

Colusa County
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

April 17, 2018
CCRCD Meeting Minutes

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Bob Alvernaz, Ben Felt, Beth Nall, Tom Hickok and Kim Gallagher

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Gil Ramos, and Jay Dee Garr

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS PRESENT: Jim LaGrande

OTHERS PRESENT: Patti Turner-CCRCD Executive Director, John Loudon-Colusa County Board of Supervisors, Kandi Manhart-Glenn County RCD Executive Officer, Colusa Glenn Sub-Watershed Coalition for the Irrigated Lands Program

Ben Felt, CCRCD President called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm at the Colusa Industrial Park Conference Room

PUBLIC/PARTNERS COMMUNICATIONS:

John Loudon reported on the current activities of the Colusa County Board of Supervisors. He stated the Board has not reached a decision on whether to allow commercial cannabis growing in the unincorporated portions of Colusa County but there will be a public meeting soon.

Kandi Manhart gave a report on the activities of the Colusa Glenn Sub-Watershed Coalition including the anticipation of changes in reporting requirements by 2020. She advised the group that the GCRCD has hired an engineer student to work in multiple counties and would be available to Colusa County if needed. GCRCD is planning a Day-in-the-District tour to educate legislators about the current condition of critical understaffing at the NRCS. She also stated that Melina Watts was hired as a grant writer for the district and envisions joint workshops on Healthy Soils.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Nall to approve the March 20, 2018 minutes as mailed. The motion was seconded by Gallagher and passed with 5 ayes, 0 noes, and 2 absent (Ramos, Garr).

FINANCIAL REPORT:

The directors received a balance sheet for the period of March 20 through April 16, 2018. The CCRCD's fund balances were as follows: checking account \$1400; petty cash account \$79; CCRCD General Fund (03200) \$57,505.37; sales tax (03201) \$0; CCRCD Misc. Projects (032025) \$4,046.93; DOC Fund (032027) has a balance of \$3,819.91 and Clearing Account fund (032001) \$0.

The board was presented with two (2) claims; Petty Cash in the amount of \$21.00 and SiteHatchery claim in the amount of \$1,750 for a deposit on the new website. A motion was made by Gallagher and seconded by Hickok to approve the financial report and two claims as submitted. The motion passed with 5 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstained and 2 absent (Ramos, Garr).

CCRCD DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

The Natural Resource Coordinator vacancy due to Jackie Filter unexpectedly giving her resignation on March 26, 2018 was discussed. Turner stated that filling this position as soon as possible is the number one priority to fulfill the tasks associated with the NRCS Cooperative Agreement. The board was presented with a draft copy of a job description prepared by Turner to review. Turner stated there is total of approximately \$32,000 left in the agreement that needs to be used in totality by September 30, 2018 with no time extensions allowed. She also stated that the CCRCD could possibly only receive \$30,000 in the new NRCS agreement to run from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. This discrepancy in funding causes a problem with continuity of available work hours for the new employee over the approximately 16 months of employment. After much discussion it was determined that to keep the job description from being too wordy it should just state the position is fulltime temporary with the potential of long-term employment and let interested applicants contact Turner for more information. It was decided that Krehbiel and Turner will be on the interview panel along with at least one Director/Associate Director. Felt, Nall and LaGrande would be available during the first week on May depending on day of the week and time of day. Turner will contact one or two of them once more detailed information is available.

The second dilemma associated with the staff vacancy is the need to fulfill the tasks associated with the DOC Capacity Building grant. Turner explained she could take over all duties of the grant but in the long run that would not be in the best interest of the CCRCD. It would be most advantageous for her to start training an employee that could ultimately become the new Executive Director on January 1, 2019 (or beginning of the January pay period). It was recommended that this new position could be called "Assistant Executive Director" to obtain a higher level of applicants. The applicant would start off at 50% FTE and lower pay but when promoted to Executive Director they would get a raise and more hours. The board fully supported this plan. Turner requested time to put together a detailed hiring plan and job description to present at the May board meeting.

Turner advised the board that Grant Agreement #17-0699-000-SO has been received from the Ca Department of Food and Agriculture for the Healthy Soil Program Technical Assistance Program. She stated that the project was already completed as applications had been submitted by April 13th. Filter was able to fulfill the CCRCD's obligation prior to her leaving. A motion was made by Nall to authorize Turner to sign the agreement in the district's behalf. The motion was seconded by Hickok and passed with 5 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstained and 2 absent (Ramos, Garr). Turner advised the group the award was for \$5,000 but the district would only invoice a fraction of that as it only covers the actual staff time and administrative fees.

Turner stated that due to the staff vacancy it is necessary to modify the Work Plan for the Department of Conservation (DOC) Capacity Building grant to focus more on hiring and teaching a new employee about the RCD. These changes will be critical to the long-term success of the original project objectives to make the CCRCD more visible, sustainable and relevant. A few of the original tasks are not as important as tasks that will help hire and educate a new employee about the CCRCD and RCDs in general. Turner prepared a letter of request to the DOC along with a modified Work Plan for the CCRCD Board to approve. After Turner read the letter and passed around the Work Plan a motion was made by Nall and seconded by Gallagher approve accept Turner's recommendations and instruct Felt to sign the letter in the district's behalf. Turner stated she is not asking for a budget modification at this time because it will depend on how quickly somebody is hired and the experience level of the new employee.

Turner announced the CARCD is offering \$2000 grants to RCD to develop a community outreach project for historically underserved producers at the field level. Kandi Manhart explained the project the Glenn

County RCD created to do a video related to soil health. After some discussion it was felt that the CCRCD could work with the NRCS to do a YouTube clip on the soil moisture testing directed at reaching the younger farmers. Turner will work at submitting the proposal by the April 30, 2018 deadline.

CCRCD REPORTS:

Turner provided a written summary of the activities associated with the CCRCD projects during the past month. She reviewed the tasks not previously discussed during the meeting.

- **Department of Conservation Capacity Building Funding;** Filter gave a presentation about the CCRCD to Rotary. Felt added the presentation caused a producer to talk to him about his concerns with a NRCS project and the need for help but reluctance to ask for it from a federal agency. Turner agreed to talk to NRCS about this.
- **NRCS Cooperative Agreement:** Hiring a new employee is the #1 priority. Filter completed her final work before leaving as requested by Krehbiel.
- **HSP Technical Assistance Program:** New project was completed by providing outreach and one-on-one assistance/ or via phone/email to 8 producers. Turner has been in continual contact with CDFA about September 2017 invoice that has not been paid yet. She was told it was approved for payment in mid-March.
- **SWEEP Evaluations:** Filter finished two verifications prior to leaving. One verification remains and if ready prior to May 31, 2018 Turner and Krehbiel with complete. If project is not ready my May 31, 2018 our contract is over and the CDFA will complete inhouse.

Turner stated that SiteHatchery is working on the new website template but ultimately, she will need to be the one to create all the new materials. Turner requested photographs from around the county to use in the new website. Kandi Manhart recommended contacting Denise Carter for permission to use her excellent photographs.

Turner announced a free training opportunity hosted by the Organic Farming Research Foundation and eOrganic. The program is titled "Soil Health and Organic Farming Webinar Series" and includes eight topics. She will email information about the webinar program that runs through May of 2019.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm by President Ben Felt. The next regular monthly meeting will be held at 5:00 on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at the CIP Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patti Turner-Secretary/Treasurer-Colusa Co. RCD