



Attachment "A"

*SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
August 27, 2015 MINUTES*

5:05 p.m. Meeting convened at the District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue,  
Suite 100, Santa Rosa, California

**Members Present**

Jeffrey Holtzman	John Nagle	Steve Rabinowitsh	Gary Wysocky
Bill Smith	Sue Conley	John Dell'Osso	Kristin Thigpen
Janet Orchard	Laurie Gallian	Don McEnhill	John Azevedo
Cary Fargo			

**Members Absent**

Doug Lipton  
Curt Nichols  
Jan McFarland

**Staff Present**

Bill Keene, General Manager; Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager; Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager; Ambers Shows, Conservation GIS Analyst; Hannah Spencer, Stewardship Technician; Kim Batchelder, Conservation Planning Associate Planner; Sabrina Colias, Stewardship Technician; Kathleen Marsh, Stewardship Coordinator; Sue Gallagher, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

**Public Comment**

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

Susan Kirks from Petaluma commented on her clarification of her statement in the minutes from April 23, 2015. She appreciated the name change made of the endangered species from Salt Harbor Mouse to Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse. However, she was concerned that the committee declined to accept her additional comment change in the June 25, 2015 meeting and wanted to explain her request for the change. She said the minutes did not reflect what she said in her summary sentence. She questioned the District's selection of group for representation on the NBC Bay Area Open Road television program for the Alman Marsh portion of the show, but wanted the District to know that there are a variety of different groups who have expertise of the marsh who could have been chosen.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Rabinowitsh asked for comments or corrections on the minutes from June 25, 2015. There were no comments or corrections but there were two abstentions. Chair Rabinowitsh announced that the minutes were approved .

## **General Manager's Report**

- Bill Keene, General Manager, introduced the District's newest employee Amber Shows, GIS Analyst, who will help the District with data needs and will support all of the programs. Amber introduced herself to the Advisory Committee.
- Mr. Keene addressed some feedback from the Committee regarding information about the District being conveyed to the Committee in a timely fashion. Four avenues to better inform the Committee is as follows:
  - District Website
  - Press Releases sent to the Committee
  - District articles in the paper sent to the Committee
  - General Manager update at the meetings will include what is being brought to the Board
- Conservation Planning Update was approved by the Board on consent calendar August 25, 2015 and will go back to the Board in October for a more detailed presentation on LiDAR, data work with NASA and the Healthy Lands and Healthy Economies initiative.
- Repairing roads to Poff Ranch will be taken to the Board on September 15, 2015.
- The Richardson Kashia conservation easement north of Salt Point will be taken to the Board on September 22, 2015, as well as an amendment to the land management agreement with the Healdsburg Ridge Preserve, that is scheduled to be transferred to the City of Healdsburg next year.
- Rancho Mark West conservation easement, which is the Doerkson property on St. Helena Road., will go to the Board on October 13, 2015.
- The Conservation Easement Workshop, a workshop to help educate the Board on District easements and how they work, will go to the Board sometime in October. This item will also be brought to the Advisory Committee.
- In November, the Stewardship Planning Update will be brought to the Board, and is being presented in part tonight at the Advisory Committee. This will be brought back to the Advisory Committee as well when it is more complete.

## **Sub-committee Report Outs**

Advisory Committee Member and Ag Subcommittee Chair John Nagle reported out on the Ag Subcommittee meeting that was held today. At the October 22, 2015 Advisory Committee meeting, the subcommittee will give a formalized presentation on what the subcommittee has been working on.

## **Stewardship Update**

Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Advisory Committee regarding the status of the Stewardship Program. Stewardship is the District's responsibility to care for the lands that have been acquired with Measure F sales tax funding. In twenty five years the District has spent \$300 million to protect over 10% of the land in Sonoma County. Last fiscal year, the District spent about \$3 million, or 1%, to protect this investment through Stewardship Program activities.

The District follows the standards and practices of the Land Trust Alliance, a national organization with over 1500 member land trusts. Ms. Emerson explained how the District Stewardship staff steward conservation easements through property monitoring and enforcement of easement terms, managing natural resources and maintaining infrastructure on fee title properties that the District owns, and engaging with the landowners, neighbors, and the general public.

The PowerPoint presentation is available at the District upon request. For more information, contact Sheri Emerson at the District office.

### **Incubator Farm**

Ms. Emerson presented another PowerPoint presentation to the Advisory Committee on the Incubator Farm. The incubator farm is a project being considered on the District-owned Young Armos property on Snyder Lane in Rohnert Park. An incubator farm is a program that helps aspiring farmers and ranchers learn to farm and work the land before setting off on their own. They would be mentored through the program. Incubator farms are very successful in other parts of the Country.

There was a public meeting last January to discuss the project concept. The University of California Cooperative Extension is a key partner, developing a Farm Plan and establishing and coordinating a Technical Advisory Committee.

The project is still in the early concept phase and there will be another public meeting early next year to discuss further with the public. There are many possibilities with this project, one being how to protect and restore natural areas while at the same time using the land agriculturally.

The PowerPoint presentation is available at the District upon request.

### **Projects in Negotiations**

The District was given a grant for the Glenn Ranch property in the amount of \$250,000 from the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program to help purchase a conservation easement in the Petaluma area.

### **Announcements From Advisory Committee Members**

#### **Kristin Thigpen(announced by Laurie Gallian)**

Sonoma County Regional Parks is putting on a Water Bark event at Springs Lake Park on September 12 & 13, 19 & 20, and 26 & 27. This is an off-leash playing and swimming event for dogs.

#### **Don McEnhill**

There is a toxic algae bloom in the Russian River that is a threat to dogs but not people. Spring Lake would be a better place to take your doges until the condition improve. New data will be given on Friday, August 28, 2015.

John Dell'Osso

September 20, 2015 the fourth annual Wine County Optics and Nature Festival will take place. There will be artwork, Bay Area conservation groups, nature photography and optics equipment on display. Mr. Dell'Osso will be manning the National Parks booth.

Chair Rabinowitsh asked that the meeting be closed in the name of Bob Stone who recently passed away. He helped to create the District and was on the 1990 campaign.

Mr. Keene also asked that the meeting be closed in the memory of Liz Burko of State Parks who recently passed away as well.

Jeffrey Holtzman, Committee member, also wanted to close the meeting in the name of Ernestine Smith, who was involved in environmental protection of Sonoma County back when it first began, and passed away recently.

**Adjournment:** 6:32 pm

Next scheduled meeting date: September 24, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson,  
Advisory Committee Secretary