



AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

APPROVED MINUTES

747 Mendocino Avenue – Suite 100, Santa Rosa, CA 95401
December 12, 2019 | 5:00 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Smith	Paul Martin	Doug Lipton	John Nagle
Alex Wood	Curt Nichols	Taj Hittenberger	
John Dell’Osso	Steve Rabinowitsh	Don McEnhill	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jennielynn Holmes	Evan Wiig	Leah Gold
Steve Barbose	Cary Fargo	Tawny Tesconi
Austin Maners	Neysa Hinton	Jan McFarland

STAFF PRESENT:

Bill Keene, General Manager; Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist; Lauren Alpert, Community Relations Assistant; Jen Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator; Allison Schichtel, Senior Conservation Planner; Aldo Mercado, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Dell’Osso called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Curt Nichols motioned to approve the minutes from October 24, 2019 as is, and Bill Smith seconded the motion. All in favor, with six abstentions from Don McEnhill, John Nagle, Steve Rabinowitsh, Paul Martin, Taj Hittenberger and Doug Lipton who were not in attendance at the October meeting.

General Manager’s Report Out

- The Vital Lands Initiative draft will go to the Board next Tuesday on December 17, 2019 from 2:00 to 4:00.
- The Taylor Mountain Cooper Creek extension, north of Farmers Lane, will go to the Board January 14, 2020.
- The final Vital Lands Initiative document will go to the Board in the beginning of 2020.

- The Stewardship Workshop/Update will go to the Board on April 7, 2020.
- Jacobsen Ranches, on the western edge of Petaluma, went to the Board this week and was approved.
- Conservation Planning staff are working on the Education and Outings program RFP for new three-year contracts starting this next spring.
- Ag + Open Space was awarded the Department of Conservation grant in the amount of \$195 thousand and have an application in for a new Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant in the amount of \$10 million. We are collaborating with the RCD's on our current DOC and RCPP grants and are proposing to collaborate with them on the new one as well.
- Steve Rabinowitsh, current advisory committee member, has not been reappointed for another term. Mr. Rabinowitsh spoke about his time in service to Ag + Open Space, since 1989 before the measure was even on the ballot. He helped create the Matching Grant Program, the expenditure plan and served on the steering committee for the 1990 Measures A and C. He started his service on the Advisory Committee when the District began and before there was any public land. He will continue to attend the meetings in the future if needed until someone else is appointed. Chair Dell'Osso and Bill Keene, General Manager, would like him to continue to serve until the new person is appointed

Subcommittee Report Out

The Advisory Committee currently has one active subcommittee, the Matching Grant Program. An update of the program will take place in the next agenda item.

Matching Grant Program 2020 Kickoff

Jennifer Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator, discussed the changes to the Matching Grant Program that were approved by the Board on November 12, 2019. One of the changes approved was to allocate \$4 million for the 2020 cycle instead of the usual \$2 million. Also, there will be a prioritization on fire and flood affected properties.

The 2020 program will be launched at the end of January 2020 with two public workshops, one on January 31, 2020 from 9:00 to 12:00 and one on February 11, 2020 from 2:00 to 5:00. Both workshops will be held at Ag + Open Space offices.

For more information on the Matching Grant Program, the PowerPoint presentation is available at Ag + Open Space, or contact Ms. Kuszmar.

Community Relations Strategy

Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist, and Lauren Alpert, Community Relations Assistant, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Community Relations Strategy. They presented the background, an overview and individual objectives. There was a discussion following the presentation and advice from the Committee was welcomed. Chair Dell'Osso opened the discussion to the public. Ken Wells was in favor of the strategy and offered some advice.



Ms. Ricard and Ms. Alpert handed out Working Lands Calendars for 2020 and hats with the Ag + Open Space logo to the committee members and members of the public.

For more information on the Community Relations Strategy, the PowerPoint presentation is available at Ag + Open Space or contact Ms. Ricard or Ms. Alpert.

Projects in Negotiation

No report out.

Announcements from Advisory Committee Members and Members of the Public

Steve Rabinowitsh shared some information on the Southwest Greenway. There is a fundraising effort underway for \$100,000 and they have already received \$55,000. They are starting negotiations.

John Dell'Osso shared that the County Board of Supervisors have joined with cities and counties in declaring a climate emergency, establishing that dealing with climate change is a top priority.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Next Meeting: January 23, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson
Advisory Committee Secretary

