

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, December 21, 2022

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: 856 9426 3955, in accordance with AB 361 due to state or local officials recommending measures to promote social distancing.

2. ROLL CALL

Members/Alternates Present

Kevin Jeffries*
Jeff Hewitt*
Natasha Johnson
Kevin Bash
Patricia Lock Dawson
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.

At this time, Board Member Jefferies arrived.

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/Lock Dawson) to approve the following Consent Calendar items.

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 16, 2022

6B. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2022

- 1) Receive and file the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Fee Collection Report for October 2022.

6C. JOINT PROJECT REVIEW STATUS REPORT

- 1) Receive and file the Joint Project Review (JPR) monthly status report as of November 30, 2022.

6D. ACQUISITIONS STATUS REPORT

- 1) Receive and file the acquisition status report as of October 31, 2022.

6E. ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2023-001 RELATED TO REVISED INVESTMENT POLICY

- 1) Approve the revised investment policy for the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority; and
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. 2023-001, *“Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Adopting a Statement of Investment Policy”*.

7. 2023 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Tyler Madary, Legislative Affairs Manager, provided an update on state and federal legislative actions and the Proposed 2023 State and Federal Legislative Platform. On December 5th, the state legislature convened the 2023-24 regular session. This session is expected to witness a changing of the guard with 35 new legislatures, including some assembly members moving to the senate, meaning that nearly 1/3 of the legislatures will be new. During the recess, the assembly democrats caucus reached a tentative agreement for Speaker Anthony Rendon of Lakewood to continue serving as Assembly Speaker through the budget cycle and fiscal year end, at which point Assembly Member Robert Rivas of Hollister is expected to assume the leadership role. This change may result in a shuffle of budget and policy assignments which RCA staff will track.

All eyes will be on the Governor’s budget proposal, which is required to be submitted in early January 2023. California is facing a budget deficit due to under-performing revenue projections, a budget deficit of \$25 billion is currently projected.

On the federal side, congress is expected to pass a Federal Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2023 ahead of the deadline for the current continuing resolution expiring on Friday. If an agreement is not reached before the end of the current continuing resolution, it is possible

there will be another resolution passed extending into early next year, or possibly through the entire fiscal year until September 30, 2023, given the shift of power in the house.

As the 117th Congressional Session winds down, RCA staff is continuing to closely monitor the establishment of a wildlife refuge in Western Riverside County as well as engaging stakeholders. RCA staff understands that tribal partners, utilities, and other stakeholders continue to engage to explore amendments to the language.

The RCA annually adopts a legislative platform that serves as the parameter for policy positions the Board of Directors will take on various pieces of legislation, administrative policies, and regulations. The platform addresses broad gains that are critical in both Sacramento and Washington, D.C. The platform points allow RCA staff, the Board of Directors, and RCA's lobbyists to communicate in a timely and effective manner with state and federal agencies and elected representatives as issues arise. The Proposed 2023 Legislative Platform builds on previously adopted platforms and includes recommended adjustments to the Board Adopted 2022 Legislative Platform based on lessons learned from the past year.

Most of the proposed revisions are technical or clarifying in nature. However, RCA staff does propose broadening language to demonstrate RCA support beyond critical funding for land acquisition to also include support for policies and programs that protect, expand, or streamline RCA's ability to acquire and manage reserve lands.

M/S/C (Lock Dawson/Ruiz) to:

- 1) Adopt RCA's 2023 State and Federal Legislative Platform; and**
- 2) Receive and file a state and federal legislative update.**

At this time, Board Member Hewitt arrived.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

Chair Johnson reminded Board Members to email her or RCA staff if they were interested in serving on the Executive Committee next year.

Aaron Hake, Executive Deputy Director, thanked each of the Board Members for the productive year at RCA. RCA is keeping a pretty good pace in conserving land and working through difficult issues.

RCA was invited to participate in a meeting put together by The Nature Conservancy, a national non-profit organization focused on advocacy and conservation, with the Assistant Secretary for Wildlife and Park from the Department of the Interior (DOI) as well as other members from the secretary's office. The meeting was to have a conversation with the DOI about the need to better fund habitat conservation plans and land acquisitions specifically. RCA made the case as to why plans like RCA's are the best vehicle to achieve the President's goal of conserving 30% of the nation's land by 2030, the America the Beautiful Initiative. There was good feedback

from the meeting, and it was made clear there is still a lot of education to provide to the higher levels of the DOI. A pathway for advocacy was provided for the year to come.

Board Member Lock Dawson wanted to know if opportunities for education would be brought forward to the Executive Committee as well as for the Board to be able to assist staff with the educating. Mr. Hake stated that RCA staff is taking time over the next couple weeks to develop a plan to bring forward to the Executive Committee.

Board Member Jeffries was wondering if perhaps going forward, the Executive Committee meeting could be held the same day as the full Board meeting, similar to RCTC. There should be a review of what things should be reviewed by the Executive Committee versus being only on the Board agenda. There are some efficiencies that could be gained from this review.

Chair Johnson thought that was a great suggestion and asked staff to see what that might look like and give the Executive Committee a game plan on whether this would work for RCA.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for consideration by the Executive Committee, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 12:14 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, January 18, 2023.**

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Mobley
Administrative Services Manager/
Clerk of the Board