



Attachment "A"

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
April 25, 2013 MINUTES

5:05 p.m. Meeting convened at the District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue,
Suite 100, Santa Rosa, California

Members Present

Laurie Gallian	Kristin Thigpen	Jan McFarland	Jeff Holtzman
Shanti Edwards	Steve Rabinowitsh	Gary Wysocky	
Dennis Murphy	Bill Smith	John Nagle	

Members Absent

Cary Fargo	Don McEnhill
Sue Conley	John Dell'Osso

Staff Present Bill Keene, General Manager; Mary Dodge, Administrative & Fiscal Services Manager; Stuart Martin, Land Acquisition Specialist; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Public Attendees Tom Hammond

Public Comment

No public comments on items not on agenda.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Gallian asked for comments on the minutes of March 28, 2013. Motion by Steve Rabinowitsh to approve minutes and Don McEnhill seconded the approval of the minutes. Eight members were in favor.

General Manager's Report

- There are still three vacancies on the committee: Second District, Business and Agriculture. District is working to fill vacancies and is open to suggestions from the Advisory Committee.

- Sales tax revenue is growing. Last year it was 18.6 percent and it is projected to be over 19 percent this year. In the highest year, 2006-2007, the percentage was 19.8. Not sure why the high percentage but it could be the rebounding economy or online sales tax that is being enforced. The District may be able to spend more on projects than previously forecasted.
- The Preservation Ranch project is moving forward rapidly. Will be taken to the Board of Directors on May 7 and hopefully closing by the end of May. There is great potential for forest and watershed restoration. The District is working with the Conservation Fund, the California State Coastal Conservancy and Sonoma Land Trust to purchase the property. Grants have been approved by the Conservancy for \$10 million and by the Moore Foundation for \$1 million. The property extends from south to north for 28 miles and when combined with existing Conservation Fund lands, will comprise more than 58,000 acres. The property is east of Sea Ranch in the hills and is the District's largest conservation easement. It is adjacent to Soda Springs Park and the District is working on getting public access from that point.
- The Forever Forestville Matching Grant Program project was accepted into the District's Matching Grant Program by the Board of Supervisors on September 18, 2012 with funding of up to \$750,000 towards acquisition of approximately 8.6 acres in downtown Forestville to become a town plaza and open space. Forestville Planning Association has the property under purchase contract with a closing date of July 31 of this year.
- Cap and Trade auction revenue investment plan draft is out for review by ARB - so far easements and backfilling of Williamson Act are included. District has been participating in legislative input sessions in Sacramento on this topic. Will continue to advocate for this funding to be part of the AB 32 investment plan.
- The District was awarded a \$250,000 grant from SCTA via ABAG-MTC to work with other county partners such as SCTA and PRMD on developing an integrated GHG reporting tool for the county that includes conservation of natural areas and working lands.
- Workshops on economic value of conservation will be held May 13 and May 17 at the District. Advisory Committee members have been sent the meeting announcements.
- The revised mitigation policy will come to the Advisory Committee for the May meeting and hopefully to the Board midyear. Members are welcome to submit input and to send the policy to others for input.
- The District has been talking with PG&E about transmission line right of way management versus reclamation. The District will bring the plan back to the Board this summer.
- O&M funding expenditure recent research and analysis by staff and County Auditor's Office indicates that we are on target with 10% spending of sales tax revenues on initial public access, operations and maintenance of district-protected recreational properties.

Bill Keene, General Manager, invited Advisory Committee Members to meet with him individually, and these meetings can be conducted on District properties.

Agricultural Conservation Easements

Stuart Martin, Land Acquisitions Specialist, presented a PowerPoint presentation to

the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Conservation Easements. Mr. Martin highlighted two projects: Crane Home Ranch and Smith Family Ranch. The PowerPoint presentation is available upon request at the District office.

Meet & Greet with Mary Dodge

Mr. Keene, General Manager, introduced Mary Dodge, the District's new Administrative and Fiscal Services Manager. Ms. Dodge retired from the City of El Cerrito as Finance Director. She has also worked at the City of Concord and Antioch, as well as Maze and Associates, the District's current auditor. Mary will be helping the District with planning on how to spend revenue with focus on the long term financial planning and the long term stewardship reserve. Mary introduced herself and expressed her desire to be here and to be making a fresh start, and her excitement and motivation for the challenges ahead.

Projects in Negotiations

- Fitch Mountain is taking longer than expected due to some encroachment issues with the acquisition. Hopefully only another couple months.
- Preservation Ranch will close at the end of May.

Mr. Keene announced the District's new Public Engagement Specialist, Sorrel Allen, who is developing the Public Engagement Program. Her focus will be on how the District engages with the community and she will be getting the message of the District out into the community. This item will be coming to the Advisory Committee in a future meeting and Sorrel will be working with the Advisory Committee members.

The District will also be hiring a new Public Information Specialist later this year. This person's focus will be with media communication and how to deliver the District's message.

The members showed interest in the Projects in Negotiations spreadsheet and asked several questions regarding the properties listed and wanted to know the progress. Mr. Keene will provide the members a spreadsheet that shows how each project began, the money assigned, what's going to happen next, and what needs to be done. This item will be agendaized and brought to the Advisory Committee for the next scheduled meeting in May.

Announcements From Advisory Committee Members

Steve Rabinowitsh

Hiked to the top of Taylor Mountain and said it was beautiful and encouraged others to hike it as well.

Dennis Murphy

1. Is only able to attend meetings every other month due to another commitment.
2. The Sotoyome RCD consolidated with the Southern RCD on the LandSmart Program. LandSmart is a regional, collaborative program that helps land managers meet their natural resource management goals while supporting productive lands and thriving streams.
3. There is a third party independent study person for Graton Rancheria groundwater measurements.

Laurie Gallian

Passed around to members the Farm News publication—a wonderful way for ordinary people in Sonoma County to relay agricultural news and activities to the community.

Adjournment: 6:45 pm

Next scheduled meeting date: May 23, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson,
Advisory Committee Secretary