



## Minutes of May 21, 2026 Board Meeting minutes

### CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Randy Krag of the LCRCDD Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at     1:01     p.m. Jing Wang will take the Minutes.

Directors Present: Randy Krag, Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Shula Shoup, Joseph Sullivan, Merry Jo Velasquez, Harry Lyons.

Directors Absent: None.

Others Present:

In Person: Jing Wang (Bookkeeper), Erica Lundquist (NRCS District Conservationist), Dalynn Dykstra (Watershed Restoration Program Manager), Megan McCluer Lopez (Finance Manager), Estefania Laines (Forestry and Fire Coordinator), Noah Cornell (Sustainable Agriculture Program Manager)

Virtually: Julia Sullivan (Executive Director), Nicole Lau (Community Forester)

### 1. INTRODUCTIONS and consideration of extra items not appearing on the posted agenda

- Executive Director Julia Sullivan introduced Dalynn Dykstra, the LCRCDD's new Watershed Restoration Program Manager, noting that she was in her fourth week with the organization and had already been working to get familiar with the RCD's projects and programs.
- Dalynn introduced herself to the Board and shared background on her prior experience with the U.S. Forest Service. She also described her experience in trails, wilderness, wildland fire, watershed restoration, and land management.

### 2. PUBLIC INPUT

Anyone may speak for three minutes on a subject not on the agenda; no action will be taken by the Board.

- Merry Jo Velasquez spoke in her capacity as President of the Lake County Land Trust regarding the proposed shared communications position between the Land Trust and the RCD. She clarified that although RCD Board members do not have a role in staff hiring decisions for the RCD, she intends to provide input on the communications position on behalf of the Lake County Land Trust.

### 3. BOARD REVIEW AND UPDATES

3.1 UPDATE on staff activities - Julia Sullivan, Executive Director

- Julia provided an update on staff activities, noting that the staff report included a significant amount of blue text reflecting active grant applications and proposal development currently underway.
- Julia highlighted a recent proposal submitted to the California Fire Safe Council State Fire Capacity Program, which requests approximately \$200,000 to support prescribed grazing on 65 acres of Robinson Rancheria-owned land. The proposal also includes participation from UC

Cooperative Extension and Gold Ridge RCD, with components focused on prescribed grazing implementation, education, grazing cooperative workshops, and support for the upcoming 2028 Community Wildfire Prevention Plan update.

- Julia reported that Forest Health Program staff and Scott McLean (Watershed Restoration Field Technician) have been coordinating a Forest Stewardship Workshop series, which began with an Earth Day “oak stroll” at Trailside Park and continued with workshops in Cobb.
- Julia invited Board members to attend the upcoming June 11 workshop in the Mendocino National Forest near Lake Pillsbury, which will include discussion of wildlife management, including northern spotted owl habitat and the Tule elk herd.
- Board President Randy Krag commented that he was pleased to see that a new GrizzlyCorps fellow position had been funded.

### 3.2 ROLL CALL on ongoing projects with Board hosts

- Randy Krag – No update.
- Harry Lyons –
  - Harry reported on Field Day in the Creek, and noted that the RCD played a major role in organizing and supporting the event. Harry thanked Kate Schmidt-Hopper for her leadership in designing and coordinating the event, while noting that his own role focused on paperwork, insurance, and ensuring the event was properly covered from a liability standpoint.
- Kate Schmidt-Hopper –
  - Kate shared thank-you letters written by students to the presenters who participated in Field Day in the Creek. She explained that the letters were created by a fourth-grade class at Coyote Valley Elementary School, with thank-you notes prepared for each presenter.
- Shula Shoup – No update.
- Merry Jo Velasquez –
  - Merry Jo reported on Kids in the Creek, noting that the event went very well and benefited from strong assistance from both Board members and staff.
  - She noted that TERA’s participation was valuable, especially because their presentation focused on cultural burning and “good fire,” and she suggested that TERA should be included again in future years.
- Joseph Sullivan – No update.

### 3.3 UPDATE on NRCS activities - Erica Lundquist, NRCS District Conservationist

- Erica provided an update on NRCS activities, reporting that the main focus is now getting newly selected applicants under contract and moving funded projects forward.
- Erica stated that 16 applications have now been selected for funding.
  - She noted at the previous meeting only about 5 applications had been selected, so the increase to 16 funded applications represents a substantial increase.
- Erica explained that approximately 20-25% of NRCS funding must be directed toward livestock-related projects, which has helped fund all eligible livestock/rangeland applications this round.
- Erica added that interest for NRCS assistance programs are continuing to grow through word of mouth as landowners hear from others whose applications were funded.

### 3.4 UPDATE from President and Directors

- Randy Krag –

- o Randy, the Board and Julia discussed whether there may be opportunities for the RCD to further engage around bird habitat, wildlife diversity, public outreach, ecotourism, or partnerships with organizations such as Redbud Audubon or local guide services.
- Harry Lyons –
  - o Harry commented on the staff report and noted that he was pleased to see the RCD connecting with Glenn RCD and Gold Ridge RCD through recent project and partnership development efforts. He expressed support for building relationships with organizations the RCD has not worked with extensively in the past.
- Kate Schmidt-Hopper – No update.
- Shula Shoup – No update.
- Merry Jo Velasquez – No update.
- Joseph Sullivan – No update.

#### **4. ACTION**

*Includes discussion.*

##### 4.1 VOTE on approval of April 2026 meeting minutes

*Discussion:* None.

Motion to Approve: Joseph Sullivan

Seconded: Merry Jo Velasquez

Ayes: Randy Krag, Harry Lyons, Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Shula Shoup, Merry Jo Velasquez, Joseph Sullivan

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: None.

Result: Passed

##### 4.2 VOTE on acceptance of March 2026 financial report

*Discussion:*

- Board members and Finance Manager Megan McCluer discussed various aspects of the Budget versus Actuals report.
- The Board discussed the relationship between project deliverables, billing rates, available staff capacity, and grant timelines.
- The Board also discussed accounts receivable and noted a significant improvement in receivables, with most outstanding amounts now current.

Motion to Approve: Harry Lyons

Seconded: Joseph Sullivan

Ayes: Randy Krag, Harry Lyons, Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Shula Shoup, Merry Jo Velasquez, Joseph Sullivan

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: None.

Result: Passed

4.3 VOTE on Resolution 2026-03 - Approval for an Exception to the Procurement Policy (in support of Clearlake Oaks Revitalization Project)

*Discussion:*

- Julia explained that HANA Resources, which currently holds a \$300,000 contract with the RCD for the Clearlake Oaks Revitalization Project, is closing its operations.
- HANA's role under the contract included support for data collection, project management, and environmental compliance, making the organization and its staff an important part of the project team. Julia noted that the HANA staff responsible for the Clearlake Oaks Revitalization Project are moving to HELIX Environmental Planning (HELIX), allowing continuity of technical expertise and project knowledge.
- Julia explained that the resolution would allow the RCD to contract directly with HELIX without going through the standard competitive procurement process normally required for a contract of this size.
- The Board discussed the proposed exception and determined it was in the best interest of the RCD and the public to maintain continuity for the project.

Motion to Approve: Kate Schmidt-Hopper

Seconded: Merry Jo Velasquez

Ayes: Randy Krag, Harry Lyons, Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Shula Shoup, Merry Jo Velasquez, Joseph Sullivan

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: None.

Result: Passed

4.4 VOTE on approval of participation in CARCD-led proposal to California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Cannabis Restoration Grant Program: Cleanup, Remediation, and Watershed Enhancement

*Discussion:*

- Noah Cornell (Sustainable Agriculture Program Manager) gave a presentation on the proposed RCD participation in a CARCD-led proposal to the CDFW Cannabis Restoration Grant Program, explaining that the program supports cleanup, remediation, watershed enhancement, conservation planning, and restoration work in areas affected by cannabis cultivation. He noted that the proposal would involve multiple RCDs statewide and would likely include two tracks: legacy site cleanup/remediation and conservation planning for licensed cannabis cultivators.
- The Board discussed how the RCD might participate in the program, including how to clearly communicate the environmental restoration purpose of the work and the types of projects or participants that would be eligible.

Motion to Approve: Kate Schmidt-Hopper

Seconded: Harry Lyons

Ayes: Randy Krag, Harry Lyons, Kate Schmidt-Hopper, Shula Shoup, Merry Jo Velasquez, Joseph Sullivan

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Abstained: None.

Result: Passed

## 5. DISCUSSION

*Does not include action.*

### 5.1 CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant updates: Mendocino National Forest Habitat Enhancement & Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project

- Nicole Lau (Community Forester) provided a recap and update on the CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant applications, reporting that both applications have been invited to submit full applications, with the full applications due June 29, 2026.
- Nicole explained that, under the Climate Change Investments (CCI) funding and Proposition 4 funding pathways, the Mendocino National Forest application advanced through both funding sources, while the Napa RCD-led application advanced through the CCI funding source.
- Nicole reported that for the Mendocino National Forest application, Alan Phillips (Rice Fork Area landowner) has agreed to provide match funds.
- Board members were satisfied with the adjustments that had been made and that the proposal is moving forward.

### 5.2 Health insurance considerations

- Julia provided an update on the RCD's exploration of options for offering employer-provided health insurance beginning in the new 26-27 fiscal year.
- Julia explained that moving to employer-provided health insurance would require updates in two areas: the personnel policy benefits section and the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget. She noted that policy language related to benefits would likely come before the Board for approval within the next two months.
- Randy expressed support for offering an employer-provided health plan to employees, noting that it would be preferable to relying solely on monthly reimbursement and requiring staff to manage coverage independently.

### 5.3 Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget development timeline and process

- Megan provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget development timeline and process, noting that the ad hoc Budget Committee had already met to review the overall schedule and the steps needed to bring the budget to the full Board.
- Megan explained that the budget will be presented to the Board in multiple stages:
  - Version 1 of the budget will be presented at the June Board meeting.
  - Version 2 will be presented at the July Board meeting, allowing the Board another opportunity to review and discuss proposed changes.
  - The final budget adoption is expected to occur at the August Board meeting, which Megan described as more of a formal approval step after substantive discussion has already occurred.
- Megan emphasized that Board questions, discussion, and any requested changes should occur during the June and July review periods.

### 5.4 Discuss draft Director position description

- Julia introduced the draft Director position description, explaining that it was developed as part of the Board’s ongoing governance and development work, as well as to support recruitment for the current vacant Board seat. The draft included responsibilities related to governance, financial oversight, organizational direction, policy, community representation, and Board participation.
- The Board discussed revising the document’s language to better reflect the Board’s oversight role, rather than implying that Directors have direct management responsibilities.

#### 5.5 Recruitment process for vacant Board seat

- The Board discussed the ongoing recruitment process for the vacant Board seat and reviewed outreach efforts made by individual Directors.
- Randy also reported that the County had responded and logged Steve Campbell as having resigned, confirming that the vacancy is recognized and allowing the Board to move forward with recruitment.
- The Board discussed the types of skills and perspectives that could be valuable in a new Director, noting that the candidate does not necessarily need a natural resources background.
- Julia stated that she would reach out to the County to confirm the necessary steps and timeline for Board term renewals and would send the relevant information to Board Directors.

#### 5.6 Establishing Greg Dills Scholarship

- Julia introduced the idea of establishing a Greg Dills Scholarship as a way to honor Greg’s legacy and contributions to the RCD.
- The Board responded positively and expressed general support for the idea, with the suggestion of first establishing scholarship funding through the RCD budget, then reaching out to Greg’s family to ask whether they would be comfortable with naming the scholarship in his honor.

### 6. AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS

- None.

### 7. CLOSED SESSION

Personnel performance review

- Start: 3:50 PM
- End: 4:13 PM
  - No action was taken.

### 7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:13 p.m. in the closed session.