SAWA MEETING MINUTES

March 28th, 2019
Meeting Location:
1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C
Riverside, CA 92507
9:00 A.M.

BOARD ADMNISTRATIVE ITEMS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Neugebauer called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Jim Earsom – IERCD; Mandy Parkes – IERCD; Kerwin Russell – RCRCD; Rick Neugebauer – TEAMRCD; Brett Mills – SJBRCD; Paul Meinhold – Merrill Lynch; Jennette El Morsy – SAWA; Brian Brady – SAWA; Bonnie Johnson – OCWD; Melody Aimar – SAWA; Greg Powers – Jackson Tidus (via conference call); Michelle Mariscal – SAWA;

III. PUBLIC INPUT

PUBLIC INPUT – Oral communication from the public audience on any subject matter within SAWA's subject matter jurisdiction. There was no public at this time.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approve Minutes for February 28, 2019
b. Approve Financial Statement for February 2019

Director Parkes moved to approve the consent calendar for February 2019. Director Mills seconded and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Neugebauer	Aye	Russell	Aye	Parkes	Aye
Alternate Johnson	Aye	Mills	Aye		

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Presentation of SAWA Investment Portfolio and Cash Flow through February 2019 – Paul Meinhold

Mr. Meinhold presented the SAWA investment portfolio and cash flow through February 2019 as well as overview of holdings and time weighted rate of return.
Director Neugebauer requested to have a written recommendation from Mr. Meinhold to have as an action item within the next 30 days.

b. ILF & Conservation Easement Report – Brian Brady

Mr. Brady deferred to action item b.

c. Treasurer's Report – Mandy Parkes

Ms. Parkes reported that there is nothing significant outstanding.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

a. Discussion and Possible Approval of a Resolution Rescinding the Current SAWA Stipend Policy

Mr. Brady reported that on March 26, 2015, at the direction of the Board of Directors, a stipend policy was approved. This policy provided for the monthly distribution to Board agencies the sum of $1,500 to $1,875 to defray Board member expenses while serving on the SAWA Board. The monthly amounts have increased by the cost-of-living adjustment contained in each succeeding year's SAWA budget. Currently, the monthly stipend stands at $1,618 to $2,023. SAWA By-laws, Section 307, provides for just and reasonable reimbursement of Directors' expenses. Based upon a review of the last nine months of Director Activities, staff believes it is in SAWA's best interests to eliminate fixed monthly stipend payments in favor of Directors submitting individual expense requests. Mr. Brady recommends that the Board rescind the current stipend policy and payment process, effective April 1, 2019. Eliminating the current stipend would save approximately $47,000 for calendar year 2019. Thereafter, savings accrue at approximately $65,000 per year.
Director Mills moved to rescind the current stipend policy and payment processes effective April 01, 2019. Director Alternate Johnson seconded and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Neugebauer	Aye	Russell	Aye	Parkes	Aye
Alternate Johnson	Aye	Mills	Aye		

b. Discussion and Possible Approval to Proceed with ILF Project
Mr. Brady reported that on June 13, 2013 SAWA was informed by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) that its In Lieu of Fee (ILF) program was being suspended until such time as a new program could be developed to comply with ACOE regulations adopted in 2008. In response to this suspension, SAWA's former Executive Director, with the assistance of SAWA's legal counsel, developed a new program instrument to reflect the new requirements. The proposal was submitted to ACOE in September 2013 for comment. ACOE has taken no action on the SAWA proposal. A 2019 SAWA strategic goal is to reinstate the ACOE ILF program and deploy related restricted funds. To this end, SAWA staff and Director Parkes met on January 29, 2019 with Michael Sweesy Principal Habitat Restoration Specialist at Dudek. Dudek submitted a proposal to assist the SAWA to resolve outstanding issues associated with the suspended In-Lieu Fee program with the ACOE. The proposal incorporates the scope of work discussed at the January 29, 2019 meeting and subsequent communications from SAWA staff. Mr. Brady recommends that the Board of Directors approve the Dudek SAWA In-Lieu Fee Program Proposal, dated February 8, 2019 and authorize the Mr. Brady to sign all contract related documents.
Director Mills moved to approve the Dudek SAWA In-Lieu Fee Program Proposal and authorize Executive Director Mr. Brian Brady to sign all contract related documents. Director Parkes seconded and the motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Neugebauer	Aye	Russell	Aye	Parkes	Aye
Alternate Johnson	Aye	Mills	Aye		

GENERAL ITEMS

VII. SAWA PROJECT REPORTS

a. Brian Brady, Executive Director – SAWA
Mr. Brady reported that SAWA is hiring up to 14 new employees, working with MSHCP staff and RCA to expand budget, updating SAWA's Accounting Manual, and analyzing overhead billing rates for possible adjustments.

b. Kerwin Russell – RCRCD
Mr. Russell reported that there is a master gardener event planned at RCRCD on April 4, 2019.

c. Dick Zembal – OCWD

Absent

d. Rick Neugebauer – Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD
Mr. Neugebauer reported that there is a new Associate Director, Newt Parkes, and Associate Director Randy Feeney was promoted to full Director.

e. Mandy Parkes – Inland Empire RCD
Ms. Parkes reported on the Sustainable Food Guide.

f. Brett Mills – San Jacinto Basin RCD
Mr. Mills reported on a few new conservation easements and other work.

g. Bonnie Johnson – OCWD
Ms. Johnson reported that OCWD is working on putting wetlands back after the storms and that vireo are trickling in. Ms. Johnson reported that there is an open interim position and anyone interested should go to the OCWD website.

h. Jennette El Morsy, Administrative Services Manager – SAWA
Ms. El Morsy reported on administrative work including the hiring of seasonal and other Dept. staff, establishing the Microsoft nonprofit donation account for Office 365 licenses for staff, and the Watershed Conference sponsorship. Ms. El Morsy is also working on audit prep and insurance renewals.

i. James Law, Habitat Restoration Services Manager – SAWA
Absent

VIII. SAWA / MSHCP BIOLOGIST REPORT

a. Michelle Mariscal – SAWA Interim MSHCP Administrator
Ms. Mariscal reported on administrative work including 8 of 8 summary reports completed for 2018 survey efforts, Cost estimate for first year of a five year monitoring effort at Clinton Keith wildlife bridge submitted to RCA for review, Annual work plan and budget to be submitted to RCA for review by March 25. Ms. Mariscal added that a vacant field biologist position filled, and new employee began on March 11, and there was an offer accepted by candidate for second vacant field biologist position. The new employee should begin by the end of the month. Ms. Mariscal also updated on other work including:

- Rare plants: Brand's phacelia monitoring and habitat enhancement study ongoing. Over 80 individuals have germinated onsite. Surveys for rainbow manzanita, prostrate spine flower, and Fish's milkwort are ongoing.
- Burrowing owl: Artificial burrow checks ongoing.
- Grasshopper Sparrow: Site assessments to verify habitat suitability of potential survey sites completed. Surveys planned to begin the week of March 18.
- Riparian birds: Site assessments to verify habitat suitability of potential survey sites completed for currently accessible sites. Surveys planned to begin the week of March 18.
- Long-tailed weasel: Surveys began October 29 and have been conducted in the Banning Bench, the San Jacinto River, Oak Mountain, and Wilson Valley. Weasel have not yet been detected. Surveys have been suspended to prioritize other survey efforts but will resume in summer.
- Vernal pools: Evidence of spadefoot breeding observed in Murrieta, Estelle and Skunk Hollow. Adult spadefoot observed in French Valley. Riverside fairy shrimp documented at new location on a newly acquired conservation parcel in French Valley.

- Quino checkerspot butterfly: Surveys ongoing. First Quino of the season (*n* = 16) observed at Multi-species Reserve sentinel site on March 15.
- Avian Taxa Lead met with staff at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area regarding sharing of BUOW occurrence data.
- Coordination continuing with CA Department of Fish and Wildlife staff at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area regarding management of the Tricolored Blackbird breeding and foraging habitat.
- Botany Taxa Lead coordinating with UC Cooperative Extension and Riverside County Parks and Open Space District on Brand's phacelia habitat enhancement study and site management.
- Interim Monitoring Program Administrator and Avian Taxa Lead attended a California Cactus Wren Symposium on March 5.
- Collaboration continuing with the state-wide Tricolored Blackbird Working Group.
- Taxa Leads and Interim Monitoring Program Administrator invited to a Wildlife Agency meeting hosted by RCA to discuss research ideas and grant funding opportunities.
- Interim Monitoring Program Administrator invited to a MSHCP Management and Monitoring outreach meeting hosted by RCA.
- Trainings Including: Grasshopper Sparrow pre-survey training for surveyors will be conducted by Avian Taxa Lead on March 20. Riparian Bird pre-survey training for surveyors will be conducted by Avian Taxa Lead on March 20. Data Manager has been participating in online SQL training course.

b. Melody Aimar – SAWA Wildlife Habitat Management Services Manager
Ms. Aimar reported the hiring of 7 BHCO assistants and orientation complete, BHCO traps open at all sites, Biologists are training assistants. Ms. Aimar reported that 2 Vireo arrived on March 15, others slowly coming in; Survey 123/Collector Apps in use with help from USGS, and Biologists monitoring HRS crews (SAWA/IERCD) for nesting bird avoidance. SBVMWD awarded SAWA Avian Baseline Surveys contract, Ms. Aimar and a biologist toured Reach 9 with new Corps staff, Navigating new electronic CA Scientific Collection Permit, Ms. Aimar is negotiating with consulting biologists for HRS monitoring, and attended/presented at Cactus Wren Symposium. Ms. Aimar also updated on work within individual member agencies jurisdictions:

- Inland Empire RCD: Devil's Canyon Project - check wildlife cameras - coverboards – stream surveys. Nest avoidance recommendations by site completed. Monthly monitoring of the burrowing owl boxes installed at the Bella Strada mitigation site, BUOW found on-site – Congratulations Mandy! RCTC-SR91 CAGN Surveys.
- Orange County Water District: Sunnyslope surveys continue. CAGN surveys at Hwy71-west and near the dam. Bat/Swallow diet study- DNA sampling complete – report and analysis pending. Biologists ground truthing upper SAR habitat for 2019 SWFL surveys. Biologist prepping for Grasshopper Sparrow surveys.
- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: Greer Ranch/Adeline Farms Biomonitoring.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: No work this month.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: No work this month.

IX. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Mills reported that he would be happy to help with any policy changes if needed as part of the Admin Committee.
Director Mills left the meeting at this time.

X. CLOSED SESSION

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – Anticipated Litigation – Significant Exposure to Litigation Pursuant to Government Code sec. 54956.9(b): One case.
The Board did not go into closed session discussion at this time.

XI. **NEXT MEETING** – April 25, 2019 will be held at the SAWA Headquarters, 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507.

XII. **ADJOURN** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:38 A.M.

Notice: All open session agenda materials will be available for inspection by members of the public at the SAWA office located at 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507. Please contact Maria Arellano at (951) 780-1012 x106 for this information (Government Code Section 54957.5). In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in a Board meeting, please contact the Administrative Services Manager at (951) 780-1012 x101. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting.

Please post 72 hours before meeting