

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Richard C. Brody
President

Steven Rosentsweig
Vice President

Nancy Helsley
Treasurer

Beth Burnam
Director

Laurie Price
Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Clark Stevens

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

EIGHT-HUNDRED FORTY-FOURTH MEETING

Monday November 27, 2023—6:00 P.M.

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** the meeting was called to order by President R.C. Brody at 6:03 p.m. A quorum was established with Directors Beth Burnam, Nancy Helsley, Laurie Price and Steve Rosentsweig in attendance. Also in attendance were Associate Directors Dennis Washburn and Deborah Klein Lopez, Executive Officer Clark Stevens, Deputy Executive Officer Daniel Cooper, Finance Officer John Hendra, and Senior Conservation Biologist Jamie King.
2. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Glenn Bailey, past RCD Director. Brooks Engelhardt, NRCS District Conservationist, and Jamie Quarfeld, NRCS Soil Conservationist, also attended.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Glenn Bailey mentioned that he would attend the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee as an alternate for Dan Cooper. He also mentioned that Chatsworth Nature Preserve has scheduled their 2024 open house for April 6.
4. **USDA/NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE REPORT:** Ms. Quarfeld greeted the board and mentioned an NRCS grant (EQIP, CIG), and a Feb. 16 deadline for NRCS climate smart grants focusing on agricultural practices. Mr. Engelhardt mentioned the availability of grants focused on Carbon sequestration, oak/riparian woodland planting and fuel modification, and invasive species management for private landowners (and leased public lands). Mr. Stevens mentioned that RCDSMM has a capacity-building grant from NRCS (led by himself and Shelly Backlar).
5. **MINUTES:** Approval of minutes for meeting of October 23, 2023. The Board reviewed the minutes and voted to approve them as presented. **Ms. Burnam/Mr. Rosentsweig; approved 5-0.**
6. **MONTHLY CLAIMS AND FINANCIALS:** Approval of Claims for October 2023 and review of financial reports through October 31, 2023. Ms. Burnam stated that it

would be helpful to include a running percentage of the portion of our revenue that is retained (vs. paid to various contractors) each month, to better gauge our true organizational size and capacity (independent of various grants). Mr. Brody (and others) observed that a handful of large grants that fail to make timely invoice payments have the potential to severely impact the organization. Mr. Hendra indicated that several RCD's face this issue, and that a line of credit from a philanthropic organization, among other options, could be explored. **Ms. Burnam/Ms. Price; approved 5-0.**

7. REGULAR CALENDAR

- A. Approval of \$646,100 augmentation and enhanced work plan for State Coastal Conservancy Grant Agreement \$19-015, Topanga Lagoon Restoration Planning, Phase 1. Mr. Brody expressed concern for taking on more grant responsibility. Mr. Stevens and Ms. King explained that this particular augmentation was well-structured (in terms of overhead) and was necessary to allow us to continue a long-term project that has been delayed. **Ms. Price/Ms. Helsley; approved 5-0.**
- B. Approval to transfer \$9000 from LVUSD Conservation Easement fund to RCD bank account to reimburse maintenance and monitoring expenses since 2016. This was modified to direct staff to analyze the exact funds that were expended from the fund through the end of FY23, and to recalculate the proper deduction (rather than using an estimated amount). **Ms. Burnam/Ms. Price; approved 5-0.**
- C. Report on accounts receivable aging. Mr. Stevens and Mr. Hendra provided the board with a single color-coded sheet explaining how numerous aging invoices were tracked down during November, resulting in a large infusion of funds to RCDSMM (and its contractors). Mr. Stevens is ready to engage a new accounting consultant to assist with this effort and to advise on the management structure of RCDSMM with respect to tracking invoices and payments.
- D. Report on Reserve Fund replenishment. While the Board and staff agreed that a 30% (of annual operating funds) target is desirable for a Reserve Fund, it would be best if RCDSMM consulted with the professional accounting advisors (see above) on the best means to achieve this (e.g., monthly deductions, % of each grant, etc.).
- E. Update on move survey, staff evaluations of Executive Officer. Both surveys were distributed to all full-time/>1-year staff, and the results returned to the board.
- F. Selection of delegate to CARCD annual business meeting. The CARCD board meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual conference, on Dec. 13, noon – 2 p.m.). Mr. Hendra will coordinate this with any interested board members.

8. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

A. Staff Reports for October 2023:

- i. Clark Stevens, Executive Officer/Principal Architect
- ii. Dan Cooper, Deputy Executive Officer/Principal Conservation Biologist
- iii. John Hendra, Finance Officer
- iv. Rosi Dagit, Principal Conservation Biologist
- v. Marilyn Brody French, Education & Engagement Director
- vi. Shelly Backlar, Community Resilience Coordinator

9. DIRECTORS' COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Ms. Price mentioned that a successful DEI committee meeting was held with staff this month, and that they would meeting monthly (next on 12/12) for now.
- Mr. Washburn brought news clippings that described a push for coastal adaptation in the Malibu shoreline area that we should be involved with. He also mentioned investigating Measure W funds, and adding this to a future meeting agenda.
- The RCDSMM holiday party will be held at 4 PM on 12/5 at the office.

10. **CLOSED SESSION:** The meeting was moved to a Closed Session at 8:03 p.m., when board met without staff for approximately one hour. During this discussion, the Board directed Mr. Rosentsweig to meet with Mr. Stevens in January to share results of the Executive Officer staff survey.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m. **Ms. Burnam/Ms. Price. Approved 5-0.**

Submitted by: _____
Dan Cooper, Deputy Executive Officer

Date: _____

Approved by: _____
R.C. Brody, President, Board of Directors

Date: _____