

# **WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, December 5, 2022**

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

The Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by Chair Natasha Johnson at 12:30 p.m., in the Board Room at the County of Riverside Administrative Center, 4080 Lemon Street, First Floor, Riverside, California, 92501.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

#### **Board of Directors/Alternates Present**

Kevin Jeffries  
Karen Spiegel  
Jeff Hewitt  
Colleen Wallace  
Julio Martinez\*  
Jeff Cervantez  
Tony Daddario  
Clint Lorimore  
Joe Males

Leslie Altamirano\*  
Natasha Johnson  
Lesa Sobek  
Kevin Bash  
David Starr Rabb  
Crystal Ruiz  
Maryann Edwards\*  
Ben J. Benoit

#### **Board of Directors Absent**

Chuck Washington  
V. Manuel Perez  
David Marquez  
Jonathan Ingram  
Patricia Lock Dawson

\*Arrived after the meeting was called to order.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member Benoit.

### **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. 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 (Ruiz/Starr Rabb) to approve the following Consent Calendar items.**

#### **6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 7, 2022**

**6B. AB 361 DETERMINATION**

- 1) Reaffirm the findings in Resolution No. 2022-003, *“A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Authorizing Virtual Board and Committee Meetings Pursuant to AB 361”*. The findings are as follows:
  - a. The Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency on March 4, 2020, related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to exist today; and
  - b. State or local officials have recommended measures to promote social distancing.

**6C. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2022**

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Fee Collection Report for September 2022.

**6D. JOINT PROJECT REVIEW STATUS REPORT**

This item is for the Board of Directors to Receive and file the Joint Project Review (JPR) monthly status report as of October 31, 2022.

**6E. PROPOSED 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE**

This item is for the Board of Directors to adopt its 2023 Board of Directors/Executive Committee Meeting Schedule.

**6F. QUARTERLY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METRICS REPORT, JULY-SEPTEMBER 2022**

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file report summarizing the Quarterly Public Engagement Metrics.

**6G. QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT**

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the Quarterly Investment Report for the quarter ended September 30, 2022.

**6H. DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022**

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the Development Impact Fee Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2022.

**6I. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

- 1) Receive and file the Quarterly Financial Statements for the three months ended September 30, 2022; and
- 2) Approve the Fiscal Year 2022/23 budget adjustment in Attachment 2.

**6J. ACQUISITIONS STATUS REPORT**

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the acquisition status report as of September 30, 2022.

**6K. STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file an update on state and federal legislation.

**6L. ADOPT RESOLUTION NOS. 2022-009, 2022-010, 2022-011, 2022-012, 2022-013 AND 2022-014 APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS**

- 1) Adopt Resolution No. 2022-009, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Approving the Application for Grant Funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Johnson Project, Assessor’s Parcel Number 465-100-037 Totaling Approximately 9.74 Acres in the County of Riverside”*;
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. 2022-010, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Approving the Application for Grant Funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Barth Project, Assessor’s Parcel Number 940-030-003 Totaling Approximately 19.92 Acres in the County of Riverside”*;
- 3) Adopt Resolution No. 2022-011, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Approving the Application for Grant Funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Conservation Fund Project, Assessor’s Parcel Numbers 422-160-008, 422-160-009, & 422-160-010 Totaling Approximately 640.05 Acres in the County of Riverside”*;
- 4) Adopt Resolution No. 2022-012, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Approving the Application for Grant Funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Samrith Project, Assessor’s Parcel Number 932-160-025 Totaling Approximately 20.13 Acres in the County of Riverside”*;
- 5) Adopt Resolution No. 2022-013, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Approving the Application for Grant Funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the Schumacher Project, Assessor’s Parcel Number 932-200-016 Totaling Approximately 47.70 Acres in the County of Riverside”*; and

- 6) Adopt Resolution No. 2022-014, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Approving the Application for Grant Funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board for the B Canyon Project, Assessor’s Parcel Numbers 101-210-003, 101-210-004, 101-210-012, 101-210-013, 101-210-015, 101-210-016, 101-210-018, 101-210-020, 101-210-022, & 101-210-023 Totaling Approximately 701.04 Acres in the County of Riverside.”*

At this time, Board Member Martinez arrived.

## **7. FISCAL YEAR 2022 AUDITED BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Sergio Vidal, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Fiscal Year 2022 RCA Financial and Single Audits that were completed on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, along with the annual required communication from the Auditors. The Financial Audit relates to RCA’s basic financial statements that report on RCA’s financial activity for FY 2022. The Annual Report includes the Auditor’s Report, Management’s Discussion and Analysis (MD&A), the Financial Statements, and related note disclosures, while the Single Audit presents RCA’s federal grant expenditures. The final item is the auditors' annual required communication with those charged with Governance.

There were no audit findings noted during the FY 2022 Audit for the basic financial statements, the federal grant program referred to as the Single Audit, or within the auditor’s required communication.

The net position as of June 30, 2022, totals about \$580 million, most of which is land. Detailed information is available within the financial statements beginning on page 118 of the agenda packet. Also, RCA collected approximately \$37 million in revenue for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022, which primarily includes LDMF fees, tipping fees, and federal and state grants. Expenses totaled approximately \$8 million which comprises general operations including salaries and administrative cost, management and monitoring and land acquisition expenditures. Other key financial highlights that occurred during FY 2022 include the purchase of 1,469 acres of additional reserve land and paying off the loan from the County of Riverside.

Eric Xin, Partner with Brown Armstrong Accountancy Corporation, provided a presentation on the Audit Results Pertaining to the Board of Directors for the June 30, 2022, Year-End Financial Statements. Brown Armstrong is responsible for auditing the RCA’s financial statements in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and government auditing standards. As part of the audit, Brown Armstrong is required to look at RCA’s internal controls over financial reporting, general compliance, and other matters as required by the government auditing standards. In addition, since RCA received and spent over \$750,000 worth of federal grants, Brown Armstrong is required to perform a federal compliance audit, or Single Audit. Lastly, Brown Armstrong is required to communicate certain significant audit matters to the governing board for professional standards.

As a result of the audit, the auditors issued three different audit reports of which the Independent Auditors Report over financial statements was granted an unmodified or clean opinion. The Report on Internal Controls over Financial Reporting and Compliance and other matters was also granted an unmodified opinion. No non-compliance or any findings on internal controls were identified. Lastly, the Single Audit Report over Federal Grant Compliance was also issued an unmodified opinion with no findings of non-compliance.

RCA had adopted the Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 87, Leases, during the fiscal year. The most sensitive accounting estimates for the financial statements are capital assets and depreciation expenses, value of donated land, lease liability, revenue, receivables, and deferred inflows of resources. The key factors were evaluated, and assumptions were used to develop estimates which were determined to be reasonable in relation to the overall financial statements.

The RCA's financial statements disclosure is neutral, consistent, and clear. The auditors did not identify any misstatements and did not propose any adjustments. There were also no disagreements with management or difficulties encountered during the audit. No fraud or abuse issues relating to RCA's employees or management were noted.

Mr. Xin thanked the RCA Management Team for their assistance, help, and flexibility for the FY 2022 Audit.

- 1) **Receive and file the following reports:**
  - a. **Basic Financial Statements with Independent Auditors' Report for the year ended June 30, 2022;**
  - b. **Single Audit Report for the year ended June 30, 2022; and**
  - c. **SAS 114 Report – *The Auditors' Communication with Those Charged with Governance.***

At this time, Board Member Edwards arrived.

## 8. SUMMARY OF THE 2022 STAKEHOLDERS COMMITTEE SURVEY

David Knudsen, External Affairs Director, provided a presentation on the 2022 Stakeholders Committee survey. As part of the ongoing commitment to working with stakeholders, Chair Johnson asked for input from the Stakeholders Committee on possible items for RCA to consider in 2023. Before the October 2022 meeting, a survey was sent to the Stakeholders Committee members and was nearly identical to the one taken by Board Members earlier this year.

Question 1: My top desire for RCA in the coming year. The top selection was to acquire more land to fulfill RCA's obligations under the MSHCP.

Question 2: If budgetary resources are available, what enhancements to current RCA activities do you recommend that the RCA Board of Directors prioritize (Choose up to 3). The top

selection was increased advocacy (lobbying) for state and federal funding legislation in support of the MSHCP. The second top response was to acquire more habitat to protect MSHCP-covered species.

Question 3: My top concern about the MSHCP is. The top response was RCA has acquired less than half of the habitat acreage necessary to fulfill the local obligation under the MSHCP.

Question 4: What are the best ways for you to learn more about the MSHCP. The top response was "Species of the Month" and "Getting to Know the MSHCP" presentations at Committee meetings. The second most chosen response was one-on-one briefings with RCA staff.

Question 5: Would your organization be willing to support the RCA through state and federal legislative advocacy efforts. Of the eight that responded, all stated they would.

Question 6: One word I would use to describe RCA and the MSHCP. The responses included conservation, focused, overpowering, hope, habitat, uncertain, busy, needs to consolidate effort too much government, unsound, and antiquated.

At this time, Board Member Altamirano arrived.

Chair Johnson noted that it was great to see the feedback from the Stakeholders Committee and to see that their priorities were in line with the Board. Education remains an opportunity to Board Members and constituents. The candid feedback is appreciated, and staff has begun working on some of the comments received. One stand out is all those that took the survey, all of them were ready to work to support federal and legislative charges.

**This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file a verbal summary of the 2022 Stakeholders Committee Survey.**

## **9. ELECTION OF RCA OFFICERS**

Board Member Spiegel, seconded by Board Member Sobek, nominated Chair Johnson to continue to serve as the Chair for 2023.

Board Member Ruiz, seconded by Board Member Males, nominated Board Member Bash to serve as the Chair for 2023. Board Member Bash declined the nomination.

No other nominations were received for chair.

Board Member Jeffries, seconded by Board Member Edwards, nominated Board Member Bash to serve as the Vice Chair for 2023. No other nominations were received.

The nominations and election of Chair and Vice Chair were approved by a unanimous vote.

At this time, Board Member Jefferies left the meeting.

## **10. PRESENTATION – SPECIES OF THE MONTH**

Betsy Dionne, Senior Management Analyst Management and Monitoring, provided a presentation on the species of the month, the Santa Ana Sucker.

Board Member Spiegel wanted to know what the main threat to the species was, apart from environment. Ms. Dionne stated that most of the waterways in Southern California have invasive species, including bass and sunfish who eat sucker fish. These non-native species not only prey on the sucker, but they also compete for resources. Invasive plant species are also a factor.

Board Member Males wanted to know if during their lifespan if suckers feed on mosquitos. Ms. Dionne noted that suckers could feed on mosquitos and other aquatic invertebrates.

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

Board Member Edwards stated this would be her last RCA meeting, as she was not re-elected. She was originally appointed at a time when the RCA was in distress 17 years ago. Since then, she has seen RCA transform. RCA's Board leadership and staff have managed to squeeze millions of dollars from the federal government for the betterment of the MSHCP.

Board Member Sobek thanked Board Member Edwards for her guidance and support. The city of Menifee was just named in the top twenty-five boom towns in the United States for the seventh year.

Board Member Hewitt stated that he has been honored to serve with so many Board Members who are passionate about what they do and care about what they do.

Board Member Benoit stated that this would be his last meeting as well. He thanked Board Member Edwards for her guidance when he first started and stated that it has been a pleasure to serve on this Board.

Board Member Ruiz thanked each of the Board Members that were leaving.

Chair Johnson noted that like others she was also appointed to this Board because no one else wanted to do it. In decade since her service began, there have been trials and tribulations for RCA, but recently there have been wins for the RCA. She thanked all the Board Members that are leaving for their grace, leadership, and guidance, and stated that RCA is better because of their service.

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, reminded Board Members there is a tour this Friday beginning at 8:30 am of some of RCA's lands. It will be a foot tour of the Winchester property in Murrieta with Jonathan Reinig, Natural Resources Manager, County Regional Parks and Open Spaces. Jonathan is a wealth of knowledge and an excellent tour guide. If there is an interest in

attending, Board Members should contact Lisa Mobley, Clerk of the Board by noon on Wednesday.

Consistent with the direction from the Board as well as input from Stakeholders about making sure RCA’s state and federal partners remain important contributory partners from a financial standpoint, RCA visited Sacramento last week. RCA met with the California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) Director John Donnelly and his staff to share some of the exciting things RCA has been doing and to highlight the parcels RCA will be bringing forward for their approval. With California’s 30 x 30 plan and the money attached to it, the WCB has never had this kind of funding, ever.

The WCB only meets four times a year, so RCA must make one of those meetings to receive grant funds. RCA staff will continue to work to make these approvals as easy and seamless as possible to receive funds quickly.

Ms. Mayer on behalf of all RCA staff, expressed gratitude and thanks to all Board Members that were leaving the Board. These past two years have been a true learning experience and the commitment of the Board as a whole and as individuals to make sure the MSHCP has the best chance of working is extremely evident.

Chair Johnson recognized Board Member Ingram who had served the RCA since 2015. RCA is where they are today because of his leadership.

**12. CLOSED SESSION**

At this time, Steve DeBaun, legal counsel, announced the Board would be going in to Closed Session to discuss the property items listed on the agenda.

**12A. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8

Agency Negotiator: Executive Director or Designee

<b>Item</b>	<b>Property Description</b>	<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Buyer(s)</b>
1	569-020-003 & 569-020-004	Sydco Management Corporation	RCA
2	932-160-025	Vandy S. Samrith and Christina Ton, Trustees of the Vandy S. Samrith and Christina Ton Trust	RCA
3	963-080-012	Alexander A. Borel, Trustee of the Alexander A. Borel Trust	RCA
4	101-180-036, 101-210-003, 101-210-004, 101-210-013, 101-210-015, 101-210-020, 101-210-022, 101-210-012, 101-210-018, 101-210-016, & 101-210-023	Green River Canyons, L.L.C., a Texas Limited Liability Company	RCA



**12B. REPORT OUT FROM CLOSED SESSION**

Mr. DeBaun announced the Board considered and approved the following closed session item:

Item 2: acquisition of the property was approved for \$272,000.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for consideration by the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Board of Directors, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled to be held on **Monday, January 9, 2022.**

Respectfully submitted,

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

Lisa Mobley  
Administrative Services Manager/  
Clerk of the Board