



Attachment "A"

***SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE
DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

March 24, 2016 MINUTES

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

Members Present

Cary Fargo	Bill Smith	Doug Lipton	Gary Wysocky
Jan McFarland	John Nagle	Kristin Thigpen	
John Dell'Osso	Don McEnhill	Jeffrey Holtzman	

Members Absent

Laurie Gallian	Sue Conley		
John Azevedo	Steve Rabinowitsh	Curt Nichols	

Staff Present

Bill Keene, General Manager; Jennifer Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator; Lisa Pheatt, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Kristin Thigpen, standing in as Chair for Steve Rabinowitsh, called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Public Comment

No public comment on items not on agenda.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of January 28, 2016 were approved as submitted.

General Manager's Report

- The RCPP Grant will be taken to the Board on March 29, 2016.
- The Conservation Easement Workshop will be taken to the Board on April 19, 2016. The purpose of this workshop is to provide the Board with an overview of conservation easements as the District's primary land conservation tool, the value of the easements and how they are structured. The easement workshop was a recommendation of the 2014 Management Review..

- A Land Acquisition Services contract is going to the Board on April 26, 2016. This is a contract with consultants to help with land transfers to Regional Parks.
- Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager, is bringing the Conservation Planning Update to the Board on May 24, 2016.
- Mr. Keene would like to let the Committee members know of a possible mitigation proposal for the Estero Ranch, at the mouth of the Estero Americano, owned and managed by Wildlands Conservancy with a District conservation easement over it. There are two drainages at the mouth of the Estero that are eroding away and creating extensive gullying and the silt is being deposited into the Estero. CalTrans is working on a bridge replacement at the Highway 1 crossing to raise it due to flooding and is looking for a nearby site to mitigate for impacts to wetland and riparian habitat and has identified the Estero Ranch property as the preferred option at this point. There will be a presentation next month at the Advisory Committee and Dan York, Director of Wildlands Conservancy, will be here in person to answer questions and get input from the Advisory Committee.
- The District's proposed site for The Incubator Farm Project, on the Young-Armos property in Rohnert Park, is controversial. Some of the neighbors would prefer the project not take place on this site. District staff is working with the City of Rohnert Park and the neighbors. Mr. Keene made a presentation at the Rohnert Park City Council on Tuesday, March 22. . District staff is going to continue to engage with the community and work with City Council.
- On March 6, 2016, OpenRoad with Doug McConnell aired an episode featuring the District. Cooley Ranch, Windsor Town Green and Jenner Headlands were highlighted. You can view the piece on our website at www.sonomaopenspace.org/projects/openroad.
- The District sponsored the Artisanal Cheese Festival this past weekend and had a booth at the event. The event was a great opportunity to talk about the District's work in general, and how it relates to artisanal cheese and local food production specifically.
- Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist, is working on an insert in the Press Democrat and North Bay Business Journal that profiles six farmers, ranchers and grape growers practicing exemplary stewardship on their land. The insert will be published the week of April 18, 2016 about a week ahead of the next Advisory Committee meeting.

Sub-committee Report Outs

John Nagle reported out for the Ag Subcommittee meeting that took place at 4:00 today:

- Mr. Keene gave a short presentation about the Incubator Farm Project on the possible Young-Armos site.
- Members discussed issues for ag funding with RCPP timeline being moved up so quickly
- Members defined ag elements that they would like to be informed about.

RCPP Grant

Mr. Keene gave a brief presentation on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program five year grant that was awarded to the District and partners including the Water Agency, two local Resource Conservation Districts, the Pepperwood Foundation and thirty others. The District and partners applied for \$10 million and received \$8 million; 80% of the original request. The District is the lead and the focus will be on collaborative, incentive based conservation with an emphasis on win: win

outcomes for agriculture and natural resources. The geographic focus is on agricultural areas with a high priority on groundwater basins and riparian corridors. The goal is to use easements and conservation plans to maintain water quality and biodiversity while supporting long term agricultural viability. Approximately \$5 million will go to the District. The District will work with partners over the next six months to develop priorities and ranking criteria. The Advisory Committee will be updated as the projects unfold.

Matching Grant Program Subcommittee

Jennifer Kuszmar, Matching Grant Coordinator, presented a Matching Grant Program overview and update before creating and finalizing the subcommittee.

The goal of the program is to protect land within or near urban areas. Local government, county, city and non-profits bring their projects to the District. The program accepts new applications every two years. In 2014, the program accepted urban open space projects totaling \$2.5 million into the program. Some examples of Matching Grant Program projects include the Roseland Village Public Space, the Sebastopol Skategarden and the Moorland Neighborhood Park, recently renamed Andy's Unity Park.

In 2016, we have the same amount budgeted as awarded in 2014, \$2.5 million. Tonight a Matching Grant Subcommittee will be created. The Subcommittee roles include reviewing the applications, attending one or two subcommittee meetings, evaluating the projects and recommending projects for funding. Much of the work is done via email or phone.

Chair Thigpen asked for volunteers for the subcommittee: Bill Smith, Jeffrey Holtzman, John Dell'Osso volunteered, and Sue Conley, who was not present at the meeting, had shown interest before the meeting. They will be joined by two Fiscal Oversight Commissioners, Jeff Owen and Dee Swanhuysen.

Don McEnhill motioned and John Nagle seconded the motion. Chair Thigpen asked for a vote, all were in favor.

Projects in Negotiations

Sonoma Raceway is going to the Board on March 29, 2016 to have three easements recorded.

Announcements From Advisory Committee Members

John Dell'Osso

It is the National Park Service Centennial this year and Mr. Dell'Osso will be working with REI, the official partner of the National Park Service's centennial celebration. He will be at the Corte Madera REI on April 16th.

There will be an Urban Growth Boundary public meeting and workshop on April 11, 2016 being hosted by the City of Cotati. The session will take place at Cotati City Hall at 201 West Sierra Ave.

Kristin Thigpen

On April 4th and 5th UC Davis is holding a Water Conference called Climate Change, Water, and Society IGERT. The keynote speaker will be Kevin de Leon, President Pro Tempore of the California Senate.

Bill Keene

Fourth graders will be allowed into the National Parks for free. They need to go online and answer two or three questions and then are issued a card that allows them free access. This applies to children about to go into 4th grade or who have just gone into 5th grade. It is part of program called Every Kid in the Park launched by President Obama in partnership with the Federal Land Management.

Adjournment: 6:19 pm

Next scheduled meeting date: April 28, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson,
Advisory Committee Secretary