



Attachment "A"

*SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
June 25, 2015 MINUTES*

5:06 p.m. Meeting convened at the District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue,
Suite 100, Santa Rosa, California

Members Present

Jeffrey Holtzman	Doug Lipton	John Nagle	Curt Nichols
Bill Smith	Jan McFarland	John Dell'Osso	Kristin Thigpen
Janet Orchard	Laurie Gallian	Don McEnhill	John Azevedo

Members Absent

Gary Wysocky	Shanti Edwards	Sue Conley
Cary Fargo	Steve Rabinowitsh	

Staff Present Bill Keene, General Manager; Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager; Mary Dodge, Administrative and Fiscal Services Manager; Sue Gallagher, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Public Comment

Vice Chair Laurie Gallian, standing in for Chair Steve Rabinowitsh, asked for public comments on items not listed on the agenda.

Duane DeWitt from Roseland thanked the District for the eleven acres of oak woodland that the District helped to preserve in Roseland. He explained that the City of Santa Rosa doesn't understand the conservation easement on McMinn Avenue and the City is not giving the buildings on the easement on three separate parcels any value and wants to demolish them. Mr. DeWitt would like to see the buildings saved. He asked that the Advisory Committee and the District look into this and support saving the buildings from being destroyed as the buildings hold value for the Roseland area.

Denny Tibbetts spoke about the Bottarini Ranch property acquisition and the private road access. She and her husband own an adjacent property on Estero Lane. They have met with Amy Chesnut from Sonoma Land Trust, Misti Arias from the District and Dan York from The Wildlands Conservancy as well as other neighbors on Estero Lane. They have discussed the acquisition plan, which has changed from an earlier designation of Water, Wildlife and Natural Areas to Recreation and Education. She is concerned that this could place an unreasonable burden on the road depending on how the new owners intend to use the private road in the future. She and her husband would like to work collaboratively now to

find reasonable ways to use the road to avoid problems coming up in the future. She looks forward to working with the new owners.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Gallian asked for comments on the minutes from April 23, 2015. There was a request from Susan Kirks, a member of the public, to make some changes to her comments in the minutes. One was a correction to the name Salt Harbor Mouse to Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse. The other change requests were considered comments rather than corrections and the Advisory Committee voted on making the correction to the name but not on the comments. Don McEnhill also requested a change to the name Russian River in his announcement to Cosumnes River. Vice Chair Gallian announced that the minutes were approved with the corrections.

General Manager's Report

- Bill Keene, General Manager, made a presentation at the June Mayors' and Councilmembers' meeting and had the opportunity to let the mayors from all the different cities in Sonoma County know what the District is working on.
- The Open Road segment highlighted the District and was broadcast on May 17, 2015 and will be broadcast again on July 26, 2015. It featured the Bianchi Dairy, North Sonoma Mountain Trail and Matanzas Creek Winery. There may be another program in the future that will feature Sonoma County as well and the District's work.
- The Advisory Committee hiked the North Sonoma Mountain Trail last month. Mr. Keene was only there during the welcome and introduction and could not make it on the hike. He asked the Advisory Committee members who attended to comment on the event. Bill Smith said it was a great hike with unique vistas like no other park, and a great trail. Other members agreed.
- The Board approved the District's request to develop a business plan for the District Farm Center with a 5-0 vote. The Advisory Committee Ag Subcommittee talked about what will come back to the Board regarding range of options and costs including the savings on rent.
- The Jones Dairy conservation easement in the east Petaluma area will close early July.
- Vice Chair Gallian announced that the Mayors' and Councilmembers' reappointed the following Advisory Committee members: Laurie Gallian, John Dell'Osso and Gary Wysocky for two year terms.

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 District Farm Center took up a large part of the meeting. Farmlink was also discussed, regarding communicating with easement holdings, looking for land and land not being used and making connections.

Refunding the Bond

Mary Dodge, Administrative and Fiscal Services Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Advisory Committee on refunding the bond.

The District was approached by the County Auditor's Office regarding refinancing our bond since there are historically low interest rates. Currently, the District pays \$7.5 million a year. Currently, the interest rate on the principle ranges from 4% to 5%. The County and the District wanted to see if the interest rate could be reduced. The District has a large amount of money in the bank for the long

term stewardship and other reserves and Ms. Dodge and Mr. Keene worked with the District's Fiscal Oversight Commission to see about using the reserves to refinance the bond to get a lower interest rate and pay down some of the principal. The FOC suggested changing the structure to paying \$30 million now, shortening the term six years and using the money that is saved on interest and principal at the end of the measure to fund the stewardship reserve that money is not needed until 2030, and only if the District is not reauthorized. It was agreed with the County to go this route. The sale happened today and the District was able to get the interest rate lowered to 1.8%, which will shorten the repayment period by an additional year and provide the District with a net present value savings \$13.7 million. It will be paid off in 2023 and at that point the stewardship reserve can be refunded with funds previously used to pay debt service. Ms. Dodge presented slides on the calculations to the Committee members.

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

Rules of Procedure Update

Mr. Keene reviewed with the Advisory Committee members the changes to the terms in the Board of Directors Resolution No. 0962, dated July 20, 1999, that were brought to the Board on April 14, 2015, and the changes to the Rules of Procedure that were discussed in a past Advisory Committee meeting and that need to be voted on by the members rather than the Board.

The first change to the terms was to add two additional youth members, making the total number of members 19 instead of 17. The second change to the terms was to address excessive absences, which would result in the Board removing a member if they are over the allowed amount of absences in a year's time. These changes were brought to the Board and approved on April 14, 2015.

The Advisory Committee Rules of Procedure also need to be changed and voted on by the members.

The first change is to rule # 10 to address excessive absences, which would result in the Board removing a member if they are over the allowed amount of absences in a year's time. The changes to Rule #10 made at the April 2014 meeting are below in red:

RULE 10: Due to the importance of Committee business, Committee members should make every effort to attend regular and occasional special meetings. Committee members should contact the General Manager **or designee** if they are unable to attend. The Committee may **(shall)** report and recommend to the Board of Directors the removal of any member if, within any calendar year, (a) the member is absent from three or more regular or special meetings without prior notification to the General Manager, or (b) the member is absent from five or more regular or special meetings, with or without prior notification to the General Manager.

In April 2014, the members voted to add 'designee' after General Manager in the third sentence and to change the word 'may' to 'shall' in the fourth sentence; however, there was a discussion amongst members in tonight's meeting that taking the absences issue to the Board is too strong of an action and members chose not to make it mandatory but optional, with the General Manager asking a member to resign if they miss too many meetings, and if there is a problem after that, the Committee may choose to take the issue to the Board if needed. Members voted to have both of these changes take effect, as long as the one word is changed back to the original **'may' report and recommend to the Board** rather than **'shall' report and recommend to the Board** as the members had voted to change before in Rule #10. Kristin Thigpen motioned to move forward and Laurie Gallian seconded the motion. All were in favor for the changes.

The next change which was also discussed in the April 2014 meeting was to delete rule #14 completely from the Rules of Procedure: **A summary report of the Committee's previous years activities shall be prepared and sent to the District Board of Directors in the first quarter of each calendar year.** John Dell'Osso motioned to move forward with the deletion, and Curt Nichols seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk, will make the changes to the Rules of Procedure as voted by members above, and will renumber the rules accordingly.

Projects in Negotiations

Jones Dairy went to the Board June 9, 2015 and was approved.

Rancho Mark West is going to the Board in July 2015.

The Matching Grant Program will have another cycle in 2016. There will be a subcommittee formed of six members. If members are interested in participating in the subcommittee, it will be formed at the January 2016 meeting.

Announcements From Advisory Committee Members

Don McEnhill

On June 27, 2015 there is a grand opening of the Riverkeeper Park in downtown Guerneville from 1:00 to 3:00.

Laurie Gallian

The Wells Fargo Center put on a non-profit Transcendence Theater production of *Ob, What a Night* at the Jack London State Park in the stone squares. The money for tickets goes toward Jack London State Park to keep up the park.

Jeffrey Holtzman

Mr. Holtzman took an African trip to Zimbabwe and Namibia, and he was able to see a number of conservancies working together with the community to protect land.

Adjournment: 6:21 pm

Next scheduled meeting date: August 27, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson,
Advisory Committee Secretary