



**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**June 24, 2022**

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Yuba County Resource Conservation District (YCRCD) was held on **June 24, 2022**, commencing at **9:34 A.M.** The meeting was held in person at the Yuba County Agricultural Commissioner Office’s conference room. Members of the public could attend in person or via Zoom Video Conference and Audio Teleconference.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**Others Present:**

Dane Wadlé, California Special District Association (CSDA)  
Ana Santos, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Frank Denatale, Fire Prevention Officer, Community Development and Services Agency, Yuba County

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

Director Aseltine Neilson requested that the approval of the May 2022 minutes be tabled until the next board meeting. Director Lindman made a motion to table the approval of the May 13, 2022, Regular Meeting minutes until the next board meeting, Director Fildes seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were provided.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. Approval of the minutes of the April 8, 2022, Regular Meeting, and May 13, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, as written or as modified. Upon a motion by Director Lindman, seconded by Director Fildes, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the April 8, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes as written. As noted in the Changes to Agenda item above, approval of the May 13, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes was tabled.

## **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

- B. Approve payment of invoice from Golden State Risk Management Authority for 2022-2023 insurance which includes furniture and equipment (\$1,761.00); also approve No Known Loss Letter that will accompany payment

Director Lindman made a motion to approve the payment of \$1,761.00 to Golden State Risk Management Authority for the YCRCD's 2022-2023 insurance and to approve the No Known Loss Letter. Director Aseltine Neilson seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

- C. Approve payment of invoice from Sutter County Resource Conservation District covering staff work on YCRCD tasks (\$2,747.00)

It was noted that this invoice covers Sutter County Resource Conservation District (SCRCD) staff work for both YCRCD admin tasks and CalRecycle tasks. The Board agreed that YCRCD should ask SCRCD to provide separate invoices for each of the two projects. Accordingly, Director Files made a motion to approve paying two invoices from SCRCD that cover the \$2,747.00 SCRCD staff work. Director Lindman seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

- D. Discuss and approve payment to Streamline for management of website (either \$120 total annual fee or \$10 monthly)

The Board agreed that paying the annual fee would be best. Director Lindman made a motion to approve payment of the \$120 annual fee to Streamline, Director Fildes seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

- E. CSDA Update from Dane Wadlé

Dane Wadlé is the CSDA field coordinator for Yuba and Sutter counties. He provided the Board with a brief update on some legislative items that CSDA is working on related to RCDs. First, CSDA is supporting AB 1776 which adds California RCDs to the list of entities entitled to prompt payment by state agencies. This bill has now moved from the Assembly to the Senate. Second, CSDA is supporting AB 1902. This bill updates the enabling act for California RCDs. It has been a while since this code was updated and in the meanwhile RCDs have taken on more tasks related to California natural resource conservation. This update helps clarify what RCDs now do and the role that they play regarding California natural resource conservation. Like AB 1776, this bill is now being considered by the Senate. Third, regarding the state budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, CSDA is working with CARCD to get funds identified to support RCDs. In the current preliminary budget, \$10 million has been identified for the Department of Conservation that would provide 2 years of financial assistance to help grow the capacity of RCDs to expand their work on fire prevention, flood prevention, and water quality activities.

Director Aseltine Neilson asked about the time frame for paying CSDA dues. Dane Wadlé indicated that YCRCD should expect to see the dues notice sometime in the

October-early November time frame.

## F. Partner Reports

### NRCS

Pa Yang, NRCS, provided the YCRCD with a report that summarized the results of the final set of Fiscal Year 2021-2022 grant programs. Ana Santos, the NRCS Soil Conservationist at Yuba City, reviewed this report with the Board. There still is a paucity of grant applications from Yuba County landowners. Some applicants from Yuba County did receive grants; however, it was surprising that no applicants received grants in some programs such as the Forestland-Interior Coast Range/ S Cascades (Sacramento Valley) program. Ana Santos explained that the process of selection depends on many factors including what practices are proposed and the impact of the proposed work, but ultimately it depends on how the scoring goes for the ranking questions (how competitive the proposals are compared to those from other counties). The Board expressed interest in receiving information per the Forestland program on whether the size of the properties and other factors affected the competitiveness of the Yuba County applications. Ana Santos indicated that she could find out what the ranking scores were for each of the Yuba County forestland applications and provide that to the Board. The Board also expressed interest in what could be done by the RCD to help make the applications more competitive. In particular, the Board asked if NRCS could provide a list of what some of the ideal criteria are for competitive applications. Ana Santos indicated that NRCS has a list of assessment and ranking questions that could be provided to the Board. It was agreed that working together to improve the competitiveness of applications would be beneficial.

### Yuba County, Fire Prevention Officer, Community Development and Services Agency

Frank Denatale indicated that he is reaching out to various Yuba County communities including Camptonville and Smartsville as well as working with the Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council (YWPFSC)(e.g., training presentations). He also has been working with the County Office of Emergency Services on a fireworks campaign spanning the 12 days leading up to the Fourth of July. Frank Denatale also has had some meetings with Rob Bartsch, the battalion chief at the Loma Rica CAL FIRE facility, and right after the Brandie Fire (Loma Rica), he met with some homeowners from the area to discuss what additional steps they could take to make their area more fire resilient.

Frank Denatale also participates in a monthly round table meeting with Randy Fletcher and public works representatives including Allison Thomson, the Executive Director for YWPFSC. He wondered if one of the YCRCD directors would be interested in participating. Director Lindman expressed interest in attending these meetings.

### Sutter County RCD

No representatives from SCRCD were present at the meeting.

Director Aseltine Neilson noted that she and Director Lindman had a meeting with Kelli Evans (SCRCD) earlier in the month to discuss administrative items (including the invoicing for SCRCD staff for their hours spent on YCRCD tasks) and the status of

different collaborative efforts. Director Aseltine Neilson summarized some of the discussion from this meeting and provided it to Director Fildes and Dewaina Edens, the YCRCD bookkeeper, to help inform the joint effort by Director Fildes, Director Aseltine Neilson, and Dewaina Edens, to develop a draft YCRCD 2022-2023 budget.

The current collaborative projects with SCRCD are either being covered through staff from other RCDs or do not require any staff time until the fall.

Also, the SCRCD agreed to provide the YCRCD with the information that is needed for using their zoom program.

#### Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council

Director Fildes mentioned that the YWPFSC together with Firewise USA is putting on a 2-day wildfire mitigation review training course this coming weekend. During a wildfire mitigation review, landowners are provided with a packet that includes various wildfire mitigation information, and Director Fildes is including in these packets the 2-page synopsis of the Forest Management Handbook for Small-Parcel Landowners which is stamped with the YCRCD's information. When conducting wildfire mitigation reviews, he also mentions the YCRCD and some of the programs that the YCRCD would like to get started. Hopefully, this outreach effort will increase the foothill communities' awareness of the YCRCD.

The YWPFSC has quite a few grants that they are managing. These include two grants for \$50,000 that would reimburse homeowners a portion of the money they spend to improve fire resilience on their properties (cost share program; 50% of costs up to a maximum reimbursement of \$2,000). The first grant reimburses for work on hardening homes; the second grant reimburses for defensible space work. Before homeowners can apply for these funds, they first must have a wildfire mitigation review conducted. The YWPFSC has received quite a few requests for these reviews, and the YWPFSC has dispersed most of the funds available from the first grant. However, fewer homeowners have applied for funds through the second grant. This reimbursement program ends November 30, 2022.

The YWPFSC also was recently awarded a CAL FIRE California Climate Investments Program grant to conduct roadside clearing in the Oregon House and Dobbins area and they are currently waiting to hear about a grant that would fund defensible space work for disabled senior citizens.

#### G. Financial Report

After the final payment to Solid Ground Consulting for the Needs Assessment and other expenditures approved by the Board, there is, as noted in the June 2022 financial report, \$12,901.18 in the YCRCD accounts. Director Lindman will be invoicing the Yuba Water Agency (YWA) for the remainder of the funding the YWA allocated for the Needs Assessment (\$2800). There also is some money designated for the Needs Assessment and the audit in the Department of Conservation (DOC) grant so she will also be contacting the DOC grant coordinator about requesting these funds.

In the original budget of funds provided by the YWA to the YWPFSC for use by the YCRCD, about \$2500 was allocated for the audit. Once Director Fildes finds out what the exact allocation is for the audit, he will talk to Dewaina Edens, the YCRCD

bookkeeper, about preparing an invoice for these monies. Director Fildes also may need to check with Allison Thomson, Executive Director of the YWPFSC, about the process for requesting these funds.

Greg Holman with the Fellowship of Friends (Oregon House) talked to Director Fildes at the Be Prepared Fair and indicated that the Fellowship of Friends might donate \$500 to the YCRCD. The Fellowship of Friends is interested in having Director Fildes conduct an evaluation of some of their acreage and provide some advice on what can be done to keep this acreage (which was terraced and planted with wine grapes) from reverting back to its original condition now that this acreage is no longer being maintained as a vineyard. Director Lindman suggested that Director Fildes provide Greg Holman with the Natural Resource Conservation Service's contact information as the NRCS has a lot of programs that might be helpful to them. The NRCS also could make a site visit and provide some advice.

H. Review and approve 2020 and 2021 audit package

Director Lindman reviewed the changes that Director Aseltine Neilson suggested for the Management Report Responses document, and she had no concerns about the suggested edits. She will make these changes to the document before sending it out to Larry Bain. The invoice from Larry Bain for the 2020 and 2021 audits (\$6000.00) also was provided to the Board directors as part of the audit package. As the Board had no further questions or discussion items, Director Lindman made a motion to approve the 2020 and 2021 audit package including the payment of Larry Bain's invoice. Director Fildes seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

I. Review and approve the preliminary 2022-2023 YCRCD budget

The Board reviewed the preliminary budget and recommended some changes. Director Fildes made a motion to approve the YCRCD preliminary budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 with the recommended changes. Director Lindman seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. According to the audit, the preliminary budget should be posted on the YCRCD website in August and a final budget approved by the Board by the end of August. The directors agreed that the Board should review the budget and make appropriate changes at least quarterly.

J. Dues Payment to CARCD

The Board discussed the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) membership dues for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. The amount to be paid depends on the total district unrestricted expenses. The dues are \$150 if these expenses are less than \$7,500. Last year, the YCRCD paid CARCD an amount of \$150 for dues. The Board discussed the RCD unrestricted expenditures for 2021 and estimated that these were likely around \$7,500. The Board agreed upon a payment of \$150 for dues. Because this item was listed for discussion only and not as an approval item, approval of this payment will need to be added onto the agenda of the next board meeting.

Director Aseltine Neilson also indicated that she planned to provide CARCD with an updated contact form. After a brief discussion, it was decided that she would include all three board directors on the form.

K. Needs Assessment – Next Steps Update

Director Lindman is finishing up the report for the YWA on the Needs Assessment. She then will be sending an invoice to the YWA (as noted above in Item G). She also met with Kevin Mallen, the Yuba County Administrator, about the budget provided in the Needs Assessment and potential county funding for the YCRCD. He had some tough questions for her including a question about why the county should invest in the YCRCD given all the other entities working in the area on conservation. She pointed out that as a California RCD, the YCRCD can work on any of the natural resources within the district and therefore it can address multiple areas of conservation need within Yuba County. Given its function, the YCRCD can partner with any of the various entities working on natural resource conservation to help increase the capacity, scale, and pace of their conservation efforts in Yuba County. For instance, in partnering with the YWPFSC, YCRCD could provide outreach and education resources and access to specific grant funding to help with their different conservation efforts. Director Fildes added that YCRCD also could assist YWPFSC efforts to build fire resilience in the foothills by addressing the huge need to reduce fuels on private lands that are outside of the 100-ft defensible space zone around structures. Director Lindman indicated that she had mentioned to Kevin Mallen several potential projects including the fuel reductions on small parcels of private land. She also mentioned to Kevin Mallen that having an Executive Director would help move such projects forward. He agreed with this, but also indicated that along with the staffing needs and potential projects, the YCRCD needs to identify the types of deliverables that would result from county funding. Building strong partnerships and identifying collaborative projects could be viewed as deliverables. Kevin Mallen suggested that the next step could be a meeting between the YCRCD board directors, representatives from the YWA, Kevin Mallen, Frank Denatale, Allison Thomson, and perhaps a representative from the Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

Director Lindman and Kevin Mallen also discussed the idea of having the Executive Director be a position under the County. As a County employee, the YCRCD would not be responsible for all the paperwork and specific costs associated with having employees. However, it would need to be quite clear that this individual worked only on YCRCD tasks.

The Board then reviewed some previously discussed ideas for projects that the YCRCD could work on as well as some new ideas. Director Lindman suggested that the Board meet with its partners to determine what other needs the YCRCD may be able to address and then develop a project list that can be used to direct YCRCD efforts. She also suggested that the Board consider which of these projects could be done over the next year and what the associated deliverables would be. These results will also be useful for a funding proposal that YCRCD should submit in response to Yuba Water Agency's call-for-proposals in the fall.

Director Lindman will let the Board Directors know when the meeting with Kevin Mallen will be held. Meanwhile, the Board should think about the points raised by Kevin Mallen during his discussion with her (as noted above).

Director Lindman also mentioned that she is working on a draft of the Board Recruitment Manual. The Board then reviewed the various groups that each of the Board members will be reaching out to once the Manual is finished.

#### L. Items for the Website

Director Aseltine Neilson asked the Board and Frank Denatale to let her know about any upcoming events so that she can post these on the website.

#### M. Update on Forest Health/Fire Resilience Pamphlet Development

Director Aseltine Neilson has developed an outline on paper for the pamphlet which still needs to be incorporated into a Word document. Once she has finished this outline, she will send it to Allison Thomson, Jannike Allen, and Beverly Cameron. It is not as similar to the Butte County Healthy Forest booklet as originally planned. It includes some additional information about landscaping for plants and wildlife, but it may end up being too complex.

The timeline for the design and publication will depend on the designer. Since the pamphlet may not be incorporating as much of the pictures and text from the other booklet, it may take longer to design.

Director Aseltine Neilson will also reach out to Allison Thomson and Jannike Allen about available maps for Yuba County like one that shows where previous fires have occurred and also one that shows vegetation zones.

Director Aseltine Neilson indicated that she hopes to have something ready in July.

#### N. Project Updates

The Board had no additional project updates to review.

### **BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Director Lindman had nothing else to report to the Board.

### **DIRECTORS' COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

Director Aseltine Neilson mentioned that she had talked to Ricky Satomi, the new Forestry Advisor with the UC Cooperative Extension for Sutter-Yuba Counties, about the pamphlet. She also mentioned to him that the YCRCD Board would be interested in having him give a presentation at one of the upcoming board meetings.

Director Fildes mentioned that Beverly Cameron is working on the YWPFSC calendar for next year and she wanted to know if the YCRCD would like to include information within the calendar about the YCRCD. The Board thought this was a good idea and discussed what type of information should be included. Director Fildes can put together some text for Beverly Cameron.

Director Aseltine Neilson mentioned that Kelli Evans is working on the site information for the next CalRecycle Grant application. The Board discussed what needs to happen once Kelli has that site information compiled. Coming actions include getting a bid for the work and adopting a resolution to submit the grant application. Director Fildes reminded the Board that (per the auditor) the YCRCD needs to select the contractor for the Yuba County projects. This may require development of an MOU with Sutter County that covers this bidding effort.

Director Aseltine Neilson also asked about the current status of the policies that Sutter County RCD has in hand or is developing. Director Lindman indicated that she has not been able to get

copies of these documents from the SCRCD directors. It would be good to get copies as they can be used as templates for policies that the YCRCD still needs to develop. Such policy documents also may be available from other RCDs or CARCD.

Director Aseltine Neilson indicated that she will be attending another Monarch Habitat on Working Lands workgroup meeting in July. Simar Bains with Sutter County RCD has been leading this multi-RCD effort. The workgroup would like to identify a specific project that focuses on the development of Monarch habitat on a local farm or ranch (local working lands). Director Aseltine Neilson also talked to Simar Bains (in a separate call) about an idea of developing a demonstration garden and perhaps even partnering with Sunsweet Growers Inc. in Yuba City.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 P.M.