



**AG + OPEN SPACE**  
SONOMA COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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**APPROVED MINUTES**

**Virtual Meeting Due to Sonoma County's Shelter in Place Order**  
**June 24, 2021 | 5:00 pm**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Don McEnhill	Steve Rabinowitsh	Jan McFarland	Brian Barnacle
Michelle Whitman	Bill Smith	Ariel Kelley	John Nagle
Curt Nichols	Neysa Hinton	Paul Martin	Sue Conley
Kristina Tierney			

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Cary Fargo  
Tawny Tesconi  
Doug Lipton

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Misti Arias, General Manager; Caryl Hart, Vegetation Management and Climate Resilience; Mary Chambers, Agricultural 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 5:02 pm.

**Public Comment**

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

Susan Sullivan, who resides on Paula Lane, expressed concern for the destructive work on the Paula Lane Preserve recently. She said there was a large are of land that is being destroyed by the building of a road and she feels it is contradictory to the preservation of the natural areas.

Susan Kirks said there was work being done at the entrance of the Paula Lane property and throughout the whole property. She is disappointed by the violations of the terms of the conservation easement. She feels this error needs to be reversed and the habitat restored. She asked the Advisory Committee members to support her and the Paula Lane Network in saving the wildlife species on this property.

### **Approval of Minutes from May 27, 2021**

Vice Chair McEnhill asked for any comments or revisions regarding the May 27, 2021 minutes. There were none. Ariel Kelley motioned for the minutes to be approved as is and Jan McFarland seconded the motion. There were no public comment on the minutes.

A roll call was taken and all were in favor: Sue Conley, yes. Paul Martin, yes. Neysa Hinton, yes. John Nagle, yes. Bill Smith, yes. Steve Rabinowitsh, yes. Michelle Whitman, yes. Kristina Tierney, yes. Jan McFarland, yes. Don McEnhill, yes. Curt Nichols, yes. Ariel Kelley, yes. Brian Barnacle, yes.

### **General Manager's Report**

- A surveyor contract extension will go to the Board on July 13, 2021.
- The Lang Conservation Easement Amendment will go to the Board on July 13, 2021.
- The Advisory Committee meetings and the Fiscal Oversight Commission meetings will continue to be virtual until the fall of this year, and then a hybrid meeting consisting of committee and staff in person and public as virtual will begin until further notice.
- We are currently recruiting for two new youth members to join the Advisory Committee and would appreciate the Committee's help in spreading the word. More information and application materials are on our website
- Mary Chambers, Agricultural Specialist, is participating in the Inter-agency Drought Task Force with various government agencies discussing impacts of the current drought and working on opportunities to address current challenges.
- We are currently recruiting for two positions at Ag + Open Space: Acquisition Program Manager and Vegetation Management Coordinator.

Brian Barnacle asked Misti Arias, General Manager, if there could be a discussion about Paula Lane at this meeting. Aldo Mercado, County Counsel, advised to agendize that topic for the next meeting.

Member of the public, Susan Kirks, noted that she was in support of the Paula Lane item being agendize for the next meeting.

### **Formation of Ag Subcommittee**

Ms. Arias introduced and discussed forming an Ag Subcommittee. Committee members Paul Martin and Sue Conley had reached out to the Ag + Open Space staff to ask to reengage this subcommittee again. Ms. Chambers continued to explain that the Ag Subcommittee would help build a foundation for communication and engagement with the agricultural community. Ms. Chambers shared a draft charter of the subcommittee that was included in the Advisory Committee packet. She expressed that the purpose of the Subcommittee would be to provide collaboration and input on Ag + Open Space's agricultural programs, strategies, and initiatives, and to support productive engagement between Ag + Open Space and the broader agricultural community. The Subcommittee will meet approximately monthly for one to two hours and will evaluate the frequency of the meetings six months after initiation. She asked if there were any volunteers for the subcommittee, with the maximum number of six, to avoid a quorum, and the following committee members volunteered:



John Nagle, Paul Martin, Sue Conley and Jan McFarland. Tawny Tesconi had expressed interest prior to this meeting but was not in attendance this evening. Some members in attendance also suggested that Doug Lipton or Cary Fargo, who were not in attendance, might also be interested in joining. Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk, will email the missing members and ask if they are interested in volunteering for the Subcommittee. John Nagle motioned to form the Subcommittee with the four members who volunteered and were present, and Ariel Kelley seconded the motion. There were no public comments.

Roll call on the vote was taken: Jan McFarland, yes. Michelle Whitman, yes. Paul Martin, yes. Curt Nichols, yes. Steve Rabinowitsh, yes. Brian Barnacle, yes. Kristine Tierney, yes. Sue Conley, yes. Ariel Kelley, yes. Neysa Hinton, yes. Don McEnhill, yes. Bill Smith, yes. John Nagle, yes.

The Agriculture Advisory Subcommittee was voted in.

### **Vegetation Management Grant**

Caryl Hart, Vegetation Management and Climate Resilience, is involved with working with the Board on a strategy for the PG&E funds for special fire protection. Climate change and lack of forest management has increased destruction from wild fires in the county. The goal of the Vegetation Management program is to contribute two to four million dollars to the most hazardous areas of Sonoma County. County staff received ninety applicants for over sixteen million dollars. Twenty applicants were selected and the contracts have been created and will be ready for funding in less than two months. There are challenges that need to be overcome, but the projects are making headway. An excel list of the approved projects will be sent out.

No public comments.

### **Projects in Negotiations**

Vice Chair McEnhill opened up the meeting for member and public comments but there were none.

### **Announcements from Advisory Committee Members**

#### Ariel Kelley

This week Ms. Kelley's children are attending the LandPaths camp at the Preston property, which is on the Projects in Negotiations list. This camp is for children 5 to 12 years old.

#### John Nagle

There is a voluntary drought initiative in California from Fish and Wildlife asking people to curtail water use.

#### Brian Barnacle

Mr. Barnacle went to the Sonoma Clean Power store in downtown Santa Rosa and saw carbon-free appliances, induction stoves with cooking demos, a children's area with mini electric vehicles, and other clean power gadgets. A great place to visit.

#### Michelle Whitman

Chair Whitman was late to join the meeting tonight and thanked Vice Chair McEnhill for chairing the meeting for her.



**Adjournment**

Vice Chair McEnhill adjourned the meeting at 5:59.

Next Meeting: July 22, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson  
*Advisory Committee Secretary*

