

**COACHELLA VALLEY MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY  
REGULAR MEETING  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 115  
Palm Desert, California  
January 9, 2012- 3:00 p.m.**

**FINAL  
MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John J. Benoit, Riverside County Supervisor, District IV  
Buford Crites, State Assembly Appointee–(*Chairman*)  
Jim Foote, U.S. Forest Service (*Non-voting Member*)  
Kristy Franklin, City of La Quinta  
John Kalish, Bureau of Land Management  
Patrick Kemp, Natural Resources Agency  
Eddy Konno, California Department of Fish and Game  
William Kroonen, City of Palm Desert  
Karin Messaros, National Park Service  
Richard Milanovich, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians  
Chris Mills, City of Palm Springs  
Gordon Moller, City of Rancho Mirage  
Al Muth, University of California  
Paul Riesman, California State Parks  
Pedro Reyes, Department of Finance  
Larry Spicer, City of Indian Wells  
Joan Taylor, Governor’s Appointee  
Ellen Lloyd Trover, Senate Rules Committee Appointee–(*Vice-Chairwoman*)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Russell Betts, City of Desert Hot Springs  
John Donnelly, Wildlife Conservation Board  
Sam Toles, City of Cathedral City

**STAFF PRESENT:** Kevin McKernan, Executive Director  
Kerrie Godfrey, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
Laurie Pearlman, Department of Justice

**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

**VACANT POSITIONS:** Vacant, Staff Services Analyst

**1.0 Call to Order & Introductions**

Chair Trover declared a quorum with 16 voting members present at 3:00 pm. Eddy Konno arrived at 3:10 and was not present to vote on the Minutes or the election of Chair and Vice-chair. Bill Kroonen, Pedro Reyes and Joan Taylor left the meeting before the vote on Resolution 2012-01, 02 and 03.

**2.0 Approval of Minutes of November 2011 meeting**

Chair Trover asked if there were any comments additions or changes to the November 2011 Minutes. Kerrie Godfrey noted that the date for the May 2012 Board Meeting

should actually be May 14, 2012 since it's the second Monday in May rather than May 7, 2012 as initially noted on the new schedule. The 2012 schedule needs to be changed to reflect the new date unless there is any objection by the Board. There was no objection. And there was no further discussion, so a motion was made and seconded (Kemp/Reyes) to approve the Minutes with the schedule change. The motion was adopted by the Board members saying "Aye" in a unanimous vote with the exception of Eddy Konno who arrived at 3:10 and was not available to vote on the minutes or the election of Chair and Vice-chair. Additionally, Kristy Franklin, Bill Kroonen, Richard Milanovich, Chris Mills and Allan Muth abstained from the vote because they were not present at the last meeting.

### **3.0 Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda**

Chair Trover asked if there were any comments on any items on the agenda. There were none.

### **4.0 Action Items - public hearing**

#### **4.1 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Chair Trover asked if everyone had a chance to review the background about the election procedures that were provided in the agenda packet as follows: The term of the Chair and Vice-Chair positions is one year, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 33506. The last election was held in January 2011. The current Chair is Ellen Lloyd Trover. The current Vice-Chair is Buford Crites. The Board Members eligible to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair are the city and county representatives, the Chairperson of the Tribal Council of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and the appointees of the Governor, the Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly.

Chair Trover opened the floor for nominations for Chairman. Kristy Franklin nominated Buford Crites and John Benoit seconded the nomination. Buford Crites accepted the nomination and the Chair asked if there were any additional nominations. Joan Taylor nominated Ellen Trover and Al Muth seconded the nomination. Ellen Trover accepted the nomination and the Chair asked if there were any additional nominations. There were none and nominations were closed. Chair Trover asked the Board to vote on the two nominees. After a roll call vote, Buford Crites was elected for a one year term as Chairman with 13 votes.

Chair Trover opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Chris Mills recommended since Ellen Trover came in second on the vote for Chair she should become Vice-Chair. Chair Trover noted that there would have to be a motion to that affect. John Benoit nominated Ellen Lloyd Trover and Chris Mills seconded the nomination. Ellen Lloyd Trover accepted the nomination. The Chair asked for additional nominations and there were none so nominations were closed. John Benoit maintained a motion to elect Ellen Lloyd Trover by acclamation. The motion was made and seconded (Muth/Spicer). Ellen Lloyd Trover was elected for a one year term as Vice-Chairman with 15 votes.

Pedro Reyes asked if the term can be extended to two years or does it have to be one year? Laurie Pearlman responded that her understanding is the pursuant to the public resource code 33506 it's a one year term.

Chair Crites took over as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Joan Taylor requested to have the closed session item addressed next as she knows it is important and she needed to leave the meeting early.

Chair Crites asked if there was any objection to this request. Since there was no objection, the Board addressed the closed session item out of order.

## **5.0 Closed Session**

Commenced closed session at 3:25 on the Mitigation matter which consisted of a report from the Executive Director on a Conservation Easement encroachment issue. Adjourned closed session at 3:55 and continued with item 4.2.

### **4.2 Resolution 2012-01 approving a local assistance grant to the Friends of the Desert Mountains for acquisition of approximately 10.0 acres in the Santa Rosa Mountains Alluvial Fan Area**

Kevin McKernan briefed the Board on the proposed acquisition parcel consisting of approximately 10.0 acres in the Santa Rosa Mountains Alluvial Fan Area which provides a key access linkage and control between two of the recent Desert Ranch acquisitions and further protects the significant cultural, geological and biological resources in this priority area. He referenced the other recent acquisitions in that area including the recent 1,342 acre Desert Ranch acquisition, which has now closed and where this key 10 acre parcel is located in broader context.

The Friends has requested that the Conservancy approve a local assistance grant not to exceed \$66,000 for the acquisition of the parcel. This parcel has also been appraised complying with USPAP standards and the appraisal was reviewed and approved by an independent qualified appraiser.

Chair Crites asked if there was any further discussion on the item. Since there was none he asked for a motion to adopt resolution 2012-01. A motion was made and seconded (Benoit/Spicer) to adopt the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 14 Board members.

### **4.3 Resolution 2012-02 expressing the Conservancy's appreciation of Stan Sniff's service to the Conservancy from 2002 until his passing in 2011**

Chair Crites noted that this item is to honor Stanley Sniff for his service to the Conservancy and the Coachella Valley. With Stanley's many years of service on the Governing Board and his contributions in many other ways as an environmental leader and selfless, dedicated public servant in the Coachella Valley, the suggested dedication of a Conservancy Resolution for his family seems to be a very appropriate way to memorialize his service.

Kristy Franklin expressed her appreciation from the City of LaQuinta that the Board is able to do this and would like to present it to his family. Chair Crites asked if Ellen Trover would be available to join her and she said, "Yes".

Chair Crites asked if there was any further discussion on the item. Since there was none he asked for a motion to adopt resolution 2012-02. A motion was made and seconded (Franklin/Trover) to adopt the motion. The motion passed with an “aye” vote of 14 Board members.

#### 4.4 Resolution 2012-03 USFWS Section 6 Peninsular Bighorn Sheep/Recovery Land Acquisition matching funds grant

Kevin McKernan explained that CVMC Board previously made a commitment to use its bond funds, as outlined in its DOF/STO-approved bond project list, in the event that willing seller acquisition totals exceeded the above mentioned sources to provide the match amount of 25%. The two proposed acquisitions are a 20 acre parcel and a 10 acre parcel appraised at \$300,000 and \$150,000 respectively for a total of \$450,000. CVMC has been working closely with USFWS and WCB/DFG to acquire land from willing sellers in Section 5, south of La Quinta, using three funding sources. Therefore, CVMC proposes to contribute \$112,500 toward the acquisition plus closing costs estimated at \$2,500 for a total of approximately \$115,000.

Chair Crites asked if there was any further discussion on the item. Since there was none he asked for a motion to adopt resolution 2012-03. A motion was made and seconded (Mills/Muth) to adopt the motion. The motion passed with an “aye” vote of 14 Board members.

#### 4.5 Discussion of Hays Ranch purchase/transfer from Friends of the Desert Mountains (FODM) to The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC)

Kevin McKernan explained that the Friends of the Desert Mountains and The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC) have asked CVMC for approval of the sale/transfer of the former Hays Ranch property in Whitewater Canyon from FODM to TWC. The initial purchase was achieved through multiple funding sources including CVMC, FODM (discretionary funds), The Nature Conservancy, and the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation. TWC is proposing to reimburse FODM for their contribution with the other contributing agencies agreeing to a straight across transfer. The Wildlands Conservancy, FODM, CVMC and others have worked in successful partnership in the Whitewater Canyon with TWC ultimately owning and stewarding acquired lands as a preserve and for public access and education. It is logical for these parcels to also be consolidated and managed under TWC ownership. This transaction would also involve a conservation easement over the property which will be held by an entity to be determined at a later date. The original purchase price was \$850,000 of which \$386,700.00 was provided from CVMC. This amount would remain invested in the property under TWC ownership.

## **6.0 Reports**

### 6.1 Written Reports.

Chair Crites asked if there were any discussion. Kevin McKernan provided the Board an update on recent acquisitions and staff reorganization and his meeting with the other conservancies.

Chair Crites Reminded the Board about the Form 700 due date of April 1, 2012.

Outgoing Chair, Trover, thanked everyone for the support she was given during her time as Chair. Kevin McKernan also thanked Ellen for the support she has given the Conservancy in her role as Chair.

6.2 Board Member comments and reports from Conservancy member agencies. Chair Crites asked if there were any discussion. There was none.

**7.0 Adjourn to the March 12, 2012 meeting**

The meeting was adjourned without objection at 4:05 p.m.