

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 4, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by Chair Natasha Johnson at 12:32 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	Board of Directors Absent
Kevin Jeffries	Leslie Altamirano
Karen Spiegel*	Natasha Johnson
Chuck Washington	David Marquez
Colleen Wallace	Ron Holliday
Mike Lara	Kevin Bash
Jeff Cervantez	David Starr Rabb
Jennifer Dain	Crystal Ruiz
Tony Daddario	James Stewart
Carole Kendrick	Joseph Morabito
	V. Manuel Perez
	Yxstian Gutierrez
	Jocelyn Yow
	Lesa Sobek
	Patricia Lock Dawson

*Arrived after the meeting was called to order.

At this time, Board Member Spiegel arrived.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Girl Scout Katelyn Fuller.

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 (Bash/Jeffries) to approve the following Consent Calendar items.

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 6, 2023

6B. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

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 2023.

6C. 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, 2023.

6D. ACQUISITIONS STATUS REPORT

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the acquisition status report as of September 30, 2023.

6E. MONTHLY INVESTMENT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the Monthly Investment Report for the month ended September 30, 2023.

6F. QUARTERLY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METRICS REPORT, JULY – SEPTEMBER 2023

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

6G. QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

- 1) Receive and file the Quarterly Financial Statements for the three months ended September 30, 2023, and
- 2) Approve the Fiscal Year 2023/24 budget adjustment in Attachment 2.

6H. DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

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, 2023.

6I. PROPOSED 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

This item is for the Board of Directors to adopt its 2024 Board of Directors/Executive Committee Meeting Schedule.

6J. 2024 STAKEHOLDERS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

- 1) Ratify the Chair's appointments to the Stakeholders Committee; and
- 2) Direct Legal Counsel to review and recommend any conflict of interest or Fair Political Practices Commission requirements appropriate to the Stakeholders Committee.

7. THE 146 PROJECT LAUNCH

Italia Garcia, Community Engagement Manager, provided a presentation on the 146 Project Launch. Under the direction of the Board, and as part of the Board-approved public outreach plan, staff has been working on launching a new program that would engage, educate, and bring awareness to RCA's mission to the youth of Western Riverside County.

In partnership with Katelyn Fuller and the Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio, RCA is launching the 146 Project, named after the number of protected species, covered by the MSHCP. This is an educational program that will help connect youth with nature and promote RCA's conservation goals. The project was created as a fun and educational way for youth to learn about conserving animal and plant species and their habitats, as well as protecting open space. The project also emphasizes the importance of environmental stewardship among today's youth.

The 146 Project incorporates educational opportunities geared towards kindergarten through 8th grade students. Eligible youth would be offered a series of fun learning activities according to grade level and upon completion, will be eligible to receive an RCA fun patch to wear on a jacket, vest, or backpack. Additionally, students will receive a certificate of completion signed by RCA's Executive Director.

To participate in the program, youth will need to visit the interactive 146 website, which is a one-stop shop for the program and includes specific and accessible instruction on how to submit the completed activities. The activity opportunities include the following: visiting at least one of the 8 habitat preserves listed on RCA's website, learning about the RCA and the MSHCP by reading through the designated about section, completing an art activity such as a drawing or coloring page, writing a paragraph summary or a brief report on their learning outcomes depending on grade level, and taking a short grade-appropriate quiz to test knowledge and record participation. Youth will be asked to submit their completed activities via the online submission form, staff will review the project submissions and issue patches and certificates. Participation in the 146 Project, including the patches, is completely free.

RCA's public outreach and marketing plan is comprehensive and aims to reach many youths in Western Riverside County and beyond. Given RCA's partnership with the Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio and Katelyn Fuller's tremendous leadership on this project, the first outreach efforts will begin with Katelyn and other Girl Scout Troops. RCA staff and Katelyn will immediately begin to speak at troop leader meetings and spread the word about the project. RCA will then launch a robust public outreach efforts which will entail a news release, a newsletter article, an information video along with targeted digital advertising and organic social media posts. Lastly, RCA will send out email notices to schools, partner agencies, and community groups in Western Riverside County. The full launch will begin in January, just in time for the program to complement the 20-year anniversary of the MSHCP.

The 146 Project idea was presented to RCA staff by Katelyn as part of her Gold Award. The Gold Award is the Girl Scout's highest honor and the final step in a girl scout's journey. The scout must select a community issue and create a project plan that achieves a sustainable and measurable impact. Through this process, the scout can enhance skills of leadership, problem solving, communication, project management, and more. The Gold Award and project must be relevant nationwide or worldwide. As a result of Katelyn's vision, and support from RCA staff, the 146 Project was created.

Katelyn is a high school senior at Martin Luther King High, and a girl scout who has completed the Bronze and Silver Award, and who by completing the Gold Award will have successfully completed the trifecta.

Board Member Daddario wanted to know if the social media posts would be on RCA's accounts or if the 146 Project had its' own. Italia Garcia stated that the 146 Project has its' own website, so the social media targets will come from there as well as RCA's accounts.

Board Member Spiegel congratulated Katelyn and stated as a former girl scout, the effort, creativity, and leadership into this project is the package that made this happen.

Chair Johnson added that the legacy this project will leave is incredible and when speaking to Katelyn earlier today, she stated that she just wanted people to know what the RCA does. This project won't just stop at the girl scouts, the boy scouts will be able to engage as well.

This item is for the Board of Directors to receive and file the 146 Project.

8. 2024 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Andrew Sall, Senior Management Analyst, Legislative Affairs, provided an update on the 2024 Legislative Platform and state and federal legislative actions. Each year, the Board updates adopts a legislative platform that serves as a framework for the policy positions the Board will take on legislation, regulations, and administrative policies. The platform addresses broad themes critical to the Board in both Sacramento and Washington, D.C. and allows staff, Board Members, and the Board's lobbyists to communicate in a timely, effective manner with state and federal agencies and elected officials as issues arise.

The proposed 2024 State and Federal Legislative Platform builds on previously adopted platforms with minor changes from the 2023 version. The agenda packet includes two versions of the platform, one with redline edits and a clean version. The main changes this year include removing language regarding efforts to establish the Western Riverside National Wildlife Refuge, adding explicit support for increased state funding for Natural Community Conservation Plans (NCCP), and simplifying and consolidating language where feasible.

M/S/C (Morabito/Ruiz) to:

- 1) Adopt the Board's 2024 State and Federal Legislative Platform; and**
- 2) Receive and file an update on state and federal legislative affairs.**

9. FISCAL YEAR 2023 AUDITED BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Jennifer Fuller, Financial Administration Manager, presented the Fiscal Year 2023 RCA Financial and Single Audits that were completed on November 17th, 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 2023. The RCA received a clean opinion and there were no audit findings noted during the FY 2023 Audit.

The net position on June 30, 2023, totals about \$620 million, most of which is related to land. Detailed information is located in the Financial Statements beginning on page 81 of the agenda packet. The RCA collected approximately \$49 million in revenue for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, which primarily includes Land Development Mitigation Fees (LDMF), tipping fees, and land donations. Expenses totaled approximately \$9 million which comprises general administration including salaries and administrative costs, management and monitoring and land acquisition expenditures. A key financial highlight that occurred during FY 2023 is the acquisition of 1,674 acres of additional reserve land.

Lindsey Zimmerman, Brown Armstrong Partner, provided a presentation on the Audit Results for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023. Thanks were offered to the RCA team who did a fantastic job during the audit. The scope of services is to perform an audit as independent auditors over RCA's financial statements in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States. The audit is also performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards as issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The scope also includes the presentation of a SAS 114 Letter, which is the required communication letter at the end of the audit. The auditors not only look at the numbers but also at internal controls over financial reporting and compliance with other matters.

The results of the audit were an unmodified or clean opinion on the financials as a whole. In accordance with the internal controls that the auditors performed the work on, there was no non-compliance with laws or regulations and no material weaknesses or material deficiencies. The auditors also did not have any areas of concern to share with the Board. The internal control process is doing a great job and there are no process improvements needed.

For the required communications, SAS 114, there are four accounting standards, none of which were applicable this year. In terms of significant estimates, the auditors look at those in detail as part of the audit including capital asset lives, depreciation expense, value of donated land, lease liability, lease revenue, lease receivable, and deferred inflows of resources. There were no corrected or uncorrected misstatements, disagreements with management, difficulties encountered during the audit, and no fraud or abuse in the RCA.

1) Receive and file the following reports:

- a. Basic Financial Statements with Independent Auditors' Report for the year ended June 30, 2023; and**
- b. SAS 114 Report – *The Auditors' Communication with Those Charged with Governance.***

10. ELECTION OF RCA OFFICERS

Chair Johnson, seconded by Board Member Ruiz, nominated Vice Chair Kevin Bash to serve as the chair for 2023. No other nominations were received.

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

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

11. BOARD OF DIRECTORS / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Board Member Ruiz announced that the City of San Jacinto for the first time is doing Candy Cane Lane on Main Street on Wednesday, and there have been reports of a weather change and there will be some snow and sledding.

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, wished everyone a nice holiday season.

12. CLOSED SESSION

At this time, Steve DeBaun, legal counsel, announced the Board will be going in to Closed Session to discuss the item on the agenda.

12A. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8

Agency Negotiator: Executive Director or Designee

Item	Property Description	Property Owner	Buyer(s)
1	465-100-040; 465-100-038; 465-110-024; & 465-100-006	Alice R. Dilworth, et al	RCA

12B. REPORT OUT FROM CLOSED SESSION

There were no announcements from Closed Session.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Johnson took a moment to thank the Board for their direction and leadership this calendar year and looks forward to everything RCA will achieve next year.

There being no further business for consideration by the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority Board of Directors, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled to be held on **Monday, January 8, 2024**.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Mobley
Administrative Services Director/
Clerk of the Board