



## **GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL AGENCY Board of Directors Meeting**

### **MINUTES**

**Thursday, May 16, 2024, 10:30 am**

#### **Meeting Location:**

Eureka City Council Chambers  
521 K Street, Eureka  
Humboldt County

#### **Teleconference Location for Board and Public Participation [Cal Gov Code § 54953(a)]:**

Healdsburg City Council Chambers  
401 Grove Street, Healdsburg  
Sonoma County

#### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Sackett called the meeting to order at 10:31 am

#### **B. ROLL CALL**

**Directors Present:** Haschak, Mulheren, Hagele, Madrone, Bagby, and Chair Sackett

**Directors Absent:** Hart, Hunerlach, and Campbell

**Others Present:** Executive Director – Elaine Hogan, Legal Counsel – Elizabeth Coleman, GRT Project Managers – Louisa Morris and Hannah Bartee, and Recording Secretary – Hiedy Torres

#### **C. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Upon Motion by Director Mulheren, seconded by Director Haschak, the agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

Motion Carried:

AYES: 6 – Haschak, Mulheren, Hagele, Madrone, Bagby (arrived at 10:32 am), and Chair Sackett

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 3 – Hart, Hunerlach, and Campbell

ABSTAIN: 0

#### **D. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Sackett called for public comment.

Richard Gienger – Mr. Gienger said that there needs to be a series of workshops that pertain to the history and territory of the Eel River Canyon. He believes this would help with getting a deeper understanding of what is at stake and that route alternatives need to be explored to protect all important perspectives. He said that it is important for the public to understand the immense impacts the trail would make to the area and to the people. Mr. Gienger wants there to be a reset to the consultation period so enough people and groups can share their perspectives. He suggested a formal series of educational classes to achieve a basic startup point for the trail.

#### **E. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

##### **1. Discussion and Direction Regarding the FY 24-25 Budget**

Director Madrone – Funding for the maintenance of trestles has not been included in the budget and he would like to see that funding added as soon as possible.

Elaine Hogan – Funding for in-house engineering services is included in the budget, but funding for outside engineering services is not included.

Director Bagby – She echoed the comments from Director Madrone and emphasized that a long-term capital improvement plan can be developed from the Master Plan, and we can partner with counties and cities in our jurisdiction and all our neighbors along the trail.

Director Mulheren – Appreciates the efforts made and the transparency reflected in our budget.

Chair Sackett – Thanked Elaine for the detail and encouraged that staff and Board look at the threshold for what expenses need to come to the Board, so that the Board can give discretion under that threshold. Chair Sackett expressed that the Trainings/Conference category of the budget did not seem adequate given the new agency and roles and that item may need to be adjusted.

Chair Sackett called for public comment. No public comment given.

Discussion only. Directions were given to staff.

2. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Resolution 2024-03 to Declare 33 Boxcars Surplus and Authorize Executive Director to Enter into a Contract for Sale in a Form Approved by Counsel, with Mid-Am Equipment, Inc. or, in the Alternative, with Western Pennsylvania Industrial, Inc.

Chair Sackett called for public comment. No public comment given.

Upon Motion by Director Mulheren, seconded by Director Bagby, Resolution 2024-03 was approved as presented.

Motion Carried:

AYES: 6 – Haschak, Mulheren, Hagele, Madrone, Bagby, and Chair Sackett

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 3 – Hart, Hunerlach, and Campbell

ABSTAIN: 0

3. Discussion and Possible Action to Create an Ad-hoc Committee of Three Directors to Assist the Executive Director with Recruitment and Selection of an Operations Position during FY 24-25

Director Madrone – Are we looking at filing one position that would include grant writing?

Elaine Hogan – Yes, this would be one position that would include grant writing, look at capital improvements, and prioritize addressing ongoing maintenance issues.

Chair Sackett called for public comment. No public comment given.

Upon Motion by Director Mulheren, seconded by Director Bagby, an Ad-Hoc Committee was created to help recruit and select an operations position during FY 24-25. Directors Madrone, Haschak, and Hart were appointed as members of the Ad-Hoc Committee.

Motion Carried:

AYES: 6- Haschak, Mulheren, Hagele, Madrone, Bagby, and Chair Sackett

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 3- Hart, Hunerlach, and Campbell

ABSTAIN: 0

4. Discussion and Possible Action to authorize the Executive Director to finalize negotiations and enter into agreements not to exceed \$30,000 for vegetation and property maintenance services in the vicinity of the cities of Ukiah and Willits in Mendocino County

Director Bagby – Were you able to contact the City of Ukiah and City of Willits to inquire about who they use for these services? Sometimes an adjacent vendor contract can be piggybacked on and possibly save a significant amount of money.

Elaine Hogan – I have reached out to the goats program and others that work with neighboring cities performing weed abatement services and requested quotes. This weed abatement would become a routine item moving forward.

Director Haschak – We should reach out to the CCC and see if they can assist with some of these issues. A 120-member CCC facility is being built in Willits, so that could be an opportunity to utilize those services.

Director Madrone – I like the idea of partnering with other community organizations. He tipped his hat to the Humboldt Trails Council and the incredible work they do with trail stewardship in Humboldt County, including portions of the Waterfront Trail and Great Redwood Trail in Eureka, and many other trails around the area. He is hoping to avoid the use of herbicide at all costs because the health risks and environmental impacts are much higher than the minimal cost saving.

Director Haschak – He echoed Director Madrone’s comments. In Mendocino County, we do not allow the use of herbicide by Caltrans and not using them would be the way to go.

Chair Sackett called for public comment. No public comment given.

Upon Motion by Director Bagby, seconded by Director Haschak, the Board authorized the Executive Director to enter into agreements not to exceed \$30,000 for the above-mentioned services.

Motion Carried:

AYES: 6 – Haschak, Mulheren, Hagele, Madrone, Bagby, and Chair Sackett

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 3 – Hart, Hunerlach, and Campbell

ABSTAIN: 0

## **F. CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Delegate Authority to the Executive Director to Execute an Amendment to the Contract with GKG Law for Outside Legal Services and Extend the Term up to Two Years
2. Delegate Authority to the Executive Director to Execute an Amendment with County of Sonoma to Extend the Contract Term until 6/30/25 for Payroll, Banking and Accounting Services, Not to Exceed \$35,000, in a Form Approved by Counsel
3. Approval of Financial Statements – March and April 2024
4. Approval of Warrants Issued – March and April 2024

## 5. Approval Cal Card Statement – March and April 2024

Upon Motion by Director Bagby, seconded by Director Mulheren, Agenda items F.1 through F.5 were approved as presented.

Motion Carried:

AYES: 6 – Haschak, Mulheren, Hagele, Madrone, Bagby, and Chair Sackett

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 3 – Hart, Hunerlach, and Campbell

ABSTAIN: 0

### **G. STAFF REPORT – Elaine Hogan, GRTA Executive Director**

Ms. Hogan reported on several technology updates, including updates to the GRTA website to improve navigation and switching to Zoom phone from virtually unused landline. She is planning to do a comprehensive insurance review and is working on cleaning up budget items related to former NCRA collectibles ahead of a new budget to be presented in July. A three-year audit will also be presented in July. She stated that the two public workshops in April related to the release of the Draft Master Plan for the Great Redwood Trail were well attended. Staff have been working on developing new or strengthening existing partnerships since the release. Ms. Hogan relayed that the GRTA was in the middle of the scoping period, running May 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>, for the program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Master Plan. The PEIR has also included starting another round of tribal consultation under AB 52. An episode of “Open Roads” was filmed with Ms. Hogan and trail partners. It will air on NBC soon and highlight the recreational opportunities on the trail, including segments that show walking, cycling and then rafting on the Eel River. Ms. Hogan and staff will be presenting and tabling at the Humboldt Trails event to take place on June 1<sup>st</sup> from 9 am-1 pm at the Sequoia Conference Center in Eureka.

### **H. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD**

Director Madrone – He said he wanted to address a question that came in a letter from a member of the public regarding why there were three representatives from the Sonoma County on the Board. There are two representatives from each County and Director Hagele is the current City representative to the Board.

Chair Sackett – Share her positive experience of taking the SMART train and then cycling on the Great Redwood Trail to the meeting.

The Board adjourned to Closed Session at: 11:27 am

### **I. CLOSED SESSION**

1. Discussion with Legal Counsel Regarding Pending Litigation:  
Abandonment and Railbanking Filings, before Surface Transportation Board, STB Docket No. AB-1305 [Government Code section 54956.9(a)]

2. Discussion with Legal Counsel Regarding Anticipated Initiation of Unlawful Detainer Action on GRTA Property APN 211-141-001 at 901 Dyerville Loop Road in Redcrest, CA [Government Code section 54956.9(d)(2)]

The Board reconvened to Open Session at: 12:10 pm

**Announcement out of Closed Session:**

Agenda Item I.1 – Direction was given to counsel.

Agenda Item I.2 – Direction was given to staff and counsel.

**J. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING**

Regular Meeting Location:

Eureka City Council Chambers  
521 K Street, Eureka  
Humboldt County

Teleconference Location:

Healdsburg City Council Chambers  
401 Grove Street, Healdsburg CA  
Sonoma County

Zoom and phone participation information will be on the next agenda.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Sackett adjourned the meeting at: 12:11 pm