

KONA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January 12, 2010

Directors Present: Virginia Isbell Greg Hendrickson Rick Robinson
Kawika Marquez Skip Cowell

Associate Directors Present: None

KSWCD Staff: Mary Robblee

NRCS Staff: Carl Rossetti

RC&D Kawika Marquez; Joachim Oster

Meeting called to order at 7:00 a.m. by Chair, Rick Robinson.

MSCU* (K. Marquez/V. Isbell) to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2009 meeting as circulated.

MSCU* (V. Isbell /G. Hendrickson) to approve Treasurer's Report - available upon request.

1) **Reports:**

A. **NRCS Report:**

- a) No NRCS staffers available for the meeting. Acting DC not present. M. Robblee reported there are 24 current applications for EQIP and that she continues to assist NRCS by assisting applicants with the application package.
- b) A Soil Conservationist from the Waimea FO has been assisting the Kealakekua FO with various activities, specifically Annual Practice Reminder Letters. M. Robblee also assisted with this mailing.
- c) Jeff Knowles' position has been posted. Knowles officially retired from the USDA effective 1/8/10.
- d) Denise Light, Conservationist, officially retired effective 12/31/09.
- e) It is Staff's understanding that the replacement for P. Ghergich's position is: A selection has been made and the name has been sent to Washington, D.C. for background history and "clearance". Once that is completed, and if approved, the individual will be offered the position. (It has been four months since P. Ghergich vacated the Kealakekua FO.

B. HACD Report: There will be an Executive Committee Conference Call today at 9am. President of HACD, Wes Nohara, resigned from his position with Maui Land and Pineapple as its assets have been sold (6,000 acres) and he lives in Kula. Consequently, he is no longer eligible to be a board member of the West Maui SWCD and had to resign. He is still the official Legislative Committee Chair for the HACD.

C. NACD Report: (Skip Cowell) There is a national meeting in Orlando, FL starting February 1st. Skip Cowell feels we may have to go backward to go forward. NACD should be nurturing corporate sponsors as they did in the past, such as the John Deere Co. NACD is trying to fill the Western Specialist position. If NACD expects to remain a leader in the Pacific Rim, someone has to step forward and take Skip's place.

D. **Big Island RC&D Report:**

- a) There will be a meeting on February 26th at the NELHA Gateway Conference Room from 10am - 2pm. Speaker, Guy Toyama, Friends of NELHA. The purpose is to discuss how RC&D and NELHA can collaborate on projects of common interest and how to submit proposals.
- b) There has been conversation with the State NRCS Office in regard to C. Sampia's position and the funds available for that position.
- c) Senator Inouye obtained monies for all the state's RC&Ds offices; however, Director Marquez is not clear where the money is or the dollar amount. Director Marquez is requesting an appointment with the Chief of NRCS for clarification of the relationship between NRCS/RC&D.
- d) RC&D is working with an ag-land owner in Kau, in collaboration with the University of the Nations, to address agricultural, cultural and educational issues. As a part of that proposal RC&D is proposing to do a multi-day musical event in 2011 in collaboration with the Coffee Festival & Earth Day Festival. Hokukano Ranch has offered to be the venue for the event. A related planning meeting is scheduled on January 29, 3 pm at Jeff Turner's office. There are a number of blues bands that are already inquiring about this event. Director Marquez will be meeting with a representative from the National Endowment for the Arts as they are funding musical events again. It is hoped Hokukano Ranch can offer some land for a community farm demonstration project.
- e) Still recruiting for the two new voting that seats have been added to the council that do not require SWCD association.

E. Conservation Assistant Report: Available upon request.

F. Monthly Report to the County: Available upon request.

2) New Cooperator(s):

8-7-013:034 (28.79 acres): Client control upper 9 acres with the 5 of those acres currently in mac nut. Cooperator wants to plant cacao but is concerned about processing.

8-4-015:005 (6.3 acres) Client currently produces mango, avocado, pineapple, citrus and other assorted fruit. Cooperator hopes to continue with diversified fruit production.

7-7-004:086 (5 acres) Client currently has pasture for sheep but due to drought conditions needs assistance in choosing suitable forage.

MSCU* (V. Isbell/S. Cowell) to approve the new Cooperator Application.

3) Conservation Plan(s):

TMK: 7-7-007:047 (13 acres) A coffee farm with 6 acres currently in orchard. Cooperator wants to clear 5 additional acres using a D-9 in 1-1.5 acre increments. Each of 4 fields will be planted in coffee and conservation cover prior to moving on to the next field. The cooperator has agreed to this process so that less than 100 cubic yards of soil is moved. Within the Cooperator's plan are instructions on the size and location of debris piles. This cooperator is participating in our Pilot Program.

MSCU* (K. Marquez/V. Isbell) to approve the new Cooperator Application on the stipulation that language is added to the plan advising the cooperator that he is not to do grading but will be removing the vegetation on the land with a D-9 then back-blading

the area and rolling to get it level. Further, the Cooperator may not move more than 100 cubic yards of soil.

4) Correspondence Review:

Available upon request.

5) Kealakehe Dump update:

Monies that Director Marquez had been informed as being available from the EPA to work toward resolving the dump issues were, in fact, targeted for the waste water treatment plant. Thus, applications were not submitted to the Department of Ag for funds that could have been used for a feasibility study had they been awarded.

6) Sept. 2010 Conference

Director Hendrickson is considering contacting the Kohala Center to work with us on the education portions of the agenda. Robblee to send out emails to her distribution list web links to determine interest in alternative activities from snorkeling and going to the beach, to local farms, environmental issues i.e. NELHA, dump, etc.

7) Pu`u Wa`awa`a Tour

Gross receipts were \$2,200.00 total expenses were \$902.00. Net receipts were \$1,298.00.

**8) Proposal to Contract
Conservation Specialist**

M. Robblee proposed that the Board hire a Conservationist as a consultant to assist with the conservation planning needs of the Kona SWCD while she is unable to do farm visits primarily due to a knee injury. It is M. Robblee's recommendation that Denise Light, who just retired, be hired as a part-time consultant because of her extensive experience and knowledge of the local agricultural community and knowledge of the requirements for comprehensive planning using NRCS tools.

The Board requested that: M. Robblee submit a written proposal at the next monthly meeting providing information as to:

- a) Hourly rate of compensation per-farm rate or another measurable unit rate of compensation.
- b) Length of contract (calendar weeks or number of farms.)

**9) "Ag Talk", formerly
Known as "Coffee Talk"**

With the departure of Virginia Easton Smith from Extension Services, "Coffee Talk" (an educational series for local agricultural producers) is ending. M. Robblee recommended that the Kona SWCD step in and develop "Ag Talk" in place of "Coffee Talk". The Board approved moving forward with this recommendation.

10) Meeting Adjourned::

Next Meeting January 12, 2009.

Virginia Isbell, Secretary

*MSCU – Moved, Seconded, Carried Unanimously