



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
February 25, 2021 | 5:00 pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michelle Whitman	Bill Smith	John Nagle	Ariel Kelley
Curt Nichols	Neysa Hinton	Paul Martin	Brian Barnacle
Jan McFarland	Jennielynn Holmes	Sue Conley	Doug Lipton
Tawny Tesconi	Don McEnhill	Kristina Tierney	

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Cary Fargo

STAFF PRESENT:

Caryl Hart, Interim General Manager; Misti Arias, Acquisition Manager; Jennifer Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator; Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist; Lauren Alpert, Community Relations Assistant; Sara Ortiz, Administrative Aide; Lisa Pheatt, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Call to Order

Chair Whitman called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. She welcomed new members, Ariel Kelley and Brian Barnacle, both representing Mayors and Councilmembers.

Public Comment

Chair Whitman asked for any public comments on items not on the agenda.

Susan Kirks, representing two non-profits in the community, Paula Lane Network and Madrone Audubon Society, welcomed Chair Whitman as the new chair, and wished John Dell'Osso, former chair and member, the best. Ms. Kirks discussed the projects that the non-profits are working on. The Paula Lane Network is creating a wildlife corridor map of southern Sonoma County that she will provide to staff and members. The Madrone Audubon Society is working on a tree vegetation understory resource list that connects needed resources and she will provide this to staff and members as well, probably in early March.

Resolution of Appreciation for John Dell'Osso

Vice Chair Don McEnhill read and presented the Resolution of Appreciation to former Advisory Committee member and Chair, John Dell'Osso, who was in attendance, on behalf of the Advisory Committee Members and Ag + Open Space staff. Mr. Dell'Osso was a member of the Advisory Committee since 2013 until January 2021, when he stepped down from the position. He served as Chair of the committee since 2017. Advisory Committee members, members of the public and staff thanked Mr. Dell'Osso for his service. Mr. Dell'Osso expressed his thanks to all and his honor to have served in this position.

Approval of Minutes from January 28, 2021

Chair Whitman asked for any comments regarding the minutes. There were none. Neysa Hinton motioned for the minutes to be approved as is, and John Nagle seconded the motion. All in were in favor.

General Manager's Report

- Caryl Hart, Interim General Manager, welcomed the new members, Ariel Kelley and Brian Barnacle.
- The recruitment for the new General Manager position is moving forward. The first interviews will be held on March 18, 2021. There has been a broad national outreach for this position by the Board of Supervisors.
- The Agricultural Specialist position is also moving forward. Second interviews took place this week. This position will help the District build up relationships with the agricultural community.
- Ag + Open Space is moving forward to hire an Assistant General Manager position. This position will focus internally to allow the General Manager to be the external face of the District. Interviews will have taken place by the next Advisory Committee meeting.
- The ASAP Grant Program, providing small farmers who are struggling financially due to COVID-19, will be taken to the Board on March 2, 2021.
- The Emergency Roadside Hazard Tree Removal at Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve due to the Glass Fire also will be taken to the Board on March 2, 2021.
- Land Management Service Agreements will be taken to the Board on March 16, 2021.
- The Matching Grant Program Funding Recommendations will be taken to the Board on March 23, 2021.
- The Earthseed Conservation Easement Acquisition will be taken to the Board on April 20, 2021.
- The Calabazas and Wright Hill transfers to Regional Parks will be taken to the Board on May 11, 2021.
- The Oken Habitat Restoration Construction and Maintenance Contracts Award will be taken to the Board on June 8, 2021.



Subcommittee Report Out

The Matching Grant Program Subcommittee have been reviewing the 2020 Matching Grant Project applications to make recommendations at tonight's meeting, which will be presented to the Advisory Committee in the next agenda item. The approved recommendations will be brought to the Board on March 23, 2021.

Matching Grant Project Recommendations

Jennifer Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator, presented a PowerPoint presentation of the 2020 Matching Grant Program applications that were received and are being recommended by the Subcommittee. Nine applications were received, and six were recommended.

Chair Whitman opened the meeting to comments and discussion from the members, and then to the public. Members of the public expressed their support of individual projects.

Chair Whitman asked for a vote to accept the recommendations made by the Subcommittee. Don McEnhill motioned to approve the recommendations as presented. John Nagle seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor with two recusals, Ariel Kelley and Kristina Tierney recused themselves.

For more information, the PowerPoint presentation is available upon request, or contact Ms. Kuszmar at Ag + Open Space.

Community Relations Update

Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist, presented a PowerPoint presentation of a Community Relations Update. The presentation included recent media coverage, the outings and education program updates, online engagement community efforts, and messaging of wildfires and other topics.

For more information, the PowerPoint presentation is available upon request, or contact Ms. Ricard at Ag + Open Space.

Projects in Negotiations

Chair Whitman moved this item to next month's meeting.

Announcements from Advisory Committee Members

Chair Whitman moved this item to next month's meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Whitman adjourned the meeting at 7:08 pm in the memory of Jim Harberson.

Next Meeting: March 25, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson
Advisory Committee Secretary

