

**MARIPOSA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (MCRCD)**  
**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**MINUTES**

**Date:** Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 @ 2:00 PM

**Location:** Conference Room at the Ag. Commissioner's Office 5009 Fairground Rd.  
Mariposa, CA 95338

**Directors present:** John Carrier, Wayne Kelly, and Lyle Turpin.

**Directors absent:** David Mecchi.

**Associate directors present:** None.

**Associate directors absent:** None.

**Staff present:** Melinda Barrett, Vicky Cole.

**Guests:** Don Smith – Treasurer's Friends of Whispering Oaks and Secretary of the Homeowners Association

**Call to order:** 2:09 PM by MCRCD Vice President Lyle Turpin.

**Public communication:** None.

**Minutes:** Moved to February Board meeting.

**Correspondence:** 1) Received by mail from Mariposa County. BOS sent Christmas card. 2) Received by email from CARCD. They have the annual elections and they did not have quorum. It got re-schedule for March 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM to have the actual votes.

**Information Items and/or Special Guests:** Don Smith introduced himself. He is the Secretary of the Homeowners Association. He got interested in the RCD because the Whispering Oaks project. He expressed his gratitude for all the help provided with the project. He is a retired banker from Indiana and moved to Cathies Valley several years ago.

**Staff reports:**

**IRWMP:** Verbal report submitted by Melinda.

**MCRCD:** Verbal report submitted by Vicky.

**Directors Reports:**

**Lyle Turpin:** Lyle talked about a livestock article he read last week, where the statistics said that the total cowherd is way down. He said it is time to start building up, maybe taking a good assessment.

**Wayne Kelly:** Wayne talked about the phase II of the Whispering Oaks Lake's project options. A biologist is working with them and given them some recommendations. Also, Melinda mentioned some of the possibilities to apply for a grant to DWR, she will talk with Rosie about the project, or for the Monarch grant.

**John Carrier:** He does not have nothing new to report but had a question for Melinda with the Department of Conservation. He thinks a couple months ago, they let grants out for regional forest fire capacity program. Melinda will talk about it on the Grants section.

**David Mecchi:** None.

**Future Agenda Items:** November and December 2023 minutes.

**Subcommittee Reports:**

**Personnel:** None.

Finance: Wayne expressed concern about we are not receiving financial reports from the county and suggested that we should approach and speak directly with the auditor. Melinda explained how to read the files to Don Smith.

Grants: IRWM- Melinda gave an introduce for the program to Don Smith, and then gave an update about what she heard about no more funding for IRWM. A state employee quit and the new guy hired did not know the program and he is trying to replace the program. EPIC grant – We are still waiting for the grading permit. RCPP grant – We got the new contract. This is the grant that we pay Smiley to support NRCS work. Vicky mentioned that today she received Smiley’s invoice, only 3 hours charged. CCI 2 – we have around 3 months of work left, this grant is almost done. The grant’s manager, Nico Alegria is coming this January for a visit. CCI3 – We starting working, next spring we will start working with the big equipment and probably we will be requesting the first advance. WCB1 – This grant will be done soon. Melinda must work on the final report. WCB2 – This grant is half way spent. The work performance is in Merced Grove. OPR grant – After two months, OPR finally decided to let Melinda fired Sierra Business Council and hire somebody else. Melinda and Pat worked in the new scope and budget, as soon as she gets the new signed contract from OPR, the new contractor will start working. This grant is due in June 2024. Home Hardening program – we still receiving applications. Melinda submitted two more grant applications for HH, did not hear back yet. Monarch Habitat grant – We just started to work. Melinda will check with Tara about Whispering Oaks Lake project, maybe they can help. Wayne mentioned that the soil is super rich over there. For last, Melinda talked about the Audubon Society has a new program named “Audubon Conservation Ranching.” It is a program that you can do a few things in your ranch to protect or promote bird’s habitat. She went to the training and basically Audubon asked all the RCDs to train somebody and then if they found a ranch in Mariposa area, we can go and do an assessment. She thinks we can get Smiley to help us with this too. She said it was a very interesting training, they did a field visit to a ranch in Woodland. She does not want to recruit people but if somebody hear about it, we can help them. About the question John Carrier had, Melinda explained that Sierra Nevada Conservancy was picked. This was several years ago. They had at the same time a watershed coordinator grant which we applied for. Melinda said that we had a beautiful amazing application, Holly Warner helped her. We did not get it. Yosemite Sequoia got it. Because Sierra Nevada Conservancy always work with them. Melinda spoke with the head of DOC and ask him why we did not get it. The true is that we never got any penny from Sierra Nevada Conservancy in ten years that she has been working here.

Policy: None.

**Financial Reports:** See at Finance subcommittee.

**Unfinished Business:** None.

**Discussion:** None.

**Action Items:** None.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM. (M) John Carrier (S) Wayne Kelly. Ayes: John Carrier, Lyle Turpin, Wayne Kelly. Nays: None. Motion approved.

Submitted by: Vicky Cole

Date Approved: 04/03/2024

Recorded minutes of this meeting are available in the RCD office. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication or assistance should contact our office at above number, at least 5 days prior to the event. An equal opportunity provider and employer.

**MCRCD Mission Statement**

The mission of the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District is to encourage and facilitate cooperative solutions to local resources conservation issues and projects. By providing leadership, the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District works with all stakeholders to find solutions that conserve the basic natural resources of Mariposa County. To further this aim, the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District provides technical assistance to landowners, carries out informational activities, seeks and implements grants and other funding sources, and develops cooperative alliances with other agencies and community organizations.