



AG + OPEN SPACE
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

APPROVED MINUTES

**Virtual Meeting Due to Sonoma County's Shelter in Place Order
December 9, 2021 | 5:00 pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Rabinowitsh	Don McEnhill	Wendy Eliot	Jan McFarland
Cary Fargo	Tawny Tesconi	Bill Smith	Jesús Guzmán
Paul Martin	Curt Nichols	Sue Conley	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

John Nagle	Michelle Whitman	Neysa Hinton	Kristina Tierney
Brian Barnacle			

STAFF PRESENT:

Misti Arias, General Manager; Jennifer Kuszmar, Acquisition Manager; Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Manager; Kim Batchelder, Vegetation Management Coordinator; Allison Schichtel, Senior Conservation Planner; Monica Delmartini, Stewardship Specialist; Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist; Sara Ortiz, Administrative Aide; Aldo Mercado, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Call to Order

Vice Chair Don McEnhill, standing in for Chair Michelle Whitman, called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Public Comment

Vice Chair McEnhill asked for any public comments on items not on the agenda. Susan Kirks had a public comment on Paula Lane Open Space Preserve, requesting support for the badgers that have been misplaced on this property and feels the habitat needs to be restored.

Approval of Minutes from October 28, 2021

Vice Chair McEnhill asked for any comments or revisions regarding the October 28, 2021 minutes. Two corrections were noted: Ms. Whitman did not make the comment on Big Sulphur Creek, it was Wendy Eliot. Also, Bill Smith was listed as absent at the last meeting but he was present. Tawny Tesconi motioned for the minutes to be approved with corrections. Wendy Eliot seconded the motion. All in approval: Steve Rabinowitsh, Curt Nichols, Sue Conley, Cary Fargo, Bill Smith, Don McEnhill, Wendy Eliot, Tawny Tesconi and Paul Martin. Jan McFarland and Jesús Guzmán abstained as they were not present at the October meeting. There were no public comments on the minutes.

General Manager's Report

- Misti Arias, General Manager, announced that they are launching a second round of requests for proposals for the PG&E Vegetation Management Program on December 16, 2021. The application deadline is January 23, 2022. We will be hosting two community outreach and training workshops: January 5, 2022 and January 13, 2022. The proposed budget is up to \$4 million for this round.
- The landowners of El Recreo, 300 acres near Hood Mountain Regional Park off of Highway 12, have accepted our offer to purchase a conservation easement. This project will go to the Board on January 25, 2022.
- We will be reaching out to the members of the Acquisition Subcommittee as well as the Matching Grant Subcommittee this month to set up meetings in early 2022. The Acquisition Subcommittee will be reviewing draft project evaluation criteria and the MGP Subcommittee will be reviewing the 2022 guidelines and proposed schedule.
- On Tuesday, December 7, 2021, Mary Chambers, Agricultural Specialist, Stephanie Tavares-Buhler, Senior Acquisition Specialist, and Ms. Arias, along with others, participated in a webinar hosted by the Sonoma County Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF). The topic was Enhancing Access to Agricultural Lands.
- Audit Services Agreement and the Herbicide Use Report are going to the Board on December 14, 2021.
- Ms. Arias welcomed the newest Advisory Committee member, Jesús Guzmán, to the Advisory Committee. Mr. Guzmán introduced himself to the Advisory Committee members.

Vice Chair McEnhill asked if there were any public comments on the approval of the minutes or the General Managers report out, but there were none.

Protected Lands and Wildfire: Response, Fire Impacts, and Ongoing Efforts

Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Manager, Monica Delmartini, Stewardship Specialist, and Allison Schichtel, Senior Conservation Planner, introduced the Protected Lands and Wildfire item. They gave an update on the work relating to wildfire: the properties affected, Ag + Open Space's role in fire response, current and upcoming land management, planning, and collaboration efforts, and maps of the fire-affected areas.

Vice Chair McEnhill opened up the meeting for discussion with the Advisory Committee members and members of the public. The members asked questions but there were no public comments.

For more information, please feel free to contact Ms. Emerson, Ms. Delmartini or Ms. Schichtel at Ag + Open Space. The PowerPoint presentation is available upon request.

Vital Lands Initiative Implementation Update

Ms. Arias presented the Vital Lands Initiative Implementation update. She asked for the Advisory Committee's thoughts and feedback. The implementation will focus on measurable priorities moving forward. These will be high level goals and objectives with feasible outcomes, and the workload will be prioritized. A top goal is to conserve 30% of Sonoma County lands by 2030. Since 1991 the Ag + Open Space has preserved 12% of the county. Vital Lands will help to identify and protect the highest priority lands.



The discussion was opened up to Advisory Committee members. Members shared that they would like to be able to think about the presentation and bring it back in January for discussion and to hear more. There was a request to have the PowerPoint presentation be sent out to the members.

Public comment from Susan Kirks, who is in support of the Advisory Committee thinking about the presentation and bringing it back to be agendaized for the January meeting. Ms. Kirks asked that the presentation be sent out to her as well.

For more information please feel free to contact Ms. Arias at Ag + Open Space. The PowerPoint presentation is available upon request.

Projects in Negotiations

No questions or comments on Projects in Negotiations.

Announcements from Advisory Committee Members

No announcements were made.

Adjournment

Vice Chair McEnhill adjourned the meeting at 6:45.

Next Meeting: January 27, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson
Advisory Committee Secretary

