

November 22, 2021

Economic Development Commission November report

The commission cancelled the November 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

EDC met on November 10<sup>th</sup> for a presentation by Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District.

Allison Martin, Environmental Educator and Andrew Hautzinger District Director made the presentation on the history of Whitfield and the education programs for children and adults (Master Naturalist program that runs from March-May). December 4<sup>th</sup> from 10-12 is a birthday party for Whitfield. The public is invited.

The presentation also included a review of properties held by the VSWCD: Whitfield to Rio Communities north, and the Rio Abajo Conservation Area (RACA) that is adjacent to Rio Communities southwest border, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> property.

After the presentation, maps were distributed and all participants were invited to visit the RACA.

The Rio Abajo Conservation Area is accessed by the Rio Grande Stables Road that exits West off of highway 304. We viewed a house on the property and then walked or rode to a cleared trail under power poles to see the extent of underbrush and vegetation on the property. Both the RACA and adjacent Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District have bosque properties adjacent the Rio Grande that need to be cleared of salt cedar and Russian olive trees in order to protect native cottonwoods. Currently there is no agency with the specific mission of wildfire mitigation for this area. The Valencia County Fire Marshall has the closest mission directive for protecting this vulnerable area. The VSWCD could use our support and creative ideas for protecting these lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve these 9 years for the Economic Development Commission. At this time I am no longer interested in continuing to work for the commission and am resigning as chair and as a commissioner, effective immediately.

Respectfully,

Kuan Tikkun