

# **WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 22, 2021**

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

The meeting of the Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Natasha Johnson at 12:00 p.m., via Zoom Meeting ID: 885 4427 1916, pursuant to Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-29-20.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

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

Kevin Jeffries  
Jeff Hewitt  
Natasha Johnson  
Lesa Sobek  
Jonathan Ingram  
Kevin Bash

#### **Members Absent**

Crystal Ruiz

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member Hewitt.

### **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no requests to speak from the public.

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

There were no additions or revisions to the agenda.

### **6. CLOSED SESSION**

#### **6A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL: EXISTING LITIGATION**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)  
Case No. RIC1901547

There were no announcements from Closed Session.

### **7. CONSENT CALENDAR – *All matters on the Consent Calendar will be approved in a single motion unless a Board Member(s) requests separate action on specific item(s).***

**M/S/C (Jeffries/Ingram) to approve the following Consent Calendar items.**

**7A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 17, 2021**

**7B. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORT**

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

**8. DRAFT PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN**

Cheryl Donahue, Public Affairs Manager, provided a presentation on the Draft Public Outreach Plan for the RCA. The RCA had already started laying the foundation for public outreach efforts, so the intent is now to build upon those with experienced staff, digital campaigns, and a deliberate process with quarterly updates provided to the Board. The key message of the RCA is the MSHCP improves the quality of life by preserving open spaces, protecting the region's species, expediting infrastructure, and spurring economic growth.

Chair Johnson voiced her appreciation of staff in their efforts, as this was a top priority for the RCA Board. The element of outreach metrics for social media will let the data speak for itself, and while the goals are currently small, they are important and shows that we are measuring our success.

Board Member Ingram noted that it would be beneficial for stakeholders to be involved in the videos that are created for the RCA. Being able to show the land that has been conserved in the county along with the species that have been protected, would be impactful for residents.

Board Member Sobek thanked staff for a great job on public outreach. With the increase of fees forthcoming, our stakeholders have been clear that they need more communication, and these efforts will be very beneficial for them.

Mr. Ed Sauls, a member of the public, thought the public outreach efforts were excellent and inquired as to how the Advisory Committee would fit into this new program. Anne Mayer, Executive Director, noted that the initiative of the Advisory Committee has long been neglected, but it is on the current list of priorities and will be kicked off again soon.

Board Member Ingram added that the Advisory Committee should not only include the development and land use stakeholders, but also members from the bicycling, hiking, and equestrian communities as well.

- 1) Receive a presentation summarizing the Draft Public Outreach Plan; and**
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

## **9. ROUGH STEP COMMUNICATION COMPLIANCE**

Tricia Campbell, Reserve Management and Monitoring Manager, provided a presentation on the advance notice that permittees will be receiving from the RCA regarding Rough Step compliance. The RCA will be reaching out to the MSHCP permittees that have jurisdiction within Rough Step Units 3, 5, and 7 that are out of compliance. Rough Step Unit 8 is also out of compliance, but it has been since the inspection of the MSHCP, as such it is treated differently and will not be included in this communication.

- 1) Receive and file an informational item on Rough Step Compliance Communication; and**
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

## **10. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

David Knudsen, Interim External Affairs Director, provided a report on both state and federal legislative updates. In alignment with the RCA legislative platform, letters of support, if amended, were sent for Senate Bill 45 (Portantino) and Assembly Bill 1500 (Garcia) asking that the bills include funding specifically for Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP). These bills are significant as they could offer a unique opportunity to identify specific funding sources for the MSHCP land acquisition process and with the recommended amendments would make the RCA eligible for funding with a smaller competitive pool of applicants.

Last week, Anne Mayer, Executive Director, had a meeting with the Wildlife Conservation Board, and managers from the US Fish and Wildlife Services and Department of General Services (DGS) to introduce them to the RCA, the MSHCP, and understand each other's roles and responsibilities. As a result of this meeting, the RCA was successful in getting a commitment from DGS to host a statewide workshop for all HCPs to bring understanding to their appraisal process.

Board Member Sobek thanked staff for the good information and the good work that is being done.

Board Member Ingram thanked staff for a job well done.

- 1) Receive and file an update on state and federal legislation; and**
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

## **11. BOARD OF DIRECTORS / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Board Member Sobek noted that RCA's sister agency, Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA), will be celebrating 25 years of conservation in May of this year and the month has been set designated as Conservation Appreciation Month. The RCA Board should do something to recognize this milestone, perhaps with the new public outreach efforts the RCA could promote this on social media.

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, stated that at least 84% of jurisdictions have at least started the process to adopt the Nexus Study Update and the RCA staff is continuing to offer assistance every step of the way. Ms. Mayer recognized the RCA staff for their efforts to cover every city council meeting to make sure staff is available to answer any policy questions as well as offer support to Board Members.

Board Member Ingram offered kudos to the RCA staff, and specifically Anne Mayer and Aaron Hake for assistance at the city council meeting.

Chair Johnson echoed Board Member Ingram's comment.

Board Member Sobek also thanked staff for their presence at the city council meeting and calling prior to the meeting to discuss any issues. She also inquired whether the adoption of the Nexus Study Update needed to 100%, and if it was not, what the consequences would be.

Steve DeBaun, General Counsel, noted that the update goes into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, for any city that has already completed the adoption. Failure to adopt the update would result in a city not being in good standing with their obligations under the Implementation Agreement and Measure A. Further discussions with the city would be required to determine the next steps.

Board Member Ingram asked for clarification on whether a city who didn't adopt the update would be required to pay the difference in any fee increases. Mr. DeBaun confirmed that the city would be responsible for the difference, and if the difference wasn't paid, the city would again be out of compliance with Measure A and various agreements.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for consideration by the Executive Committee, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 1:04 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, May 19, 2021**, via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Mobley  
Administrative Services Manager/  
Clerk of the Board