



**Lake County Resource Conservation District**  
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**Harry Lyons**  
President

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2024  
BOARD MEETING

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER** – President Harry Lyons calls the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Alma de Paredes will take the Minutes.

**Directors Present:** Tony Blyleven, Jim Bridges, Randy Krag, Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Harry Lyons, Shula Shoup, Merry Jo Velasquez,

**Directors Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Alma de Paredes, Greg Dills, Laurie Hutchison, Erica Lundquist (NRCS), Megan McCleure (JAIDE), Kristen Murphy (JAIDE), Lawrence Ray, Wren Ward; Ronald Montez, Sr., Historian and Tribal Elder of the Big Valley Band Pomo Indians, and Daniella Santana of the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake.

**1. INTRODUCTIONS** and Consideration of extra Items not appearing on the posted agenda. Directors and attendees introduce themselves and Mr. Montez introduced Daniella Santana. Ms. Santana will lend a tribal voice into the RCD and is being considered for the open at-Large Direction position. Involved with the Blue-Ribbon Committee for the Rehabilitation of Clear Lake as well as the Hitch conservation efforts. Her background includes a Bachelor's degree from U.C. Long Beach, a stint in West Africa with the Peace Corps working on the environment and agricultural sustainability, and a masters in mapping, natural resources. She is interested and involved with the Clear Lake rehabilitation and the Hitch conservation programs.

**2. PUBLIC INPUT** - Anyone may speak for 3 minutes on a subject not on the agenda; no action will be taken by the Board. Land Acknowledgement Prayer led by Ronald Montez opened the Board Meeting.

**3. REPORTS/UPDATES**

3.1 Lake County Fire Safe Council Report & PG&E Grant & COCO/AIM - Laurie Hutchison – Continuing work to build capacity of the LCFSC so that it has more bandwidth to assist the community. She is still working on the CoCo Aim grant. The PG&E project has been completed and is working with Kristen Murphy of JAIDE to apply for a second round of funding.

3.2 Forestry Report & CFSC Defensible Space Grant – Wren Ward/Kevin Soland – Kevin will reach out to CalFire for resolution of the delays in the start of the Defensible Space work and release of funds as there are 80 homes in the pipeline to be cleared. Working on both CARCD and NACD projects and will provide technical assistance to underserved private landowners.

3.3 NRCS Report – Erica Lundquist – Forester candidate identified, and an offer is pending. Other open positions have had their deadlines extended to March 24, 2024. She is expecting to have a 3-month intern in place by June 2024. Continues working on backlog of projects.

3.4 Goats Rue Project - Greg Dills – Nothing to add.

3.5 Caltrans Revegetation Projects - Greg Dills – Contract for the Middletown Phase II project has been drafted and is in queue for review and approval.

3.6 Lake County Land Trust Wright Project – Larry Ray – Needs to submit a map to the Army Corps clearly delineating wetlands and is awaiting shape files from Steve Zaluski. Once he submits the maps, he will wait for confirmation that permits will not be needed to start work. We should have the shape files in two weeks. Larry has worked with Mr. Montez, tribal observer, on the forest health project.

3.7 Trout in the Classroom – Tony Blyleven – For 2024, he has six classrooms, two each in Hidden Valley, Upper Lake, and Lower Lake, 50 trout eggs each. Viable fingerlings will be released in Putah Creek or Blue Lakes.

3.8 Soil Projects – WETA, ZFP, Conservation Works – Kristen Murphy – All soil conservation contracts have been signed. Will now move forward with recruiting efforts for an AG Conservationist. Working on a grant that would provide a solar irrigation system to underserved community farmers with under 500 acres of farmland. Eligibility hinges on the applicants passing an efficiency test. Also studying the feasibility of entering into a cooperative agreement with NRCS for either a 1-year, \$75K, no match agreement or a 2-year, \$150K with a 1:1 match. The Board prefers the 1-year, no match option. Erica will investigate the renewal opportunities of the 1-year option.

### 3.9 President/Director Reports

Harry Lyon – Nothing further to add to the report.

Randy Krag – Nothing to report.

Kate Schmidt-Hopper – Nothing to report.

Jim Bridges – Nothing to report.

Shula Shoup – Nothing to report

Merry Jo Velasquez – Middle Creek – Three to four unwilling landowners but the work is progressing to buy the land for the Middle Creek Restoration Project. Land Trust: Wright/Keithly Wetland Preserve project: Continue to work to obtain funding to restore Manning Creek. A written Concept proposal is being drafted which will go through the Land Trust committees for approval. If approved a full proposal will be requested from which a grant proposal will be crafted. Also on the Wright/Keithly Wetland Preserve – Working on education platforms.

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR: ACTION** - APPROVE MINUTES of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, MEETING; ACCEPT MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT; APPROVE AND PAY BILLS. Note: any item may be pulled from the consent calendar if requested by a director or member of the public.

**Motion to Approve Minutes and Pay Bills:** Merry Jo Velasquez

**Seconded:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

Randy Krag has questions regarding the Accounts Receivable totals.

Megan McCleur reminds the board that the accountant generated financials will not be approved until the Board is confident that the financials are correct.

**Motion to Reject Financials:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper **Seconded:** Merry Jo Velasquez

**Aye:** None

**Nays:** Unanimous

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

**5. SAFETY MEETING** – Slip and Fall Prevention – All have read.

## 6. DISCUSSION & ACTION

### 6.1 VOTE on Tentative Approval of Contract with Caltrans for Middletown Phase II

**Motion to Approve Contract with Caltrans with Potential Amendments:**

Kate Schmidt-Hopper **Seconded:** Merry Jo Velasquez

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

### 6.2 VOTE on Approval of \$60K Contract with LACO Partnership & Associates for Management Support - CAL FIRE Tree Mortality

**Motion to Approve LACO Contract:** Merry Jo Velasquez

**Seconded:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

### 6.3 VOTE on Resolution 2024-2 for Realignment of LCFSC

**Motion to Approve Resolution 2024-2:** Merry Jo Velasquez

**Seconded:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

### 6.4 VOTE on Hiring Forester

**Motion to Approve Forester Job Offer to Candidate:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper

**Seconded:** Merry Jo Velasquez

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

## 6.5 VOTE on Advertising for Ag TA Provider Position

### **Motion to Approve advertising for the Agricultural Technical Assistant Position:**

Randy Krag

**Seconded:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

6.6 Discussion on March Presentation by Nevada County Cannabis Alliance – Harry Lyons - The Alliance will give a 30-minute presentation regarding the technical services they provide to the cannabis grower community. They are a privately funded organization.

6.7 Discussion on Job Description for Finance Manager – Megan McClure – Discussed the need to hire a bookkeeper and financial manager to work together on a part-time basis. Looking at launch July 1, 2024.

6.8 Discussion on Audit Plan – Harry Lyons – Discussion regarding either keeping the 22/23 audit procedure the same as 21/22 audit with the involvement of Klein Accounting or skip 23/24 and begin again with the 24/25 Fiscal Year.

6.7 Discussion on Partnerships for Blue Ribbon Projects- Scotts Valley Aquifer/Schindler Restoration – Not enough information to make any decision on the Scotts Valley Aquifer. We have some information on the Schindler Restoration project and Harry will review with the Board as more information comes in. Kristen Murphy of JAIDE said that the Schindler Restoration plan is solid.

## 7. ONGOING PROJECTS – Roll Call on Annual Projects and Board Hosts.

Recruiting – Kate Schmidt Hopper - The Board met Daniella Santana who is a candidate for the at-Large Director position.

Meisenbach Scholarship – Harry Lyons and Kate Schmidt-Hopper – Nothing to report.

Field Days in the Creek – Kate Schmidt-Hopper and Shula Shoup – Date is still to be determined but will begin work in the near future on the insurance requirements and discussions with the private landowners.

Kids in the Creek – Merry Jo Velasquez – Scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Trout in the Classroom – Tony Blyleven – Discussed at the beginning of the Board Meeting.

Invasive Weeds Tour – Randy Krag- Nothing to report.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

Megan McClure took a roll call of who will be attending the DEI training sessions scheduled for next week.

Kristin Murphy announced that she will be giving a presentation on JAIDE's work with RCDs at a JAIDE function.

## 9. GENERAL DISCUSSION - no action will be taken by the board.

## 10. ADJOURN

**Motion to Adjourn:** Merry Jo Velasquez **Seconded:** Kate Schmidt-Hopper

**Aye:** Unanimous

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstained:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Attachments: