



SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE AUTHORITY
Minutes of January 15, 2009

5:00 pm: Chair Bob Anderson call the meeting of the Open Space Authority Board to order at 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, California.

Directors Present: Bob Anderson, Liza Prunuske, Al Alys, Mike Sangiacomo

Directors Absent: Jean Kapolchok, Paul Hammond, Alternate

District Staff: Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager; Maria J. Cipriani, Assistant General Manager; Bill Keene, Assistant General Manager; Misti Arias, Conservation Program Manager; Karen Gaffney, Stewardship Program Manager; Marta Puente, Land Acquisition Specialist; Paul Rowan, Land Acquisition Specialist; Sue Gallagher, Deputy County Counsel

Sue Jackson, Deputy Clerk/Recorder; Shane Lewis, Bookkeeper

Public Attendees: John Guardino

1. **Agenda Items to be Held or Taken Out of Order; Off Agenda Items.**

Chair Anderson called for items to be held, taken out of order, or off the agenda. There were none.

2. **General Announcements not Requiring Deliberation.**

GM Andrea Mackenzie made the following announcements:

- The District filled two positions in December, per the approved reorganization: Karen Gaffney, Stewardship Program Manager, and Lulu Waks, Stewardship Technician. Ms. Gaffney was previously the Executive Director of West Coast Watershed, a private consulting firm, where she worked on behalf of several North Coast projects. Ms. Waks has recently completed a tour of the Far East, where she participated in two volunteer natural resource/conservation research projects in India.
- Escrow closed on the Walsh/Sonoma Mountain project in late December. She commended staff, Counsel, and District partners, for their diligence in getting the project completed. The Sonoma Mountain acquisition is one of three projects in the greater San Francisco Bay Area that came to fruition prior to the State's Stop Work Order.
- The effect the State's Stop Work Order has had on bonds that fund acquisition, conservation, restoration projects and the ripple effect on public agencies and their non-profit partners, and on the private consultants and companies that are doing the field work. According to the State Coastal Conservancy, there are

approximately \$178 million in projects that will be impacted by the freeze of pooled money investment, preventing the use of general obligation bonds such as Props 84 and 50.

- To date, the District anticipates that it will not lose any acquisition projects, although Jenner Headlands potentially could be impacted. Bill Keene reported that work on two Stewardship projects, the North Slope Sonoma Mountain Trail and Saddle Mountain Management Plan has been affected.

A discussion about the overall impact followed, including:

- Ms. Gaffney noted a project with the Shasta County Resource Conservation District, wherein dams that are barriers to fish passage, particularly the endangered Coho Salmon, have been removed. The dam removal has been completed; the Coho is returning. However, the pipelines are not finished and, therefore, there is no irrigation water, having a profound consequence throughout the State.
- Ms. Mackenzie stated that organizations, e.g., the Coastal Conservancy, are seeking an opinion from the State regarding the possibility of using alternative sources of funding; those sources to be reimbursed by the State at a later date.
- Director Prunuske identified a potential funding source through the State Water Resources Control Board, the vehicle through which President Obama's economic stimulus is coming to the environmental realm. Over \$1 billion may be available for projects such as those that have lost Coastal Conservancy funding.

Ms. Mackenzie announced and distributed copies of "Golden Lands Golden Opportunity," a report prepared by the Bay Area Open Space Council, the Greenbelt Alliance, 110 open space districts, land trusts, and conservation organizations in the greater Bay Area. Its focus is the consolidation of data from the nine Bay Area counties to identify high priority lands for preservation, acquisition, and public policy. It will be delivered to ABAG, county boards of supervisors, other public officials and the media. The State Coastal Conservancy may use this document to prioritize funding for projects.

A companion piece, the "Upland Habitat Goals Report" is anticipated for release this summer. It will address scientific data regarding how much of each type of resource is necessary to protect biodiversity throughout the nine-county greater Bay Area.

Ms. Mackenzie introduced and distributed the District's "Open Space matters...to everyone," a DVD documentary that positions the District as a keen epicenter of quality of life issues in Sonoma County.

3. **Public Comment.** *(Items not on the agenda)*

John Guardino thanked the Authority for bringing the Sittenauer project back for consideration. He encouraged the District to move forward in an effort to establish the first agency "Affirmative Easement" in Sonoma County. He stated that, given the economic climate and the value comparison of residential versus agricultural properties in California, this project will "create hope in concrete form" for a large number of farmers who want to replace the aging population of small farmers. He stated that the project will create a model not only for land preservation but also for future affordability and continued production on a number of small farm properties in the County.

4. **Review of Authority Rules and Rotation of Officers**

The Authority reviewed the Minute Order - Accepting the Rules for Governance and acknowledging rotation of officers. The new Authority officers are: Chair/Manager, Liza Prunuske; Vice Chair/Clerk, Mike Sangiacomo; Al Alys, Chair Pro Tem.

The Order was approved as follows:

Motion by Director Alys
Seconded by Director Prunuske

 4 Ayes No 1 Absent Abstain

SO ORDERED

Director Anderson transferred the position of Chair to Liza Prunuske. Director Prunuske continued the meeting with an acknowledgement of the passing of former Director Charles Cooke.

5. **Bookkeeper's Report and Approval of Claims.**

Mr. Lewis reported that revenue is within the anticipated revenue budget. Revenue resulting from the holiday season sales tax will not be available until January. There were no claims.

6. **Approval of Authority Minutes.**

Minutes for November 19th and December 11th were tabled until the next meeting due to lack of a quorum.

On a motion by Director Alys and seconded by Director Sangiacomo, the minutes for November 13th and December 8th were unanimously approved as written.

Directors Kapolchek and Sangiacomo were appointed to the Budget Subcommittee; Director Anderson as Alternate. The Minute Order appointing directors to other subcommittees was tabled until the February 5th meeting.

7. **Closed Session.**

Prior to adjourning for Closed Session, Director Prunuske recused herself from discussion of the Sittenauer project.

The Authority adjourned to Closed Session Re: Sittenauer and Gilardi projects at 5:50 pm and reconvened to Open Session at 7:05 pm.

8. **Report on Closed Session.**

Chair Prunuske reported that the Board met in closed session and gave direction to staff on the Sittenauer and Gilardi projects.

9. **Suggested Next Meeting.** February 5, 2009

10. **Adjournment.** Chair Prunuske adjourned the meeting at 7:10 pm in memory of Charles Cooke.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Jackson
Deputy Clerk/Recorder
Open Space Authority