Upper Salinas – Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

January 24, 2019

1. Call to Order. Michael Broadhurst called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm and determined a quorum was present. Directors present: Eric Kaltenbach, Chuck Pritchard, Mike Bonnheim, Tom Mora. Associate Director present: Mary Bianchi. Staff present: Executive Director Devin Best. Members of public present: Brian Pedrotti, SLO County Planning Department.
2. Additions/Changes to Agenda. The NRCS representative is not present so there will be no official NRCS report.
3. Public Comment. None.
4. RCD Reports.
5. County update on Ag Worker Ordinance. Brian Pedrotti provided an informal discussion on the upcoming Ag Worker Ordinance currently under revision and open for public comment until April 5th. A calculator will be developed and used to determine number of farm worker units available for each property owner. Ordinance issues already brought up include lease landowners rights, increasing flexibility, and streamlining process. Ordinance will increase the number of units from 4 to 12 to include in a discretionary vs. ministerial process.
6. Board Updates Mary reported on the Paso Groundwater Basin Coordinating Committee met. The GSP is in draft form and included changes to the Paso Basin ending at the SLO/Monterey County line; resulting in safe yield changing 90,000 AF to 61,000 AF. Chuck Pritchard reported he is working with Royce Larsen and Cal Poly to host a livestock ranch tour on April 20th at Bitterwater Ranch at 9 am. The tour will look at various aspects of ranch management and conservation of natural resources.
7. Executive Directors Report. Devin Best distributed and discussed the Executive Director’s Report. Several projects have come to completion including Toad Creek Stewardship and SLO County Storm Water Resources Plan. Staff has submitted several grants for Healthy Soils and for Noxious Weeds through CDFA funds.
8. Form 700 – Board members were handed their respective Form 700 forms to review and sign.
9. Consent Agenda. Eric Kaltenbach discussed the February Treasurer’s reports. Accounts receivable increased, and methods to reduce expenses and also obtain payments from past due invoices were discussed. Tom Mora moved to accept the February 2019 board meeting minutes and also the Treasurer’s report. Chuck Pritchard seconded. Passed unanimously.
10. Other Agency Reports.
11. NRCS. No official report. Chuck Pritchard discussed Royce Larson’s comments regarding the decrease in forbs relative to grass in county range land. This is a long term concern possibly related to drought. There was general board discussion about grazing practices and their impacts on changes in the varieties of grass present.
12. WRAC. Tom Mora discussed the ideas George Kendall presented to WRAC were well received. Also, Kristy Mullholland was reappointed to WRAC as environmental at large. No action was taken. ALAB. Mary Bianchi presented on ALAB’s meeting in February. Cannabis was a big discussion item as well as the RCD involvement with CalFire for forest health and fuels reduction programs. Additionally, two Board of Supervisor’s (Compton and Arnold) appointees are absent from ALAB.
13. Board Action Item.
14. Resolution 19-02 to appoint Mary Bianchi as a Board of Director for USLTRCD. Chuck motioned. Mike Bonnheim seconded. Passed unanimously.
15. Conservationist of the Year. Mike Bonnheim was nominated as Conservationist of the Year for 2019. Chuck motioned to award Mike Bonnheim the award of Conservationist of the Year. Tom seconded. Passed unanimously.
16. Advocacy Policy. Devin Best presented an Advocacy Policy for adoption. Board elected to postpone until further review and revisit at April’s board meeting
17. Agenda Setting. Advocacy Policy. Next meeting will be April 25 at 4:00 pm.
18. Adjournment. Meeting was adjourned at 5:58 pm.