

**BALDWIN HILLS CONSERVANCY**

6133 Bristol Parkway, Suite 301

Culver City, CA 90230

Phone: (310) 641-3497

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TELECONFERENCE  
PUBLIC MEETING  
*of the*  
BALDWIN HILLS CONSERVANCY  
MAY 13, 2003**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**I. Roll Call**

The special teleconference public meeting of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy was called to order at 4:00 p.m., on May 13, 2003, at the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, 6133 Bristol Parkway, Culver City, CA 90230

The Conservancy roll was called, and the following voting members were present: Clare Bronowski, Ta-Lecia Ann Arbor, Kenneth Bentley, Allan Boodnick, Supervisor Yvonne Burke, Ted Jackson, Jim Park, and Robert Miyashiro.

The following non-voting members were present: Don Rogers.

The following staff members were present: David McNeill and Heather Barnett.

Representing Resources Agency was Heather Barnett.

**II. Consent Items**

- a. Authorization of a consultant services contract with Loyola Marymount University for Research and Analysis of the Recreational and Environmental Enhancement Potential of Ballona Creek.
- b. Authorization of a local assistance grant to Environment Now for land acquisition, planning, and development along the Ballona Creek Trail and Bikeway.

Dave Myerson, Environment Now, stated they have a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Urban Development for \$50,000 available to work with their discretion along the creek, hopefully to partner with one or more agencies on restoration projects. In addition, SMMC has been looking at sending some amount of funding through the State Parks Dept.

Member Fishman feels the decision who Environment Now will take direction from in expenditure of these particular funds should come from the Baldwin Hills Conservancy. Member Miyashiro, a grant to Environment Now, to him means that they have control over the funds; does not understand the relationship that a grant to Environment Now, who then comes back to the board and ask what to do with the money and asked why was a grant executed in

the first place? Mr. McNeill answered that Environment Now would act as the ears and eyes for the Conservancy and make recommendations.

Member Fishman gave an example of Coastal Conservancy's experience with their block grant to Rich Trail Council of San Francisco Bay and other similar grants; a larger grant is made to ensure that funds are available for projects in a particular area, and a limited of funds are available for planning design, etc. -- the actual project when ready to go, has to come back for another approval to their board. Member Bronowski, what the conservancy is really doing is committing the funds to bring other people to the plate so that Environment Now will help the project come together and the board will bless it before it's completed. Member Miyashiro feels the acquisition planning and development is very broad and is not sure that there is much to go on; right now sees only granting of authority to Environment Now and feels it should be a little bit tighter to know what the \$250,000 is being spent on.

Member Bronowski answered the conservancy board is committing Environment Now to the region/and the particular creek and they are aware of other projects, but have not been able to step up because; 1) legislation did not include it in our jurisdiction, and 2) the board had committed a specific amount of money, Environment Now will act as a clearing house and attending other agencies' meetings for the Conservancy. Member Fishman stated that in his experience with similar grants, a work plan has to come back to the Executive Officer for approval and that approval delegates the Executive Officer for the planning functions and the actual project comes back to the board for approval.

Mr. McNeill stated once a project is selected, the work plan would be with he and Environment Now. Member Miyashiro asked what does the \$250,000 get? Mr. McNeill explained the money could be used for restoration projects, signage, trail improvements, and fencing, to increase the viability of the creek as a recreational resource and added if able to partner with other stakeholders, then can have a seat at the table to make those viable projects with regards to a budget for building a demonstration site. If these projects don't get off the ground, then the money will be spent on the ground for hard deliverable projects. Member Park advised of the value of moving the money, as it's two – three years old money. Member Boodnick asked how the amount was derived. Mr. McNeill answered he tried to maximize the amount of money available and compared other stakeholders' who average \$200,000 – \$250,000 for particular projects.

Member Bronowski wondered if the money isn't spent, would there be the same issue with the money being old money. Mr. McNeill responded he didn't feel there would be problems spending the money and is looking at exploring opportunities to connect the Baldwin Hills with Ballona Creek, which is a multi-million dollar opportunity. Member Miyashiro asked what as the process for determining the priorities on how projects go forth? Mr. McNeill stated he would meet with the other stakeholders and a group that Environment Now is responsible. Member Rogers expressed some concerns over what the conservancy would be getting. Mr. McNeill stated he could look into how to recycle the money if the \$250,000 isn't spent, his intention is to spend it and the cost of building a bridge to connect the park with Ballona Creek. He has a proposal that shows it would cost \$50,000 to just explore the possibility of building a bridge across Ballona Creek

Member Miyashiro expressed his concern that is not if the money would be spent, but feels the process (from his department's standpoint) seems to be a little bit backwards; normally a grant applicant will come to the agency awarding the grant with a particular proposal, and they would review various proposals and weigh them against the broad goals of the awarding agency. He further stated that the proposal the conservancy suggests would award a quarter million dollar grant with nothing specific in mind. Member Bronowski, the conservancy board has spent long

sessions in a workshop and one of the chief issues was how to spend money as a new conservancy. She feels a need to get moving on these projects. Member Arbor, stated that Ballona Creek has been an ongoing conservation and if the conservancy want to come to the plate with something viable, the conservation with having some type of connection with the park and Ballona Creek, should be included as a project in the funds, which the conservancy is proposing to grant to Environment Now to continue the study that they've already started.

Member Miyashiro also expressed concerns why was it so difficult at this stage to identify some of the projects that have a nexus to the conservation and its jurisdiction and indicate them in a more specific manner. He feels a little bit uncomfortable to give out a \$245,000 blank check and what he's hearing is that stakeholders are at the table and there is no process in which things would go forward. Member Bronowski clarified, stating Dave Myerson's job will be to go out with the money and identify the projects he recommends the money be used for, develop the work plan, and bring back to the board for approval.

Member Rogers asked if one or two projects would be funded from the \$245,000. Member Bronowski answered yes, with other agencies, as well, the goal being to fund one large project that's coordinated. Member Arbor reiterated, stating the conservancy's contribution would be \$245,000 and the other agencies could put in their funds eventually. Mr. McNeill stated they are trying to use acquisition planning and restoration to begin creating a habitat corridor along the creek to initiate linkage to the Baldwin Hills and enhance recreation opportunities for the area.

Mr. McNeill stated there's a list of opportunities in the grant that will be tightened up once the project has been selected and that the document would be tightened up based on templates he's received from the State Coastal Conservancy and California State Parks. He has spoken with Ruth Coleman (State Parks) who made some recommendations and feels those things will help make it a tighter document, but sometimes having a tighter document make it more difficult to move forward. Member Boodnick asked if there would be any conflict with other agencies in the area or adjacent areas who has their own money and may have a different take on what the conservancy is doing. Mr. McNeill answered the conservancy is not looking for conflict, looking for consensus. Member Bronowski stated the point of the contact is to give Dave Myerson some ability to be a consensus builder; the project would not be funded if it's creating conflict.

Member Bronowski asked for feedback from the Resources Agency. Heather Barnett reported that Member Nichols had attended Environment Now's board meeting to clarify the report. Mr. McNeill stated he could rewrite or add language to state "no funds will be disbursed until a work plan is drawn up." Member Bronowski preferred language that Member Fishman used. A motion was made to move the item, motion carried.

Motion made to close meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.