



**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**November 12, 2021**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Yuba County Resource Conservation District (YCRCD) was held on **November 12, 2021**, commencing at **9:34 A.M.** The meeting was conducted by Zoom Video Conference and Audio Teleconference.

The Yuba County Resource Conservation District supports the orders and directives from the California Department of Public Health and the California Governor’s Office in the effort to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Governor’s Executive Order N-29-30 enables meetings of legislative bodies to be conducted by way of teleconference.

**ROLL CALL**

Directors	Present	Absent
Alyssa Lindman (President)	X	
Gary Fildes	X	
Deborah Aseltine Neilson	X	

**Others Present:**

- Gurveen Dhillon, Sutter County RCD
- Kelli Evans, Sutter County RCD
- Pa Yang, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Julian Branston, Plan B Works
- Steven Dambeck, Yubakami
- Tony Ofarrell

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments provided.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

- A1 Approval of the minutes of the July 9, 2021 Regular Meeting, as written, the minutes of the August 20, 2021 Special Meeting, as written, and the minutes of the September 17, 2021 Special Meeting, as written. Upon motion made by Director Lindman, seconded by Director Fildes, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes as written.

**ACTION ITEMS**

- A2 Adoption of Resolution #21-8: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE YUBA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PROCLAIMING A

LOCAL EMERGENCY PERSISTS, RE-RATIFYING THE PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM'S ORDER DATED MARCH 4, 2020, AND RE-AUTHORIZING REMOTE TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF YUBA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOR THE PERIOD NOVEMBER 12, 2021 – DECEMBER 11, 2021, PURSUANT TO BROWN ACT PROVISIONS. Upon motion made by Director Lindman, seconded by Director Aseltine Neilson, and unanimously carried, the Board approved Resolution #21-8.

B1 Approval of payment of \$150 membership fees to California Association of RCDs. Upon motion made by Director Lindman, seconded by Director Aseltine Neilson, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the payment of membership fees.

B2 Approval of payment for renewal of QuickBooks. Upon a motion made by Director Aseltine Neilson to pay a renewal fee of up to \$860, seconded by Director Fildes, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the QuickBooks renewal fee.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### C. Presentation By the Food Hub

#### Yuba County Food Hub – RFSP Grant PowerPoint

Julian Branston began the presentation by introducing their team and their roles in the Food Hub. Members that attended today were Steven Dambeck, Tony Ofarrell, and Peter Pillsbury. Steven described some of the small food businesses in the foothill area as well as other community entities including a local charter school that is teaching their students about raising food. A limiting factor however is the number of farmers in the area. The good news is that there are areas available where farming has not occurred since the mining era and so does not contain pesticides (pristine land). They wish to start a food hub and they gave a summary of this food hub concept. What do they need? They need water and are looking to the local water district instead of using groundwater. What do they have? They have resources and people who know about good farming practices. May need additional monies later on to help educate those who would like to participate in this food hub (e.g., about good farming practices). A feasibility study for a food hub would provide information for those interested in the food hub, such as being farmers or investors or who are interested in some of the educational ideas such as healthy soil techniques. Their strategy has three steps. Step 1 - is to conduct a feasibility study that would include information such as land use, how much produce is needed to serve area, how many staff members would be required for production, distribution, and marketing, and other business requirements. Step 2 - is to work with partners such as Yuba County Water Agency and others at county level who are invested in water and connect the dots between several studies on water infrastructure and how these could best serve a food hub. Step 3 – is to apply for an infrastructure grant from USDA for developing the food hub facility. They are looking at revising this strategy. They are still waiting to hear from USDA; notice about the grant awards was to be given at the end of October. They are not confident that they will get the grant as they have not received

any feedback from USDA regarding the grant. They also may need to swap Step 1 and Step 2 as it has become apparent that it is important to address the need for water.

Pa Yang from NRCS re-introduced herself and then went on to ask Julian and Stephen about what agencies they reached out to for information on the grants. Pa Yang mentioned the Conservation Innovation Grant as this might be another grant opportunity for the Food Hub team. She also mentioned that some years ago, the Yuba County RCD (which did not include any of the current board members) attempted a Food Hub, but this effort did not succeed due to many challenges such as staffing, permits, monies to keep hub going, water, variations in demand for produce, etc.

#### D. Partner Reports

##### Pa Yang - NRCS

Pa Yang presented her report to the Board. This report included the timeline for grants for next year. The NRCS is currently accepting applications for Cat Fire (Catastrophe Fire) recovery where they are providing funding for wildfire cleanup (burned fences, logs, trees, etc.) and replanting. The EQIP application is now open until December 10, 2021 and the ranking deadline is January 28, 2022.

##### Sutter County RCD

The Sutter RCD Project Manager provided an update on joint Sutter County RCD-YCRCRD actions. Sutter County RCD had another SWEEP Hub event on November 10th. The Monarch Technical Assistance project is going well; a number of growers have expressed interest and Simar Bains has been going out, as weather permits, to look at the locations. The Project Manager spoke about their annual Speak Off competition that was held Friday October 22nd via zoom and the winner Kirtan Kalkat is now going to the state contest which will be held sometime in December. The Project Manager mentioned that the Parkway project is progressing. Lastly, the Sutter RCD Project Manager notified the Board that the CalRecycle project clean-up in Yuba County will likely be starting here soon, but will not be finished until January or February. The Project Manager mentioned that SWEEP and HEALTHY SOILS applications are out now and their Technical Assistance Provider is working with farmers to help them complete their applications.

#### E. Financial Report

Director Fildes reported that he has submitted checks to Sutter County RCD and membership dues to CARCD. Director Fildes also mentioned that QuickBooks will be updated by next week. There currently is \$12,960.40 left in the monies available from YWPFSC to cover staff time and a little under \$20,000 in the account which does not include anything paid last week.

#### F. Audit Update

Director Fildes reports that there is no change on the audit and that he is waiting to hear back from Mr. Bain.

#### G. Website

Director Aseltine Neilson mentioned that the website is almost finished and live. The Board is currently waiting for the redirect from the old website and when that is completed the website will be live and ready to use and edit.

#### H. Tier 1 - Special District Requirement

The Yuba County RCD must meet the Tier 1 requirements such as supervisors/board members completing all training on time, completing an audit, filing reports with LAFCO, posting the agenda 72 hours prior to the regular meeting on the website and at the building in which the meetings usually take place, reports to the State Board of Equalization, mission statement, workplan and annual budget, and have all policies up to date. The Board is slowly working to ensure that these Tier 1 requirements are met. The YCRCD now has liability insurance in place, but we may need insurance for the office premises. YCRCD also is meeting the basic operational requirements although we could do better on engagement and outreach. Kelly Evans indicated that Sutter County is filing reports to LAFCO for the Sutter County RCD, so Yuba County may be doing the same thing. Also, the counties may also provide the reports to the State Board of Equalization.

#### I. Move from Zoom meetings to in-person meetings

All directors have decided it's best, due to continuing COVID uncertainties, to continue zoom meetings.

#### J. DOC FAP Grant – Updated Work Plan and Budget

Director Lindman has been working on the DOC work plan and budget update. Unfortunately, it does not look like the forest fellow requested through the Sierra Nevada Alliance grant will be funded and any fellow through the Sierra Nevada Conservancy would be completely covered so no funds would need to be requested through the DOC grant. Because Director Lindman needs to finish the DOC work plan and budget updates, she has decided to not include any funding for a forest fellow. The budget does include \$5000 for the Needs Assessment (and the Yuba Water Agency has approved \$8600 for the YCRCD to fund the remainder of the Needs Assessment). Director Lindman would like to get going on the Needs Assessment as the Yuba Water Agency funding is only good until the end of June 2022. Director Lindman also indicated that she may include about \$1000 in the DOC grant for Sutter RCD staff time to participate in a Soil Carbon Collaboration that is working to improve soil health and carbon sequestration within grazing lands. Director Aseltine Neilson also is investigating costs for developing and printing some brochures which also could be covered under this grant and Director Lindman also will discuss this grant with Allison Thomson to see if she has any ideas. Director Lindman will review the final draft at the end of the month with the DOC grant manager and will provide this final draft for approval at our next meeting.

#### K. Project Updates

Most of the project updates were covered through the partner reports and other items. As noted, the Yuba RCD did receive funding for the Needs Assessment through the Water Agency. The Foothill program is still on hold for the time being as the YCRCD does not have the resources to pursue potential grant/funding opportunities.

## **BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Director Lindman mentioned that she has met with Randy Fletcher to see if he can potentially help with the audit (whether the County can do it for us or help pay for it) and talked about Director Lindman giving a joint presentation with the YWPFSC to the Yuba Water Agency (which will include all the Yuba County supervisors) in January. Director Lindman requested from Kelli Evans and Gurveen Dhillon a list of joint accomplishments with Sutter County RCD including some of the stats and photos. Director Lindman also has a call with Allison Thompson later today and will be discussing building the YCRCD-YWPFSC partnership.

## **DIRECTORS' COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

The Board discussed potential agenda items for the next meeting. These include the DOC Grant workplan and budget update, an update on the audit and on the website, and the 2022 budget (including the timing of revenue and expenses). Pa Yang will be providing a presentation on the NRCS program and grant opportunities at the December meeting. Director Fildes mentioned he has a potential board member in mind and Director Aseltine Neilson mentioned that she has been working on getting the office computer and printer up and running. Director Aseltine Neilson also saw Allison Thompson at the YCRCD/YWPFSC office and shared the Forest Health Guidebook with her.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 A.M.