

NORTH BAY WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Minutes for the meeting of the North Bay Watershed Association (NBWA) Board of Directors.

Date: May 6, 2016
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Marin Community Foundation
5 Hamilton Landing, Suite 200
Novato, CA 94949

Directors Present: Directors present included:

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Agency/Organization</u>	<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Agency/Organization</u>
Jack Baker	North Marin Water District	Damon Connolly	County of Marin
Keith Caldwell	Napa Sanitation District	Chris Pegg	City of Sonoma
Judy Schriebman	Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Paul Jensen	City of San Rafael
Mike Healy	City of Petaluma	Madolyn Agrimonti	City of Sonoma/Sonoma Co. Valley Sanitation District
Jack Gibson	Marin Municipal Water District	Pam Meigs	Ross Valley Sanitary District
Kathy Hartzell	Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Brant Miller	Novato Sanitary District
		Juliana Inman	Napa County FC&WCD

Directors present represented 14 out of the 18 agencies signatory to the Association MOU.

Board Actions:

1. **Call to Order.** Jack Gibson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.
2. **Public Comment.** None.
3. **Approval of the Agenda.** (See Handout) The Board unanimously approved the agenda.
4. **Approval of the Minutes of the Board Meeting held January 16, 2016.** (See Handout) The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on January 16, 2016 were unanimously approved.
5. **Treasurer’s Report.** (See Handout) The Treasurer’s Report was accepted as presented by Judy Kelly.
6. **Living Shoreline.** Marilyn Latta, California Coastal Conservancy presented information about the Living Shoreline project that seeks to implement creative multi-benefit solutions to shoreline restoration. Experts agree that policies need to change to allow for the beneficial reuse of fill substances – oyster shells, as an example. A good example of this thinking is shown in the Maryland Living Shorelines Protection Act under which you need to prove a living shoreline wouldn’t work, before you’re allowed to build a seawall. A large regional effort was just completed in the Bay Area to consider how best to restore estuary-watershed connections and multi-habitat efforts. Coastal planners are excited about the new

focus on transition zones on both edges of the bay interface areas. Examples of bayside restoration projects include creation of new eelgrass, shellfish beds, rock habitats, and artificial structures. This project is considered a pilot, with a one-acre approach, to test methods and assumptions. This is key because projects of this sort have not previously been done in the SF Bay. The project is unusual as it has budgeted \$1.3 million on monitoring because there are so many data gaps. The monitoring is looking at fish, bird, and invertebrate use with frequent quarterly monitoring. Native Olympia oysters and eelgrass are part of the effort with the goal of trying to design projects to achieve various ecosystems and functions. Site locations include: San Rafael on land owned by TNC and in Hayward which is a smaller site. Materials used include series of shell bag mounds, reef balls, reef ball stacks, "layer cake"-design hard scape device, and oyster blocks. On the larger test site, six semi trucks of shells were used. Preliminary results look very promising: 750k oysters survived, shell bags performed the best, layer cake the worst. Oysters do better at lower tidal areas. Eel grass results: excellent despite some natural ups and downs, continuing to monitor. Marilyn reports that they have also seen an increase in varied wildlife at the study sites and along with habitat benefits, the treatments reduce wave activity 30-50%. They are currently assessing seven sites bay-wide for another round. Members had the following questions for Marilyn: Q: can you eat the oysters? (No, not safe enough). Q: Given the need to restore and protect shorelines, have you looked at other materials? Do you have a plan to add more material as the protected area settles? (Yes, we have a 5-year monitoring plan. Will continue to assess the need for maintenance. Ideally, they will utilize natural materials. Informational signs are included near the project, and City of San Rafael has been very supportive with the permitting process. Pilot projects will continue through 2030 to determine best course of action). Q: What kind of public support are you getting? (Support is good, but project is only visible at low tides. Signage will be up soon. Funding is not easy, but there are new funding sources becoming available) Q: How will this project scale? (Hope it can easily scale up and down depending on funding) Details can be found at Sfbaylivingshorelines.org

7. Resilient Landscape Vision- Project for Lower Novato Creek: Scott Dusterhoff, SFEI, presented information about the Vision Project. This project focuses on attaining better flood protection while enhancing ecosystem services. The work is being lead by the San Francisco Estuary Institute with the overall goal of helping the Bay Area community achieve better ecosystem health. Scott provided some background on current and recent North Bay projects undertaken by SFEI, including the Napa Valley Historical Ecology Study, the San Pablo Bay Shoreline Change Study, the Petaluma Watershed Historical Hydrology Study, and today's topic --the Lower Novato Creek Landscape Vision. SFEI is using a "resilient landscapes" approach and format for the project. This is a multi-step process: 1. Understand how things worked (by performing a historical ecology evaluation) 2. Identify landscape change 3. Create resilient landscape visions with partners → Craft policy and project guidance → define implementation projects → monitor and feedback into "how things work now." In this case, they are looking at flood control channels at the Bay interface. Challenges include: aging infrastructure, complex landscape setting, dredging impacts to habitat; changing climate, outdated channel designs, and the increasing value of dredged sediment for bayland restoration. The project asks: How can we meet future flood control needs AND improve ecosystem functioning at the Bay interface? The answer is the Flood Control 2.0 project (*note: Flood 2.0 was presented to the NBWA Board on 6 November 2015*) created to address this question. One of the Flood 2.0 projects, Lower Novato Creek, has constrained flood flows, high fine sediment supply, constrained tidal flows; in-filled tidal channel network; low tidal prism and aggrading mainstream channel, and subsiding reclaimed marsh area. Habitat features have greatly changed over time. This project calls for levee removal and re-established tidal marsh, converting Highway 37 and the railroad into an elevated causeway, re-establishing upland transition zones, creating a horizontal seepage levee and a depositional marsh plain. The levee would be built to protect Bel Marin Keyes community. Board members asked the following questions: Q: How do you project 5, 10, 20 years out if the levee will be effective? (With projections for sea level rise all over the place, we would build the levees high enough so that they will protect against flooding for the foreseeable future). Q: Elevating Highway 37? (We want

to elevate the whole highway, not only sections and now even Caltrans is talking about that option). Q: Isn't Bel Marin Keyes service district concerned about the coming changes included with this project. (We have meet with BMKSD and are in close coordination with them on this project). See more information about the project at <http://www.sfei.org>

8. **NBWA Conference Summary**. Judy Kelly, NBWA Executive Director, presented a power point that summarized the 2016 NBWA Conference on April 22nd in Napa. She reviewed the numbers of attendees (approximately 175/180), net return to NBWA (\$12,000), and the overall positive feedback received on the conference. As would be expected, speaker evaluations were varied with the majority either very highly/highly rated, or rated good. Three speakers were rated good/fair. There were a few specific comments about the talks that will be passed along to the speakers if they wish to receive them. The conference planning committee will meet again later in May to go over the details and look closely at the ranking of the speakers. There was a round of congratulations to all involved in making the conference a success.

9. **Items of Interest**. There were no items of interest discussed.

10. **Items for Next Agenda**.

*Caitlin Cornwall, Sonoma Ecology Center, *North Bay Climate Adaptation Initiative* project update

*Gary Bobker, The Bay Institute – freshwater needs of the lower estuary

Jack Gibson, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL

Submitted By: Judy Kelly,
Executive Director

NEXT MEETING INFORMATION

June 3 – Novato Sanitary District 500 Davidson Street, Novato, CA 94945