



**Sonoma County Fish and Wildlife Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2011 – 7:00pm**

Attending
Members

Crystal Norris
Al Ferris
Jo Bentz
Caroline Christian
Brock Dolman
Jeff Holden
Don McEnhill

Absent
Members

Andrew Pozzi
Darius Anderson
Jim Lynch
Dave Cook

Others

James Reed, CA Dept. of Fish and Game (DFG)
Noelle Johnson, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation
John Guardino, Laguna Foundation
Kristen Reeder, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue
Danielle Mattos, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue
David Bannister, Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation
Daghy Thomas, Ag Commissioner's Office

Chairperson Crystal Norris calls the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. There is no quorum.

Adoption of Minutes

Crystal asks if there are any additions or corrections to the August 2011 minutes. There are none. Al Ferris makes a motion to accept the June and July minutes as presented, with a second by Jeff Holden. Motion carried with seven 'Ayes', four 'Absent'.

Correspondence

- A. Correspondence from California State Fish & Game Commission regarding various regulatory actions
- B. Letters from Ann Gallagher White, Deputy District Attorney
- C. Thank you letter and project report - Community Clean Water Institute

Financial Reports

In August 2011, the Abalone Fund received \$70.00 from Central Collections, with a fiscal year fund balance of \$724.68. The General Fund received \$1,613.14 from Superior Court, \$2,965.57 from Probation, and \$1,200.00 from the District Attorney's Office with a fiscal year fund balance of \$58,545.46.

Crystal asks if there are any additions or corrections to the August financial reports. There are none. Jo Bentz makes a motion to approve the financial reports as presented, with a second by Brock Dolman. Motion carried with seven 'Ayes', four 'Absent'.

Old Business

Noelle Johnson, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (GRRCD), is requesting a grant in the amount of \$3,750.00, for *Hedgerows for Habitat – Phase II*, second reading

Noelle says they have decided to build nesting structures next season so they may focus on bee nesting this season. There will be additional plantings next month.

Crystal asks if there are any further questions or comments. There are none.

Jeff Holden makes a motion to approve the grant in the amount of \$3,750.00, with a second by Al Ferris. Motion carries with seven 'Ayes', four 'Absent' for grant #155.

David Bannister, Executive Director, Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation (Laguna Foundation), is requesting a grant in the amount of \$9,500.00 for *Restoration Department Truck*, second reading

John Guardino, Laguna Foundation Board member, is present on behalf of David Bannister.

Crystal asks if there are additional comments or questions.

Al asks for clarification on the usage of the vehicle. John says it's a very 'lean' time financially for Laguna Foundation and the truck would be used exclusively for transporting materials and site visits for restoration projects. Al is not opposed to funding something that will be used solely for site restoration, as long as that is all it is used for.

Caroline asks John to elaborate on some of the challenges Laguna Foundation has faced with environment and terrain and describe some of the restoration sites.

John explains that they work in seasonal flood plains and wetlands, which necessitates a four wheel drive vehicle. The primary site of restoration over the past five years has been Middle Reach, between Occidental Road and Highway 12. They have planted 30-50 acres of trees thus far and anticipate planting another 28 acres in the fall and spring of 2012 in Meadowlark Field to complete the major phase of the project. The restoration work they are doing helps mitigate pollution, filters overland flow, improves native species habitats and reduces erosion. The establishment and maintenance phase over the next three to four years is critical to the project and is labor and cost intensive. Laguna Foundation has four to five current projects and anticipates two additional major projects next spring.

Jeff asks if the Foundation is doing the dredging work off Llano Road. John says that is one of their current projects.

Jo asks if the truck will be used for trail construction. John explains that the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District is doing that work and that in the future they will partner with the Water Agency, who will be doing trail restoration.

Jeff Holden makes a motion to approve the grant in the amount of \$9,500.00, with a second by Al Ferris. Motion carries with six 'Ayes', four 'Absent', one 'Abstain' for grant #156. Caroline Christian abstains due to a conflict of interest - she sits on the Laguna Foundation Board.

Doris Duncan, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue (SCWR), is requesting a grant in the amount of \$8,304.00, for *Disease Control Area Project*, second reading

Danielle Mattos and Kristen Reeder are present on behalf of Doris Duncan.

Jeff asks if they researched less expensive tags. Danielle says they have two bids. Avid charges \$7.00 per tag, which includes pre-loaded needles. Biomarker charges \$4.10 per tag, and sells the injector or single use needles separately which would bring the cost per unit to around the same price as Avid. Biomarker also requires a minimum purchase of 1,000 tags. Jeff then asks what the original quote for tags is in the grant request. Danielle says the original quote by Home Again was \$5,996.00 for 200. Avid quoted \$830.00 for 100.

Brock asks if they are willing to reduce the grant amount by approximately \$4,000.00 since they have found a better price quote. Danielle says they would like to get more than 100 which would last approximately six months. Brock says if they purchase 200, it would come to around \$1,600.00.

Jeff reworks the numbers for the amended grant request. The new total is \$3,868.00 with the better pricing.

Jo would like more information regarding the pricing of the injecting gun. Danielle doesn't have the separate quote for the gun with her.

Caroline would like clarification on what would best suit SCWR's needs. Danielle says they would prefer the preloaded needles, since injecting the animals can be very difficult especially when there is a high volume of intakes.

Caroline, Jo and Jeff ask for a reworked budget with comparative breakdowns of complete packages for both vendors and more clarification about SCWR's specific needs. Crystal asks them to submit the new grant request with more detailed information to the Agricultural Commissioner's Office prior to the October meeting so commissioners can review it.

Crystal says the grant request will be tabled until the October meeting.

Scholarships sub-committee formation

Crystal asks the commissioners who would like to participate in a formal scholarships sub-committee. Caroline and Al volunteer. Caroline will contact Jim Lynch and Darius Anderson to find out if they are interested in participating.

Carole Balala, Coordinator, Wildlife Fawn Rescue, is requesting a grant in the amount of \$1,800.00, for *Taxidermy Project for Wildlife Education Program*, first reading

Carole explains that Fawn Rescue has an educational outreach volunteer that visits over 35 schools per year. They prefer to use taxidermy animals as opposed to live ones and are looking to enhance their collection with a badger and a pocket gopher. Carole found a dead badger on the side of the road just outside Bodega a couple weeks before.

Brock has spotted two other dead badgers in the same area around the same time.

Don McEnhill says a coworker has a mounted bobcat and people are drawn to taxidermy animals, which makes them a great teaching tool for children.

Caroline references an article from the *Journal of Science* that studied children in France. It was shown that school aged children know very little about local species. She feels that this type of work is really important.

Crystal mentions that the Commission has granted money to Fawn Rescue in the past to taxidermy a vulture.

Brock mentions Paula Lane Action Network in Petaluma, which focuses on badgers.

Jeff asks if there are any issues with the taxidermy of badger. Crystal says it's alright for rehabilitation organizations to taxidermy animals. It's in their MOU's, specified for educational use only. James Reed, DFG, says he believes badgers fall under the classification of fur bearers and are permitted for taxidermy.

Al attended the Western Outdoor Youth event in Sacramento, where there was a live owl, red tail hawk, and an eagle. Crystal explains the specifications falconer regulations.

Brock talks about a prairie dog experiment that utilized a stuffed badger.

Crystal states this is the first reading; the second reading will be heard at the October 2011 meeting.

Reports and Comments

Commission –

- Caroline will not attend the October meeting. She will be at a Nature Conservancy conference in Memphis.
- Jeff's boat broke so he hasn't been fishing.
- Jo mentions the DFG vote on closing abalone season on the entire Sonoma coast. James Reed confirms that the vote was 3-0 to close the season. DFG field surveys over the past few weeks have shown a 48–50% death rate of Sonoma coast abalone.

- Brock went to Rio Lindo Academy in Healdsburg to watch the Vaux's Swifts emerge from the chimney. There was a Peregrine Falcon diving through them. There were at least six to ten thousand birds.
- Don says Russian Riverkeeper has just restructured its board; they are transitioning to quarterly meetings.
- Al reports the two scholarship recipients won't be able to attend the Salmon Festival with him due to conflicts with school. He went salmon fishing and caught two large ones, 30 and 23 pounds. One of them was a hatchery fish. Jeff suggests he save the head so the pit tag can be read at the hatchery.

Public –

- James Reed says that DFG Captain Steve Riske is on vacation in Wyoming. There have been two big cases locally DFG has been working on – one is an abalone case, the other is a deer case.

With no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Thomas
Commission Secretary