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Program and Policy Subcommittee Meeting Summary Report

February 21, 2018

SUMMARY

Board Members Dolly Sandoval and Jim Provenza were present. Liaison Advisors Steve Chappell, Sandra O’Roak, Erik Vink, and Legal Counsel Nicole Rinke were also present. Three public members were present.

The meeting agenda included a discussion of Board approval of reports, a discussion of the Conservancy’s language translation capabilities, and an update on the Proposition 1 solicitation.

Presentation of Reports to the Board

Staff provided background on the types of reports that are produced by the Conservancy. There are generally three types of projects with reports:

- Projects supported by Conservancy Grant Funds (e.g. Proposition 1 grants and possible future bond funded grant programs).
- Projects supported by external funds (e.g. projects for which the Conservancy has sought specific funding for discrete tasks from State, Federal or philanthropic grant sources. Examples include grants for development of EcoAtlas, invasive species control, and education and outreach).
- Conservancy funded planning efforts (e.g. Cache Slough Regional Planning, the Central Delta Corridor Partnership, and the Delta Tourism Awareness 5-year Marketing Plan, and the Delta Sign Plan).

Each of these types of projects currently has varying levels of review or updates to the Board either through regularly scheduled updates (Proposition 1), discussion items before the Board, or within the Executive Officer’s Report.

The Subcommittee discussed the various levels of review for each of the types of projects and the importance for the Board to be involved in the review process while also providing assurance to participants of collaborative processes that products will be adopted in good-faith.

As a result of the discussion, staff has provided the Board the attached policy for review.

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Language Capabilities

Staff provided background on the potential opportunities to provide language translation of documents and website content. In 2015 Conservancy staff researched options for translation and determined at that time that costs were prohibitive.

Costs for document translation are still prohibitive. However, the Conservancy can place a free Google Translate button on the Conservancy's website that would translate web text into numerous languages; although a caveat would have to be added to the website that translation is not guaranteed to be grammatically correct. While .pdf documents on the website cannot be translated using the Google Translate button, the Conservancy can direct visitors who wish to translate any document on the website to the Google Translate webpage for free translation of those documents. Staff recommended that both steps be taken to provide translation of information on the website.

The subcommittee discussed and concurred with staff's recommendations. Based on the subcommittee's recommendation, staff posted the translation button and the link to Google Translate on the Conservancy's website.

Proposition 1 Solicitation

Staff is assessing options for determining funding recommendations in the event that a Proposition 1 grant cycle is oversubscribed. The Subcommittee discussed options such as awarding partial funding, placing priority upon projects within the legal Delta, and prioritizing implementation over than planning projects. There was general agreement that basing decisions upon score was the most objective method upon which to base funding decisions. The committee discussed the possibility of withdrawal of a funded project and there was support for considering funding of the next highest scoring proposal(s) until the next solicitation opens. The committee also discussed that if a grant is awarded with conditions, if the conditions are not cleared before the next grant cycle opens, the award would be rescinded and the applicant could resubmit the project for consideration with the next cycle. Similarly, the committee concurred that proposals for which funding is reserved should resolve issues(s) that prevented an award no more than six months after the funds are reserved. Those that do not can apply for future grant cycles. This approach favors shovel ready projects, makes more funding available for projects that are ready to go, and preserves the competitive nature of the grant program.

The Subcommittee also discussed the Board approval timeline for the fourth solicitation cycle. Staff will bring draft Grant Guidelines to the Board for consideration in May. If the draft Guidelines are approved, they will be posted for public comment for the month of June, and final Grant Guidelines will be brought to the Board for consideration in July; The Cycle 4 solicitation would open on August 1, 2018.

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Future Agenda Items

The Subcommittee will discuss the draft Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines for Cycle 4 and staff will provide an update on the agricultural sustainability analysis and land owner goals outlined in the Conservancy's 2017-2022 Strategic Plan.

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