



Attachment "A"

*SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
April 23, 2015 MINUTES*

5:07 p.m. Meeting convened at the District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue,
Suite 100, Santa Rosa, California

Members Present

Sue Conley	Doug Lipton	John Nagle	Curt Nichols
Bill Smith	Jan McFarland	Cary Fargo	Gary Wysocky
Steve Rabinowitsh	Janet Orchard	Laurie Gallian	Don McEnhill
Shanti Edwards			

Members Absent

Kristin Thigpen	John Azevedo	Jeffrey Holtzman	John Dell'Osso
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Staff Present Bill Keene, General Manager; Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Public Comment

Chair Steve Rabinowitsh asked for public comments on items not listed on the agenda.

Duane DeWitt asked that the minutes be changed from the March 26, 2015 Advisory Committee Meeting. The General Manager had attended a conference at UC Berkeley and was reporting out on the keynote speaker, E. O Wilson, and called him 'the father of biodiversity'. Mr. DeWitt stated that that was not the full truth, that he was not the 'father' of biodiversity but rather that he studies it and is a supporter and researcher of biodiversity, and that the 'father' of biodiversity is nature itself, and much grander than a single human.

Mr. DeWitt also spoke of the Roseland Creek cleanup that resulted in twenty-two wheelbarrows of trash that included a homeless encampment. Mr. DeWitt explained that the District and the County has given more money to Roseland than the City of Santa Rosa and has kept hundreds upon hundreds of apartment buildings from being put in Roseland along the creek. But he feels it is unfair that the City of Santa Rosa has not pitched in to help and would like the members of the Advisory Committee to take note of this.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Rabinowitsh asked for comments on the minutes from March 26, 2015, and if the members were in agreement with the correction requested by Mr. DeWitt. Committee members agreed with Mr. DeWitt's correction and had no further corrections. There were six abstentions and six ayes and Chair Rabinowitsh announced that the minutes were approved with the correction.

General Manager's Report

- Bill Keene, General Manager, spoke about the summary of accomplishments by the Advisory Committee for the past year that were sent to the Board of Director's office. The report, Board, Committee, Commissions and Task Forces Annual Report 2014, was handed out to each member and Mr. Keene asked if there were any questions regarding what was reported and there were none. (A copy of the report is available upon request).
- In regards to youth representation on the Advisory Committee, given the busy schedules for students at this time of year, the District will be recruiting actively for the youth AC members in the fall when the school year starts. In the interim, District staff will prepare recruitment materials, reach out to key partner agencies and groups, and will ask for AC member mentors to support the recruitment process and the selected youth when they are on board. The District has already received inquiries regarding these positions.
- The District presented at the California Climate Agricultural Summit in Davis and the Sonoma County Climate Adaptation Forum on how agricultural lands are helping to reduce and avoid emissions, sequester carbon, and make the county more resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- The District co-sponsored the Growing Our Farms event that took place at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds in Santa Rosa this afternoon. Misti Arias, Acquisitions Program Manager, made a presentation on behalf of the District. The focus of this symposium was on how to connect farmers to available land, and Ag Innovations Network led a discussion that resulted in several creative ideas. Approximately 50 farmers attended, and around 20 were actually looking for land.
- The Glenn Ranch Application for grant funding went to the Board this week and was approved. There is a new state program called Sustainable Agricultural Conservation and its purpose is to help prevent increases in GHG emissions by limiting opportunities for expansion of vehicle-dependent forms of development. The grant is \$300,000 and would be used for a conservation easement on Glen Ranch.
- The Colgan Creek Matching Grant Project phase two and three went to the Board this week and was approved. The creek was once a straight channel but is now a meandering channel which performs better in storms and helps to protect the riparian habitat.
- Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager, attended the California Trails and Greenways Conference in Yosemite this week. The District received an award for the Montini project for innovative trail construction. Ms. Emerson accepted the award for the District and is presenting the District's work on the East Slope trail.
- The District Farm Center project will go to the Board on May 12, 2015. The District has been developing a conceptual plan. Mr. Keene invited members of the Advisory Committee and the public to attend the Board meeting in support of the project.
- The District will present a Conservation Easement Workshop to the Board in July 2015. This workshop is to educate the Board of Directors of the value of an easement, why an easement is done and how. This was recommended from the Management Review that was performed on the District last year.

- The District is co-sponsoring a new television program on NBC called Bay Area Open Road that is being hosted by Doug McConnell, who hosted Bay Area Back Roads years ago. The focus is on protected and preserved lands in the Bay Area. The episode on the District will air on Sunday, May 17, 2015 at 6:30 pm. The trailer for the show will be emailed to the Advisory Committee. Bianchi Diary will be highlighted as agricultural land, Alman Marsh in Petaluma for being a land on the urban edge, and the North Sonoma Mountain Regional Park for its wildlife corridor, habitat and views. The District may be highlighted again next season.
- The Bay Area Open Space Council is having their 25th Anniversary this year, as is the District. The District is sponsoring their conference in May. The District received five complementary tickets for being a sponsor and we have three tickets left for the anniversary dinner on Wednesday, May 13, 2015 at Craneway Pavilion in Richmond from 5:00 to 9:00 if anyone is interested in attending. The conference takes place all day on Thursday, May 14, 2015 and tickets are still available for purchase.

Susan Kirks, a member of the public, requested through the chair if she could make a comment on one of the items from the General Manager's report out. Ms. Kirks was very pleased that Alman Marsh in Petaluma is being highlighted on the NBC Bay Area Open Road television program. There is an endangered Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse in the Alman Marsh that she hopes gets mentioned in the program. Ms. Kirks also wanted to let the District know that the Petaluma Wetlands Alliance are the stewards and experts of the Marsh but they were not contacted regarding the filming for the show. She would like them to be considered in the future. The District chose the Friends of Petaluma River due to the river portion of the program, and Ms. Kirks agreed they are appropriate contacts as well.

Sub-committee Report Outs

Advisory Committee Member and Ag Subcommittee Chair John Nagle reported out on the Ag Subcommittee meeting that was held today. The subcommittee reviewed the concept for the District Farm Center. The District would like to purchase a property so they no longer need to pay rent, which is quite a lot of money presently. The purchasing of the land would be cost neutral and there are endless opportunities that the facility could be used for, for example, as a center for promoting agriculture, demonstration gardens, and/or leasing out to other organizations for agricultural projects. It will be a boost to the community. There is no property selected yet, however, northwest Santa Rosa has been a focus area. The project will go to the Board for approval in order to move forward.

Patricia Tuttle-Brown, a member of the public, requested through the chair if she could make a comment on the Ag Subcommittee report out. As a Petaluma person, Ms. Tuttle-Brown would like the District and the Advisory Committee to consider the Corona Creek area in Petaluma that is currently undeveloped. It is a marsh area with original oaks and many bird species. It would be a great place to have a central park in an urban area and it will imperil Petaluma if allowed to be developed.

Conservation Planning Update

Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Advisory Committee on the Conservation Planning Update.

Ms. Gaffney explained that the Conservation Planning program is in place to support the District in meeting the goals of the mission. This is accomplished through informed and effective decision making, clear communication about District accomplishments and the leveraging of District resources and investments. The Conservation Planning is a new program and it is still evolving. The

program consists of data and analyses, planning, community relations and legislative components. The data and analyses objective is to develop and analyze high quality data to support the efficient prioritization of District actions and documentation of District impact. This happens by the prioritization of investments, leveraging our funding, reporting out to the community, aligning with state policy objectives, supporting conservation actions by our partners and backcasting and forecasting. The planning objective is to integrate data to prioritize actions. This is done by creating a comprehensive plan and performance metrics, resource management planning and our District Farm Center project. The community relations objective is to have effective two way communications and messaging. This is accomplished through having an effective community relations strategy, market research and program evaluations, branding and image updates, community based outreach, public relations and advertising and internal communications that are clear and frequent with our constituents, Board of Directors, Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission. The objective of legislative is to track and influence legislation and funding that may affect the District.

For more information, the PowerPoint presentation is available at the District upon request.

Chair Rabinowitsh opened up the meeting to Committee members and members of the public for comments and questions.

Review Future Advisory Committee Meeting Topics

Ms. Gaffney led the review of future Advisory Committee meeting topics with Advisory Committee members. Ms. Gaffney, with the help of other District program managers, created a draft future agenda topics outline that was presented on the overhead and was passed out as a handout to members. This list will be reviewed at each Executive Committee meeting that are held monthly for input and as a way to most effectively support Committee members in their roles. This list will be reviewed every few months in the Advisory Committee meeting as well for further input.

Members reviewed the draft and noted that the two summer months have been combined, which was decided in last month's meeting, and will take place in August with no meeting in July for a summer break.

There will be a field trip to North Slope in June and this will be an opportunity to show the Advisory Committee members the work that has been done on North Slope, the development of the construction project and an opportunity to show everyone in person the trail system and its challenges. It will be an official meeting that will be noticed and the public will be invited, the time will stay the same, 5:00 to 7:00 and a carpool will leave the District at 4:30 to arrive at North Slope at 5:00. Members can carpool or drive themselves and passes will be provided to members.

The Conservation Easement Workshop item will be brought to the Committee next month. There has been a lack of understanding on the Board members part and this will give them the how of easements, why we do the easements the way we do and what is accomplished with easements. This item will be brought to the Advisory Committee first, then to the Fiscal Oversight Commission and then to the Board.

There has been interest in a future joint meeting with the Advisory Committee and Fiscal Oversight Commission, though no date has been set as of yet. The Comprehensive Plan would be brought to this meeting for further review of the plan, which will ultimately combine the strategic plan, the acquisition plan, the yearly budget and the stewardship manual. All of these plans would be combined into one. This meeting could take place at Finley or the Glaser Center, with the expectation of 50 to 100 people in attendance.

Members of the Committee were in agreement with all the items scheduled and set for future meetings. Requests from the members for future meeting topics can be made throughout the year.

A list of scheduled future meeting topics for the next six months and topics on the future items list past six months can be seen at the District upon request.

Projects in Negotiations

Colgan Creek phase two & three were approved by the Board this week.

There was a ribbon cutting last Friday for the East Washington Park ball field in Petaluma. Eleven years ago some fathers with their kids starting working hard on this project and Supervisor Rabbitt was part of that effort.

Announcements From Advisory Committee Members

Don McEnhill

There was a study on the Cosumnes River levee relocation and Mr. McEnhill will send this to Mr. Keene and Ms. Gaffney.

Laurie Gallian

There was a Sonoma Ecology Center celebration at Montini

John Nagle

California Fish and Wildlife are seeking property owners in the 4th and 5th districts to voluntarily reduce water diversions to keep water in the creeks. If anyone is interested you can contact John Nagle and he will give you more information.

Steve Rabinowitsh

Cogan Creek received a grant from the State for phase two.

Adjournment: 6:34 pm

Next scheduled meeting date: May 28, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson,
Advisory Committee Secretary