

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

MAIL: 12200-B Airport Road, Jackson, CA 95642

LOCATION: 12200-B Airport Road, Martell, CA

PHONE: (209) 223-6744 FAX: (209) 223-0749 E-MAIL: jhopkins@amadorgov.org



SUMMARY MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrative Committee

FROM: Jon Hopkins, GSA Director *Hop*

DATE: June 27, 2017

SUBJECT: Amador Resource Conservation District (ARCD) Additional Space Request

Background: The ARCD (Special District) provides conservation technical assistance to agricultural producers and individual landowners, initiates and carries-out community-wide conservation programs including programs in agricultural, watershed, and woodland resource management, habitat restoration, irrigation water management, fuels reduction, workshops, classes and scholarships to students pursuing a career in resource management.

ARCD also has the ability to secure grants. The ARCD board is appointed by the B.O.S. and is made up of local people appointed by each Board member to represent the County. ARCD reviews, recommends, and funds the projects mentioned above.

ARCD also depends on the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for technical assistance. NRCS is a Federal division of U.S.D.A that assists America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners conserve the nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

From 2001 to 2004 the County provided office space to NRCS at 42-A Summit Street. In 2004, NRCS rented space at the Quail Hollow complex in Jackson, but due to Federal budget cuts lost their funding. At the recommendation of the Ag Commissioner, the County entered into an MOU with ARCD to provide office space at the GSA building (approximately 530 square feet) to house its office and the NRCS office. NRCS occupies the space consistently with three (3) to four (4) employees every day. ARCD use is intermittent during the day holding nightly meetings once a month.

Subject or Key Issue: To receive input from the Administrative Committee regarding the request for additional space from the Amador Resource Conservation District (RCD); attached for reference is their letter dated March 21, 2017. NRCS would add one (1) employee and RCD would add one (1) employee.

Analysis: Cooperative agreements are common and often transfer money, property, services, or anything of value. NRCS is a Federal Agency and has had primary use of the 500+ square feet provided to ARCD in the General Services Building since 2004. It is unclear why the Federal Agency has not restored funding to meet its real estate requirements. The last MOU executed between the County and ARCD was on October 2, 2007 with a one year term followed

by a month to month tenancy.

Housing multiple agencies in one facility can be beneficial, however the Federal Government typically requires cooperative agreements to carry out a public purpose of support where there is substantial involvement between the parties and the services provided are legitimately beneficial without simply providing space for the Federal Government's direct purpose. Mr. Cannon's letter explains this public purpose and the benefits.

While only the Board of Supervisors can determine the public purpose and benefits of cooperative agreements, it should be noted the County's population growth remains unchanged with slight periods of decline in the past 10 years. County department staffing and funding have also declined during that period of time, yet cooperative agreements with non-county departments have expanded their programs and continue to grow.

Cooperative agreements with organizations sharing space and/or resources usually start out having marginal impacts on the County but eventually non-county organizations grow slowly and over time leads to greater consumption of consumables, accelerates building deterioration, generates competition for space (common areas, employee break room, conference rooms), and in some cases disrupts County staff's production of work or requires staff's assistance.

With limited County staff this creates direct and indirect conflicts between the agencies. An example of this would be when the County provided payroll services to non-County entities, or dispatching services, etc.; eventually growth leads to separation because the burden of providing space and/or resources overwhelms the other entity that has separate and distinctly different responsibilities.

Alternatives: 1) Provide the additional 250 square feet to ARCD and amend the existing MOU to reflect this change or; 2) Continue to provide only the 500⁺ square feet currently used by NRCS or; 3) Explore other locations for these functions or; 4) Remove all space and resources provided to ARCD and NRCS.

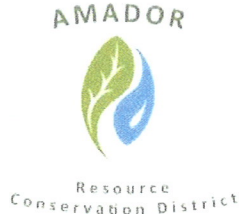
Fiscal or Staffing Impacts: County staff frequently responds to individuals seeking out services unrelated to county functions.

4/5ths vote: N/A

Recommendation(s):

Discussion and possible action

c: Chuck Iley, CAO
file



12200-B Airport Rd
Jackson, CA 95642
Phone: 209-223-65643
Email: ARCD@amadorrccd.org
Web: www.amadorrccd.org

Directors
Steve Cannon, Bob Long, Carole Marz, Ed McCracken, Dan Port

Jon Hopkins, Director
General Services Administration
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642

21 March 2017

Dear Jon,

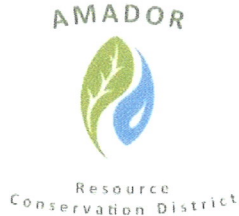
There are two topics that I need to cover in this letter, but I guess the primary overall purpose is to arrange to meet with you sometime to discuss the two topics.

One of those items is the Old Abe situation. It kind of went to the back burner with everything else that I need to deal with on a daily basis. I've reviewed the agreement that you gave us and I did some marking up on it, with the most basic suggested change being that the county includes the cannon on its insurance policy. If you recall, Alliant told us that the VCSD could not have the cannon on its insurance policy unless the VCSD owned the cannon.

Now to change hats.....to my position as a Director of the Amador Resource Conservation District. As you know, Amy Rocha of the Natural Resource Conservation Service and has been replaced by Bobette Parsons. There have been some other changes within that office in terms of personnel, but the plan at this time is to fill a Forester position and also an Agricultural Engineer position. The ARCD has also hired a District Manager (Amanda Watson) in the last year. The office space that was allotted to us during the time of Sandy Baracco's occupation of the Facilities Manager position was something less than Sandy and I had originally agreed upon. I didn't get worked up about that because we had more space than we had over at 42-A Summit Street and Amy seemed to be able to make things work. Now it looks like the NRCS will have a need for an additional desk area and the ARCD would like to provide Amanda Watson with space to work when she's in Amador County (she currently works from home). As the scope of our district operations is increasing, she's going to spend more time here.

I know that the jockeying for space is a constant issue. I also know that Facilities is moving to a different part of the building. But I wanted to let you know just how important the NRCS and the ARCD are to the County of Amador, as a way of justifying our need for about 250 square feet more of space (excluding the walkway area).

In the past four years, the NRCS has provided over \$ 1.7 million to landowners in Amador County. These grant monies end up generating employment with contractors that do the work that the landowners agree to perform. Projects like fencing, agricultural irrigation systems, forest thinning and brush removal, tree planting and herbicide applications are



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some of the projects that NRCS funds. Additionally, the ARCD has gotten funding from the state and federal governments to create fuelbreaks in four locations that generated about \$520,000 of work performed by local contractors. We have recently been funded by the state to assist landowners with the removal of dead pine trees and those two grants total \$380,000. I can't think of another county entity that brings in as much money for local employment as the ARCD. We are currently going through some capacity building work and will likely receive a \$80,000 grant from the Department of Conservation for that capacity building. This will result in our increased capability to acquire more project dollars to benefit our constituents here in Amador County.

The ARCD is not funded by a property tax assessment. The Board of Supervisors has committed to an annual stipend of \$2000 for the district, but we have not received that stipend for the last 3-4 years. Our board hasn't made a big deal of that since the county has supported the ARCD and NRCS with office space. But I think we can easily justify the district's need for some more space and I think I have documented the benefits that the county has received by the space commitment we have gotten. Please help us do more and you'll see how well we will do.

As I said, I'd like to sit down and talk to you about this, so please give me a call and let me know when you'll have time.

Sincerely,

Steve Q. Cannon
Director, ARCD
209.419.1569