

MEETING MINUTES
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Advisory Committee Meeting
April 14, 2023, 10 am – 12 pm

Agenda and meeting materials are available at:
www.sfbayrestore.org

1. Call to Order

Jessica Martini-Lamb, Chair of the Advisory Committee (AC), called the meeting to order.

2. Determination of Quorum

AC member attendance: Najiha Al Asmar, Sara Azat, Erika Castillo, Adrian Covert, Paul Detjens, Lil Milagro Henriquez, Dulce Jimenez, Greg Martinelli, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Lisa Horowitz McCann, Marquita Price, Stuart Siegel, Diane Williams, Beckie Zisser

Staff attendance: Jessica Davenport, Karen McDowell, Sara Haugen, Taylor Samuelson

Sara Haugen, Clerk of the Advisory Committee, called the roll and determined there was a quorum.

3. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

4. Brief Reminder of Ground Rules and Voting Procedures (INFORMATION)

Chair Martini-Lamb reviewed the ground rules and voting procedures. There were no questions.

5. Approval of Advisory Committee (AC) Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2023 (ACTION)

Item 5: [Draft Meeting Minutes for February 10, 2023](#)

Sara Azat moved approval of the minutes and Erika Castillo seconded. There were no objections or abstentions. The minutes were approved with no corrections.

6. Chair's Report from March 3, 2023 Governing Board Meeting (INFORMATION)

Chair Martini-Lamb shared updates from the March Governing Board (Board) meeting:

- The Board appointed or reappointed eleven AC members.
- Sara Haugen, Project Manager, briefed the Board on the AC Exchange Program. Eight committee members signed up and have been paired based on their interests and expertise and if they are a new or returning member.
- The Board approved three new grants, including the Montezuma Wetlands Restoration Project, Phase 2, Goat Island Tidal Marsh Restoration and Public Access Project, and Berkeley North Basin Project, and authorized an

augmentation for the Strategy to Advance Flood Protection, Ecosystems and Recreation along San Francisco Bay (SAFER Bay) Project.

- Taylor Samuelson, shared information about the upcoming Board tour in the East Bay on June 2nd at the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland and Eden Landing. North Bay, South Bay, and West Bay to follow later in the year.
- As part of the AC Chair's Report to the Board staff also presented on the Equity Ad Hoc Subcommittee's plan to develop a long-term Equity Framework. The plan developed by staff and the Equity Ad Hoc Subcommittee, and the Chair Martini-Lamb recommended that the Governing Board direct staff to proceed with the development of the Equity Framework, as described in the memo.

Chair Martini-Lamb shared that members are invited to join the Equity Ad Hoc Subcommittee, which has upcoming meetings on May 2nd and May 16th to support developing the Equity Framework. A member asked about how equity is being measured in our projects, and another member clarified that the purpose of creating the Equity Framework is to propose equity metrics.

7. Recommendation on AC Chair and Vice Chair for 2023-2025 (ACTION)

Jessica Davenport, Deputy Program Manager

Jessica Davenport, Deputy Program Manager, explained that the AC may vote to recommend specific AC members to serve as Chair and Vice Chair and the Board will consider the AC's recommendations when appointing AC members to serve in those positions. The current Chair, Jessica Martini-Lamb, and Vice Chair, Lisa Horowitz McCann, expressed interest in continuing in their roles. A member clarified the role of the two positions and the length of their terms, which is two years. A member asked if people of color or representatives of community-based organizations have served in these positions before. Staff replied that a person of color had served once before, and noted it is a good idea for those with interest to shadow the current Chair and/or Vice Chair so that newer members will become ready to step into leadership roles over time.

A member noted a missed opportunity to attend the California Department of Water Resources' Tribal Water Summit event this week.

Jessica Davenport asked if there were any conflicts of interest for this item. There was a discussion about conflicts of interest and how abstentions and recusals affect the quorum. If a member had a conflict of interest, they would need to recuse themselves and the AC would lose its quorum because a recusal counts as leaving the meeting. If a member chose to abstain from the vote, that would count as a "no" vote, and the AC would not lose its quorum. Staff reviewed the Charter to confirm that, because the candidates for Chair and Vice Chair do not benefit financially from their roles, they do not have a conflict of interest and need not recuse themselves.

Sara Azat moved the motion and Diane Williams seconded to recommend Jessica Martini-Lamb as Chair. Chair Martini-Lamb abstained from the vote.

Ayes: Najiha Al Asmar, Sara Azat, Erika Castillo, Adrian Covert, Paul Detjens, Lil Milagro Henriquez, Dulce Jimenez, Greg Martinelli, Lisa Horowitz McCann, Marquita Price, Stuart Siegel, Diane Williams, Beckie Zisser

Diane Williams moved the motion and Sara Azat seconded to recommend Lisa Horowitz McCann as Vice Chair. Vice Chair Horowitz McCann abstained from the vote.

Ayes: Najiha Al Asmar, Sara Azat, Erika Castillo, Adrian Covert, Paul Detjens, Lil Milagro Henriquez, Dulce Jimenez, Greg Martinelli, Jessica Martini-Lamb, Marquita Price, Stuart Siegel, Diane Williams, Beckie Zisser

8. Annual Report Update (INFORMATION)

Taylor Samuelson, Public Information Officer

Item 8: [Draft Annual Report of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, Fiscal Year 2021-2022](#)

Taylor Samuelson, Public Information Officer of the Authority, reviewed the annual report process, which covers the previous fiscal year (2021-2022) from July 1- June 30. The Board approved the annual report text at their March meeting, and the publication is being finalized for print. Taylor presented the contents of the report. The aim is to move toward hosting the report on the website in the future.

One chart featured shows progress towards Measure AA 20-Year Campaign Goals, which includes projects at the implementation stage to not duplicate projects from planning phases. Last year the Authority funded several planning projects and the Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program (WRMP), so the numbers don't look very different from the year before. A member suggested shading part of the bar chart in future years to differentiate between completed projects versus those underway.

The Board has authorized just over \$125 million in five years, so the Authority is on track for the \$500 million expected to be generated over the 20-year term. Previously funded projects are being completed and grantees are returning to request funding for new phases. There is a continuing focus on equity with improvements to the Community Grants Program, lowering barriers for community participation, supporting new partnerships with community-based organizations, and updating grant processes.

In July 2021, the Authority received \$56 million in requests and authorized \$6.1 million to six new projects, nearly \$200,000 to two new community grants, \$5.3 million to projects that previously received grants, and \$11.4 million to previously authorized funds went towards the South Bay Shoreline Project. Three projects have been completed: Sonoma Creek Baylands Strategy, Encinal Dune Restoration and Public Access, and Oakland Shoreline Leadership Academy.

A new chart was added that shows the progress toward 20-year funding goals by region at the request of the Board. The Performance Measures show steady progress, and do not include targets. There are now 31 restoration plans in the pipeline, which increased from 18 the previous year. There was \$15.3 million in match funding for the \$11.7 million the Authority authorized. So far, the Authority has funded more planning projects in number, but more funding has gone to construction. Taylor asked for feedback on a chart demonstrating this information. A member asked if post-construction is included in the chart, and staff clarified that post-construction is combined into the construction category, while pre-construction efforts are categorized with planning. The chart shows a count of grants, rather than a project that can span several phases. Another member noted it would be helpful to see which post-construction projects were funded so that the public can see what the Authority is willing to fund.

A member asked about the benefits to economically disadvantaged communities, and asked if we can track a percentage of projects led by those communities. Another member agreed that most of the performance measures are ecological, and there is a process to add cultural, economic and other people-oriented metrics between the Authority and the WRMP People & Wetlands Workgroup. A member asked if the water board representatives know where the pollution hot spots are to objectively measure where sources of pollution are for the Bay. Vice Chair Horowitz McCann, Assistant Executive Officer of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, explained that they do track those sources based on several factors. For the Authority, projects that address water quality issues are scored more highly in the application review process, and there is an opportunity to connect information about hotspots and how they are being characterized.

A member noted that it would be helpful to see outreach to Tribal representatives and find out whether Traditional Ecological Knowledge is being utilized for projects. Another member mentioned that Tribes often do not have the capacity to respond to many forms of outreach they receive, and to manage grants. Chair Martini-Lamb highlighted that it was identified at the last Board meeting that the Authority should have more robust Tribal outreach. Deputy Program Manager Jessica Davenport noted that, at the May Board meeting, staff will recommend adoption of an Interim Tribal Consultation Policy, which will require staff to notify Tribes about projects prior to their being brought to the Board for authorization. She stated that notification letters have already been sent out for upcoming projects, and the Board will be voting on whether to approve the interim policy while staff develops a more comprehensive set of Tribal engagement recommendations. A condition was added to Board's resolution authorizing funding for the Berkeley North Basin Project that requires the City of Berkeley to reach out to Tribes to assess their interest in involvement in the project. A member noted that the outreach requirements can be a barrier for Tribes who do not have the capacity to participate.

Karen McDowell, Deputy Program Manager, pointed out a financial chart in the report where readers can easily see projects that are receiving funding for multiple project phases.

The report has benefitted from the Annual Report Ad Hoc Subcommittee, and Taylor thanked the past members for their work.

9. Community Grants Cohort Update (INFORMATION)

Sara Haugen, Project Manager

Item 9: [Presentation on Community Grants Cohort Update](#)

Sara shared an update about the Community Grants Cohort, which will take place over four meetings in the course of a year. There are five participants from community-based organizations across the Bay Area. This first meeting was held a week ago and the next one will be a site visit, likely to one of the participants' project sites. AC Members are invited to serve as mentors to the cohort in their areas of expertise.

A member noted that it would be good to assess if the amount earmarked for Community Grants is appropriate given the scale of funding available each year. Karen McDowell noted that there are funds earmarked for Community Grants, but it is not a cap, and funding can be directed to those projects in the regular grant round, as well, as the grantees build capacity to manage larger grants. The amount can be adjusted over time as needed. A member provided context, stating that with the maximum grant size was initially set at \$100,000, and now it has doubled, and there is room for additional growth.

10. Grant Programs Update (INFORMATION)

Sara Haugen, Project Manager

For the Competitive Grand Round, the 2023 Request for Proposals and application will go to the Board on June 30th for approval for release in July. Updates will include a reference to the State Coastal Conservancy's revised project selection criteria, which is one of the required criteria under Measure AA, and the addition of more references to Tribal consultation and engagement in the RFP and application Pre-applications and consultations with staff are encouraged from July-September, with full applications will be due in October.

AC members will be invited in September to serve as reviewers in November for the competitive grant round. Staff are also seeking additional volunteers to serve as Community Grant reviewers as applications come in on a rolling basis.

11. Project Update: Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project (INFORMATION)

Paul Detjens, AC Member, Retired from Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Item 11: [Presentation on the Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project](#)

Paul Detjens, now retired from the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Flood Control District), presented on the Lower Walnut Creek Restoration Project. The project was resulted from a general reevaluation of a United States Army Corps of Engineers project, and the Flood Control District spent ten years on

a deauthorization process to carry it out independently of the federal government. The project area is located at the north end of the Walnut Creek Watershed. The goal is to have a project that restores wetlands for rare and endangered species, and to encourage sustainable flood management and public access while avoiding dredging sediment every few years. The Flood Control District carried out various technical studies for scientific analysis for the project and coordinated with many regional planning efforts, such as San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's Adapting to Rising Tides Guide, Flood Control 2.0, and the Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report.

Simultaneously, the Flood Control District included a community-based planning process with a listening tour to understand the community's perceptions of the creek's problems. They also formed a stakeholder advisory group to advise the technical team on ramifications of the measures they were considering for the project. The input helped inform design of the project. They also held about thirty-five tours, along with community workshops, Lower Walnut Creek Adventure online episodes, and social media outreach.

The Flood Control District created new tidal wetlands and channels where there were previously diked and drained areas. They included gradual ecotone sloped levees (5%-10%) to have long-term refugia for species to migrate upwards as sea level rises. The project benefitted from the fact that 2 million yards of dredged material had been placed there in the past, so the site was not as subsided as other similar locations around the Bay. Now that construction is complete, the site will receive ongoing sediment loading from the Walnut Creek Channel, which is directly connected to the wetland area. John Muir Land Trust (JMLT), a project partner, proposed 2.9 miles of trails, pedestrian bridges, ADA-accessible vista points, bird blinds, interpretive signage, kayak lodges, and staging areas which were provided as a pass-through grant to JMLT from the Authority grant. JMLT is aiming to break ground in August or September with a grand opening celebration in Spring of 2024. This design of the restoration and public access phases of the project were integrated, and they coordinated their permitting efforts through the Bay Restoration Regulatory Integration Team.

The Flood Control District received \$8 million total in grants for this project, \$6.9 million of which was designated for implementation for this project, with funding for monitoring through Year Four. A subcontract of \$1 million was passed through to JMLT for public access amenities, as described. This was not a mitigation project, but instead a voluntary habitat restoration project. Up to this point, the Flood Control District has completed the restoration, installed over seven miles of Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse exclusion fencing, moved 330,000 cubic yards of soil, and built 5.3 miles of tidal channels.

In a restoration project, it is easier to expand existing vegetation than to start over. The Flood Control District tried to have biological oversight to keep the Salt Marsh Harvest Mice present, and to carry out construction outside of the fenced off habitat areas. The excavation of tidal channels took about four months, and because of their careful process they were able to maintain much of the pickleweed growing onsite.

Eighty-five percent of this work took place in the North Reach part of the site, with the other fifteen percent in the South Reach. The focus at the South Reach was a large levee setback to move the levee 600 feet inland, and to widen and strengthen it so that it can be further elevated in the future if needed. Public access will come to that section will later connect the Iron Horse Trail with the San Francisco Bay Trail.

The Flood Control District held a levee breach ceremony with JMLT and about 200 people attended. They have a live camera setup to monitor construction progress on the project on lowerwalnutcreek.org which was paid for by the Flood Control District to help connect the community to the project.

They grew over 30,000 plants from nineteen different native plant varieties in seven ecotone zones. They added goldfield and poppies seeds as a cover crop which worked well. It was a complicated multi-benefit project with a large amount of funding and partner coordination.

There was no time for questions, but members may reach out to Paul Detjens directly.

12. Announcements (INFORMATION)

There were no announcements.

13. Public Comment

Taylor Samuelson shared that there is a new episode of Open Road about the Authority's work coming out on Sunday which members can view and share with their networks. Also, staff completed the video and a one-page fact sheet about the Authority at the request of the Board. Staff will share a link to the video and fact sheet with members following the meeting. The latest and final issue of Estuary News features restoration projects and is currently available online and in hardcopy.

14. Adjourn

Jessica Martini Lamb adjourned the meeting at 12:03 pm.