

# RCRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

*August 18, 2021*

## ACTION ITEM HIGHLIGHTS

- The RCRC Board of Directors approved the formation of the Golden State Connect Authority, a joint powers authority, to advance rural broadband development.
- The RCRC Board of Directors approved the proposed paydown of RCRC's unfunded pension liability.



2021 Photo Contest Winner  
Ramiro Ruiz  
Monterey County  
"Field of Green"

## MESSAGE BOARD

Have you registered yet?

The RCRC 2021 Annual Meeting registration page can be accessed [here](#).

The RCRC Board of Directors meeting took place via Zoom on Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. The RCRC Board of Directors reviewed many issues, and the following are highlights:

### **RCRC Chair's Report**

Chair, Supervisor Stacy Corless, Mono County, acknowledged the challenges counties are facing with the wildfires currently burning throughout California.

Supervisor Corless looks forward to meeting again in-person at the upcoming RCRC 2021 Annual Meeting in Monterey County.

### **President's Report**

Patrick Blacklock, President and CEO, reported on RCRC's wildfire and drought support efforts. Mr. Blacklock announced the hiring of Bob Burriss who will be joining RCRC's Economic Development Department at the end of the month. Mr. Blacklock also highlighted RCRC's efforts on strengthening broadband connections in rural communities, and recent Governmental Affairs Department's advocacy efforts. The PowerPoint presentation can be accessed [here](#).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### **Creation of a New Joint Powers Authority for the Purpose of Expanding Broadband access and Quality in Rural Counties**

The RCRC Board of Directors reviewed and approved the formation of a new joint powers authority, the Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA), for the purpose of expanding broadband access and affordability in rural counties. The draft GSCA's Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement can be accessed [here](#), which is presently under review by RCRC member counties' administrative offices and County Counsels. Once finalized, RCRC staff will submit the Agreement to RCRC member counties for consideration and potential approval by their Board of Supervisors to join GSCA. The memo can be accessed [here](#). The presentation can be accessed [here](#). The press release can be accessed [here](#), and the website can be accessed [here](#).

## **RCRC Proposed Paydown of Unfunded Pension Liability**

The RCRC Board of Directors reviewed and approved the proposed paydown of the California Public Employees' Retirement System unfunded pension liability. The approval authorizes the use of up to \$1,070,000 of existing resources to paydown unfunded pension liability. The memo can be accessed [here](#).

## **CalPERS, RCRC, and CSAC Joint Presentation Announcement**

The California Public Employees' Retirement System, RCRC, and the California State Association (CSAC) of Counties, will be hosting a joint webinar presentation on September 23<sup>rd</sup> regarding investment returns and asset liability management process. Once details are finalized, invitation to the presentation will be distributed.

## **RCRC Communications Plan - Overview**

Carolyn Jhajj, Communications Director, provided an overview of the communications plan and action items on the horizon. The memo can be accessed [here](#). The PowerPoint presentation can be accessed [here](#).

## **RCRC County Photo Contest**

The RCRC Board of Directors voted on the three finalist photos, and a winner of RCRC's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Rural County Photo Contest was chosen. The winning photo, submitted by Ramiro Ruiz is displayed at the above left-hand column. The top 3 photos can be viewed [here](#).

## **Annual Meeting Update**

RCRC's 2021 Annual Meeting will take place September 29 – October 1, 2021 in Monterey County. Thus far, 40 sponsors have committed to supporting the event. RCRC Board Members are encouraged to register as soon as possible and visit the event website for the most up-to-date information, [here](#).

## **Annual Meeting – County Basket Auction & Drawing**

Following Thursday night's dinner at RCRC's 2021 Annual Meeting, individual county baskets will be auctioned off during the county basket auction and drawing. Chair, Supervisor Stacy Corless, Mono County, has selected the following charities to benefit from the proceeds: Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra/National Wounded Warrior Center, the Eastern Sierra Conservation Corps, the Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserves, and the Mono Arts Council. RCRC member counties are encouraged to participate. The county basket auction letter to RCRC member counties can be accessed [here](#). The presentation can be accessed [here](#). Please contact Chief Economic Development Officer Barbara Hayes at [bhayes@rcrcnet.org](mailto:bhayes@rcrcnet.org) with any questions or need additional information.

## **RCRC Strategic Plan Engagement Results**

Carolyn Jhajj, Communications Director, provided an update of the strategic plan process and next steps. Ms. Jhajj and RCRC Consultant Russel Gould conducted an extended discussion with the RCRC

Board of Directors to refine the draft themes list. The memo can be accessed [here](#). The PowerPoint presentation can be accessed [here](#).

## **GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

The entirety of the Governmental Affairs Department's PowerPoint presentation can be accessed [here](#).

### **State & Federal Legislative Update**

Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Senior Vice President Governmental Affairs, shared that Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez will be joining CSAC as the new Deputy Executive Director of Legislative Affairs.

At the state level, Ms. Warmerdam discussed the final four weeks of the 2021 Legislative Session (September 10<sup>th</sup>) and Governor Newsom's recall election (September 14<sup>th</sup>). Sarah Dukett, Legislative Advocate, provided an update on the recently-amended Senate Bill 594 (Glazer) regarding the state's redistricting deadline and requirements. Select state legislative measures of importance to California's rural counties can be accessed [here](#).

At the federal level, Ms. Warmerdam focused the discussion on the status of the bipartisan infrastructure package and the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration's programs to help distressed and underserved communities impacted by the pandemic. The memo can be accessed [here](#).

### **Forest Management and Wildfire Update**

Mary-Ann Warmerdam, Senior Vice President Governmental Affairs, provided a brief synopsis on efforts in the Legislature and various state and federal agencies to address California's persistent catastrophic wildfire events. Ms. Warmerdam focused the discussion on the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Expenditure Plan, adjustments to the federal wildfire suppression policy in the wake of the Tamarack Fire, and the federal bipartisan infrastructure package. The memo can be accessed [here](#).

### **Drought Update**

Sidd Nag, Legislative Advocate, provided an update on current issues involving California's drought policy. Mr. Nag highlighted the Newsom Administration's plan for drought response which is currently under development. Additionally, the Department of Water Resources has distributed the first round of drought resiliency grants. The memo can be accessed [here](#).

### **Water Issues Update**

Sidd Nag, Legislative Advocate, provided an update on current issues involving California water policy. Mr. Nag focused the discussion on Senate Bill 552 (Hertzberg) which requires counties to establish drought task forces, and encouraged counties to establish a drought task force by December 31, 2021. The western and rural water projects that are part of the federal bipartisan infrastructure package was also discussed. The memo can be accessed [here](#).

## **Environmental Services Joint Powers Authority**

Staci Heaton, Senior Regulatory Affairs Advocate, highlighted what will be discussed at the Rural Counties' Environmental Services Joint Powers Authority (ESJPA) Board of Directors meeting, including a presentation by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, illegal dumping, Senate Bill 1383 Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Organics Regulations implementation, the State Water Resources Control Board's Construction Storm Water General Permit, and issues related to solid waste and recycling. The memo can be accessed [here](#).

## **California Public Utilities Commission Update**

Tracy Rhine, Senior Legislative Advocate, and John Kennedy, Legislative Advocate, provided an update on RCRC's involvement at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and highlighted the following: discussions to get underway on Rule 20 Underground Guidebook for local jurisdiction; CPUC's requirement of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) to be more transparent on Public Safety Power Shut-off event decision-making; approval of all utility Wildfire Mitigation Plans by the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety; Frontier Communications' post-fire service restoration in Alpine and Mono Counties; and, the implementation of the \$6 billion broadband infrastructure bill (Senate Bill 156; Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee). The memo can be accessed [here](#).

Please refer to the RCRC Board Packet and Supplemental Packet for further details related to the items above, as well as other items covered during the meeting. The RCRC Board Packet and Supplemental Packet can be accessed [here](#).

### **GSFA BOD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The GSFA Board of Directors meeting took place via Zoom on Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>. Here are some of the highlights:

- Carolyn Sunseri, RCRC Marketing Director, provided a presentation entitled "Build Minority Wealth Through Homeownership – 2021 Strategic Initiative." The presentation can be accessed [here](#).
- Craig Ferguson, Deputy Director, provided an update on the Financing Action Team's bond issuance approval, down payment assistance programs, and the Advance Rebate Payment Program.
- Barbara Hayes, RCRC Chief Economic Development Officers, provided an update on GSFA's rural broadband efforts. The presentation can be accessed [here](#).
- The GSFA Board of Directors reviewed and approved the authorization of the Executive Director to apply for and accept a broadband strategic plan and a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy development grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration.

Please refer to the GSFA Board Packet for further details related to the items above, as well as other items covered during the meeting. The GSFA Board Packet can be accessed [here](#).

**Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because [they] want to do it.**

– Dwight D. Eisenhower

The RCRC Board of Directors adjourned in memory of Inyo County's County Administrative Officer Clint Quilter.



November 20, 1963 – July 20, 2021