



# North Santa Clara Resource Conservation District

(formerly the Guadalupe-Coyote RCD)  
An independent special district of the State of California

## SUMMARY MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Thursday, March 7, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.



*Note: Though agenda items may be considered out of order (for example, to accommodate the schedules of guest speakers and/or members of the public in attendance for a specific item, or when items are removed from the consent agenda), the official minutes remain recorded in the same order as originally published in the official agenda. Number of votes are reflected in the following order: Aye-Nay-Abstention, with nays and abstentions called out by Director name.*

Susan Hare  
President

Gail Bautista  
Vice-President

Frank Maitiski  
Director

Cynthia McColl  
Director

Paula Quintero  
Director

Larry Johmann  
Associate Director  
Director Emeritus

Rick Lanman, MD  
Associate Director  
Director Emeritus

Bill Leikam  
Associate Director  
Director Emeritus

Brian Schmidt  
Associate Director

Mel Sarmiento  
Associate Director

Kat Wilson  
Associate Director

Stephanie Moreno  
Executive Director &  
District Clerk

Julie Gantenbein  
District Counsel

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1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by President Hare. Directors present: President Hare, Vice President Bautista, and Directors Maitiski (arrived at 5:41 p.m. and Quintero (left at 6:41 p.m.) Director McColl was absent (excused). Associate Directors present: Associate Directors Lanman and Leikam. Executive staff present: Executive Director/District Clerk Moreno.
2. **Meeting Agenda**  
*Motion: Approve the agenda as presented. (Hare/Bautista; 3-0-0; McColl and Quintero absent)*
3. **Public Comment:** Speakers: Member of the public Matt Frazier (regarding environmental services); Executive Director Moreno read a letter from member of the public and former GCRCD Director Libby Lucas (regarding Coyote Creek Flood Wall Construction) and made an announcement regarding contemplated changes to the Williamson Act by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors (which are anticipated to be beneficial to the preservation of agricultural lands within the District, and is a time-sensitive issue the Board and District constituents should be aware of.)
4. **Consent Agenda**  
*Motion: Approve the consent agenda as presented. (Hare/Quintero; 3-0-0; McColl and Quintero absent)*
5. **Presentation**  
*Morgan Hill Unified School District (MHUSD) FarmTECH Program:* Michael Jochner, MHUSD Director of Student Nutrition, gave an overview of the school district's initiative to grow its own produce and answered questions.
6. **Partner Reports**
  - 6.1 *USDA-NRCS:* District Conservationist James Booth gave a report on behalf of the USDA-NRCS Hollister Service Center.
  - 6.2 *Other Partners:* Nation Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Pacific Region Representative Caleb Griffen gave a report on behalf of NACD.

- 6.3 Updates from agencies and organizations who wish to share information regarding their agricultural and/or natural resources conservation activities, programs, and projects.

## 7. Programs and Projects

- 7.1 *NRCS-RCD Local Work Group Meeting*: The Executive Director reviewed results from the joint meeting held with Loma Prieta and San Benito RCDs on February 27, 2024.
- 7.2 *Strategic Planning Update*: Executive Director Moreno explained that this agenda item is for individual Directors to give feedback on how the envisioned process for the 2025-2029 Long Range Plan, and referred the Board to the numerous sample plans included in the Board packet. In response to a question from Director Maitiski, she indicated that during the process itself, there will be opportunities for Directors and Associate Directors, as well as members of the public, to engage in discussion regarding goals and objectives. Comments that related to the process: Director Maitiski would like to see a SWOT analysis and vision statement incorporated; Director Quintero would like to see more of a focus on our disadvantaged communities and our youth; Vice President Bautista agreed with Director Quintero; President Hare agreed with all previous speakers, and would like to see the plan be simpler and more focused to allow easier public understanding.
- 7.3 *Greater Bay Area Carbon Farm Hub (GBACH)*: Update on the reason for the name change to Greater Bay Area Conservation Hub (expanded focus to conservation planning rather than just carbon farm planning) and the coordinator funding overlook by CARCD.
- 7.4 *Executive Director Updates*: Executive Director Moreno gave an update on activities with the following programs and projects, and at Director Maitiski's request, included the reason that the program/project was developed and implemented. She explained that District programs and projects are developed by the District, with Board approval, in response to feedback and requests from District constituents and stakeholders, such as through the local work group meetings; stakeholder meetings; agency collaborations and requests; constituent requests, and she provided individual information regarding that for each item.
  - 7.4.1 *Farm and Ranch Resilience Program*: Outreach plan, recent activities, and upcoming workshop for Asian growers.
  - 7.4.2 *Redwood Habitat Suitability Analysis Project*: Preliminary findings and project outreach.
  - 7.4.3 *Tule Elk Habitat*: Research findings, NSCRCD Highway 101 Overcrossing Study Group, and proposed fencing project.
  - 7.4.4 *Hazardous Fuel Reduction Program*: Mapping work and increase in treatment areas.
  - 7.4.5 *Resilient and Equitable Urban Stream Corridors*: Staffing and budget changes.
  - 7.4.6 *Cannabis Restoration Grant Program*: Application update.
  - 7.4.7 *Silver Creek Linear Park Research Project*: Completion of focused gaging program.
  - 7.4.8 *Zero Emissions Neighborhood (ZEN) Pilot Project*: Urban greening activities and outreach.
  - 7.4.9 *Watershed Education and Technical Assistance*: Municipal habitat restoration technical assistance request.
  - 7.4.10 *Stock Pond Rehabilitation and Permit Streamlining Grant Proposal*: Collaboration update.

## 8. Administration

- 8.1 *District Logo Contest*: Executive Director Moreno presented the planned task and timeline for the logo contest, and share the map of the Title 1 schools and DAC communities. She would like to contract for graphic design purposes, but President Hare and Vice President Hare said they could personally assist with that. She also stressed the importance of the District retaining of the “on-demand” platform so buyers can't download the logo on anything. The committee (Hare and Bautista) indicated they only planned to allow purchase of products selected by the District, and offered to help with flyer development. She asked for direction as to the target population for the contest (for example, what percentage of Title 1 funds will trigger involvement; and they indicated all

listed 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade schools that overlap the two categories in the east foothills “pink” color coded areas.

- 8.2 *California Association of Resource Conservation Districts*: CARCD Delegate Frank Maitiski and Executive Director Moreno gave an update on the 3/7/24 Board meeting, elections, and other recent activities by, and communications with CARCD. Two key issues were that: 1) the CARCD Board of Directors by consensus paused moving forward on the proposed Division 9 changes until they can get feedback from all RCDs; and 2) the CARCD Board overturned the Executive Committee’s unilateral decision to suspend membership for over 41 RCDs (approximately 2/3 of the current membership), even though they had paid dues, because they hadn’t provided supporting documentation. They agreed if CARCD made a mistake as to approvals without documentation it needs to be corrected during the next fiscal year, not mid-year. Director Maitiski has been invited to be a member of the 3-person Bylaws Committee.
- 8.3 *Board Reports*: The Board heard updates and reports from Directors, Associate Directors and Committees. President Hare said she wanted the record to reflect that the District does not have any control over the Coyote Creek Flood Wall Construction, and does not anticipate needing to reach out to Valley Water regarding the project, unless it is in terms of offering technical assistance for rehabbing after the project is done. Associate Director Lanman recommended that the Board recommend Will Ware for an appointment to the NSCRCD Board of Directors by the Board of Supervisors.)
- 8.4 *Executive Director Report*: Executive Director Moreno said she continues to be impressed by the District’s two new employees, Conservation Program Coordinators Teddy Peng and Andrew Lopez. They excel at representing the District in a way that she believe the Board would be proud of, and she has received numerous compliments regarding their professionalism, knowledge, and commitment. The District is a better organization because of their presence.

**9. Meeting Adjourned at 7:25 p.m.**

**Consent Agenda**

- 4.1 Approve minutes for the January 4, 2024 Board Meeting.
- 4.2 Accept financial reports through January 2024.

**Information Only:**

- 4.3 County of Santa Clara Controller-Treasurer Department; *Proposition 19 Local Agency Registration*; dated February 9, 2024.