October 24th, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended a meeting of the Suisun Landscapes Tool project. They met with the DWR Fish Restoration Program to discuss removing water diversions after tidal restoration on October 25th. Ms. Guzman, Mr. Edmunds, and Mr. Takekawa met to work on datasets from our water level loggers for our Delta Conservancy project. Dr. Gaby Keeler-May visited from October 26th to November 2nd to collect Phragmites control surveys results from landowners and staff and to conduct in-person interviews. On October 27th, Mr. Takekawa met with Dr. Susan De La Cruz at USGS to discuss midwinter waterfowl surveys and Suisun Marsh projects. Levee repair work at Mein's Landing began on November 1st and was scheduled to be completed by the middle of the month. Finally, on November 1st, Mr. Chappell and Mr. Takekawa attended a Tidal Restoration workshop in West Sacramento hosted by DWR and the Delta Stewardship Council.

- 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. He handled facility maintenance in preparation for the hunting season including filling propane and water jugs and emptying the septic holding tank. He installed new cleats and bumpers on the main dock and used quick patch to repair the concrete surface. He installed a no wake buoy. The rebuilding of the clubhouse porch was completed with final installation of screens and painting of the exposed surfaces. The ozonator water system was moved to the back of the porch, and the solar panels were cleaned. New dock poles were installed at the Pierce Harbor dock.

Opening day of waterfowl season at Joice Island Gun Club was successful. For the October 21st, opener the total bag was 50 birds including 12 mallards and 18 teal taken by 11 hunters (4.5 birds/hunter) and 9 birds on Sunday by 9 hunters (1.0 birds/hunter). In comparison, the total bag for the 2022 opener was 53 birds including 11 mallards and 29 teal taken by 10 hunters (5.3 birds/hunter). In 2021, 49 birds were taken on the opener by 9 hunters (5.4 birds/hunter) including 6 mallards and 16 teal on the opening Saturday by 9 hunters (5.4 birds/hunter). The average for the first 3 weekends (30 hunter days) was 2.9 birds including 17 mallards and 32 teal. In 2022, the average was 5.2 birds and in 2021, the average was 2.6 birds.

- g) Summary of Past & Future Meetings, Tours, and Presentations ~ A SRCD comment letter was provided to Suisun City on their proposed warehouse development project adjacent to the Suisun Marsh. SRCD supported work by Solano RCD watershed explorer's program through a grant from Valero. Discussion ensued.

8). Suisun Resource Conservation District Committee Reports ~

- a) Agency Committee ~ No report.
- b) Legal Committee ~ No report. A closed session will follow these reports.
- c) Personnel Committee ~ No report.
- d) Finance Committee ~ Fechter and Associates has scheduled our FY 22-23 audit to start in January with fieldwork.
- e) Associate Directors Committee ~ No report.

9. Closed Session ~ 1) Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) Significant exposure to litigation:
2) Conference with Labor Negotiators: agency designated representatives: Directors H. Kent Hansen, Janes Waters, and Mike Lewis. Unrepresentative Employees: Executive Director, Operations Manager, Office Supervisor, Water Managers, Biologist, and Lower Joice Island Resident Caretaker. ~ 2 Cases.

10. Reconvene ~ There was nothing to report from case #1) Conference with Legal Counsel. For case #2) Conference with Labor Negotiators -- the Board accepted the Chair of the Personnel Committee recommendation for the 2023 SRCD Staff Salary Considerations. Mr. Lewis made a motion to accept the recommendations, seconded by Mr. Hansen, all were in favor and the motion carried.

11. Meeting Adjournment ~ A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Hansen, all were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 PM.