

# **WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Natasha Johnson at 12:02 p.m. via Zoom Meeting ID: 876 9775 4887, pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20.

#### **2. ROLL CALL**

##### **Members/Alternates Present**

Jeff Hewitt  
Kevin Jeffries\*  
Kevin Bash  
Natasha Johnson  
Lesa Sobek  
Jonathan Ingram  
Crystal Ruiz

##### **Members Absent**

*\*arrived after the meeting was called to order*

#### **3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member Bash.

#### **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the public.

#### **5. ADDITIONS/REVISIONS**

There were no additions or revisions to the agenda.

- 6. CONSENT CALENDAR** - *All matters on the Consent Calendar will be approved in a single motion unless a Commissioner(s) requests separate action on specific item(s). Items pulled from the Consent Calendar will be placed for discussion at the end of the agenda.*

Board Member Sobek requested Agenda Item 6C be pulled from the Consent Calendar for further discussion.

**M/S/C (Hewitt/Sobek) to approve the following Consent Calendar items with the exception of Item 6C, which was pulled for further discussion:**

**6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 20, 2021**

**6B. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORTS**

- 1) Receive and file the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Fee Collection Reports for January 2021;
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

**6C. FISCAL YEAR 2020/21 SECOND QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT**

Board Member Sobek stated she noticed the report had changed and asked Jennifer Fuller, Financial Administration Manager, to provide an overview of the changes. Ms. Fuller stated the report has been slightly refreshed and still contains the cash balance summary followed by an overview of the budget to actual and the fiscal year end projections. Board Member Sobek asked specifically about a red-line item on page 23 of the staff report and Ms. Fuller explained why the item is showing as a deficit.

**M/S/C (Sobek/Ingram) to:**

- 1) **Receive and file the FY 2020/21 Second Quarter Financial Report;**
- 2) **Approve the budget adjustment to increase expenditures \$74,539 for consultant services;**
- 3) **Authorize the Chair to direct the Auditor-Controller to make the budget adjustment in the amount of \$74,539; and**
- 4) **Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

**6D. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 21-01 RELATED TO PROCUREMENT POLICY MANUAL**

- 1) Approve the revised Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Agency (RCA) Procurement Policy Manual (PPM) for the procurement and contracting activities undertaken by the agencies, pursuant to legal counsel review as to conformance to state and federal law;
- 2) Adopt Ordinance No. 21-01, "*Ordinance of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Agency Regarding the Revised Procurement Policy Manual*"; and
- 3) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

**6E. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2021-006 TO AMEND BYLAWS WITH REGARD TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S PURCHASING AUTHORITY AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES**

- 1) Following the completion of the four-week noticing period required in Article XIII(B) of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) Bylaws, approve the proposed amendments to the RCA Bylaws;
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. 2021-003, "*Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Authorizing the Acceptance of Credit Cards, Debit Cards, and Electronic Funds Transfer as Additional Methods of Payment and Collection of Payment Processing Fees*"; and
- 3) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

**7. 2021 STATE AND FEDERAL PLATFORM AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Lisa Mobley, Administrative Services Manager/Clerk of the Board, noted correspondence had been received in support of this item from Mr. Dan Silver, who was also present at the meeting. The correspondence was forwarded to all Executive Committee members.

Mr. Silver, Executive Director of the Endangered Habitats League, addressed the Executive Committee to express his support for this item.

David Knudsen, Legislative Affairs Manager, provided an overview of the Legislative Affairs program, a State and Federal legislative update, and the proposed 2021 State and Federal legislative platform.

Vice Chair Hewitt expressed his appreciation for the presentation and noted it will be a lot of work moving forward.

Board Member Ingram expressed his appreciation for the presentation and for the platform.

Board Member Sobek thanked Mr. Knudsen for the presentation and for the inclusion of a quote from the Chair in the press release regarding HR 972. She looks forward to bringing back funds for the program.

Board Member Bash stated he is excited for the platform and was happy to see the coordination between Congressmen Takano and Calvert.

**M/S/C (Ruiz/Ingram) to:**

- 1) Receive a presentation summarizing the RCTC Legislative Affairs program;**
- 2) Receive and file an update on state and federal legislation;**
- 3) Adopt the 2021 State and Federal Legislative Platform for Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA); and**
- 4) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

**8. PROPOSAL FOR CREATION OF AN RCA LEGACY HOME REBATE PROGRAM**

Ms. Mobley noted correspondence was received in opposition of this item from Mr. Dan Silver who is present at the meeting.

Mr. Silver, Executive Director of the Endangered Habitats League, stated they respectfully oppose this item, noting there is no public interest in waiving fees during a time of overall revenue shortfall.

Aaron Hake, Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director, presented an overview of a proposed Legacy Home Rebate Program, which would be a pilot program administered by the RCA with a budget cap and a sunset date to help mitigate the potential financial risks and also provide an opportunity for the Board and staff to reevaluate the performance of the program for any potential changes that may be needed. Mr. Hake detailed proposed eligibility for the rebate as well as potential upsides and downsides of a rebate program.

Board Member Ingram expressed support for the rebate program, noting the pilot method and the sunset were great ideas. He made the motion to recommend adoption of the rebate program.

Chair Johnson asked for clarity regarding the budget cap of 50 rebates until 2023. Mr. Hake explained the soonest someone could apply for the rebate would be one year from July 1 so beginning in Fiscal Year 2023 is when RCA would potentially see a fiscal impact. Therefore, the money should be set aside in the budget beginning in 2023 and

with the sunset date of June 30, 2025, that would give the Board two full fiscal years of data to evaluate the program.

Board Member Sobek noted the program seems complicated and noted some may take advantage of the program, questioning whether the program is helping the plan.

Chair Johnson stated the pilot program is an opportunity to test the waters and see how it goes and shows an evolving of RCA in providing options and a fair and equitable process.

Vice Chair Hewitt stated at first, he was opposed to this however, given the nature of it being a two-year pilot program the RCA will be able to see and evaluate the impact to the plan.

Board Member Ruiz expressed support for the rebate program.

Board Member Bash expressed support for the program, noting it is a pilot program that can be changed in the future.

Board Member Sobek asked for clarification regarding the concept outline and the fees being paid. Mr. Hake clarified the outline and noted the fees will be paid up-front and the rebate may be applied for, given the applicant meets the eligibility criteria. She seconded the motion made by Board Member Ingram.

At this time, Board Member Jeffries joined the meeting.

Board Member Jeffries noted he had reviewed the proposal and he is in support of it moving forward.

**M/S/C (Ingram/Sobek) to:**

- 1) Recommend to the Board of Directors to adopt an RCA Legacy Home Rebate Program; and**
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

## **9. NEXUS STUDY UPDATE**

Aaron Hake provided an overview of activities that have happened since the Nexus Study was adopted by the Board. He discussed communication that had been done with member agencies and the business community, and what staff has been hearing from member agencies and stakeholders. He provided an update on member agency actions, resources available to member agency staff and stakeholders, and staff's next steps.

Board Member Sobek noted a discussion between Mr. Ellis of the Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce and asked Mr. Hake to provide an update on that conversation.

Mr. Hake stated it was a productive meeting where Mr. Ellis expressed his concerns with the communication on the fee increase and the desire to do everything possible to facilitate the development of a greater base of commercial and industrial jobs in Southwest County, noting projects that were of particular concern.

Chair Johnson noted she also attended the meeting with Mr. Ellis, stating he was bringing concerns he had heard from others to the table for discussion. She stated the predominant message of the meeting was communication was not happening the way he had liked and now that has been identified as a blind spot staff is focusing on communicating as much as possible.

Board Member Sobek asked if the Board should look at and discuss a lengthier phase-in of the new Nexus Study fees. She stated in the future the Board should look at a Nexus Study every four or five years and in doing so perhaps a sub-committee of City Managers should be involved at least once during the process.

Board Member Ingram stated staff would have to look and see what projects are in the queue to determine impacts of a longer phase-in period as the increased fee is not applicable until June. He noted this is why he suggested creating a portal for payment, so people had the opportunity to pay and then to look at modifying the verbiage in the plan itself that stated you pay your fees at issuance of permit. He stated this payment portal would create the ability for staff to monitor what is coming in rather than going through a third party and would also save money on the auditing process.

Chair Johnson stated they do not want to be taking away from jobs or development, they are here to help where they can when they can. While the RCA may not be able to meet all the needs the one thing the RCA can give developers is certainty in the process, noting the phasing approach puts the RCA behind.

Board Member Ingram stated an update on the Nexus Study and fee implementation should be sent to all member agencies and Board members.

## **9. COMMITTEE MEMBER / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, announced in March they will be meeting with the City Managers as a group regarding the Nexus Study, the rebate program, and the legislative platform.

Board Member Ingram discussed the property surrounding Greer Ranch between Murrieta and Menifee now has people building jumps and berms for mountain biking and it is attracting 4,000 to 5,000 in a week to two-week period. He stated there are protected species and Coastal Sage that is being eradicated to build tracks and the RCA does not want to take the land on and be responsible for getting it back to the state it needs to be in. Board Member Ingram stated they are going to have to create a coalition

between the mountain biking community and the RCA to figure out how they can utilize and access the land without destroying it.

Chair Johnson stated she has forwarded the information to staff and thanked Board Member Ingram for bringing it to the attention of the Executive Committee, noting it was something that will continue to be discussed.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for consideration by the Executive Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lisa Mobley  
Clerk of the Board