

Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee (ACC) Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday April 11, 2018  
3:00 pm  
501 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

Attending:

Simone Hardy, Agriculture Commissioner and Russ Lester, Chair

Members: Moira Burke, Barbara Comfort, Ian Anderson, Craig Leathers, Mary Helen Seeger, Jeff Dittmer, Bruce Brazelton, Jennifer King, Lisa Howard

Guests:

Chris Rogers, County Administrator's Office; Wendy Rash, NRCS; Michael Yankovich, Resource Management; Sean McNamara, Sierra Orchards; Sharon Garrett, Agriculture Administrative Assistant

1. 3:00 PM Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Introduction Members and Guests
3. Changes and Approval of Agenda
4. NO Review/ Approval of Minutes

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on recent Board Activity

B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity

C. Seeking Alternate to GSA TAC in absence of primary member (Lisa Howard)

It was determined that Al Metvitz was not eligible as he is Alternate for Russ Lester.

An Alternate was not chosen at this meeting. Put on agenda for next meeting.

D. 2018 Goal Setting Continued

It was moved and unanimous agreed that the following topics be added to previous Goal Setting list: Labor, Cannabis, SCMA Updates, Delta Water, Healthy Soils, Williamson Act

E. Sustainable Solano Presentation

Power Point Presentation by Elena Karoulina, Executive Director ([elena@sustainablesolano.org](mailto:elena@sustainablesolano.org)) with detailed information about origin in 1999 as Benecia Community Gardens, its development, focus, funding, and research on nationwide and Solano County farming. The Advisory Board consists of Ben and Denise Lyon (farmers), Simone Hardy (Ag Commissioner), and Sarah Hawkins (Farmbudsman). In essence, Sustainable Solano want to build a "local food system", harmonizing interests of various stakeholders: local farmers, high and low income consumers, and value added products / services. There was much interest in her presentation. There was discussion of need for farmers to maximize margins and how that can be melded with the sustainability goal of residents eating local quality fresh produce. A bottleneck is distribution opportunities in farmer's markets or direct to consumers. Another issue is that 99% of products grown in Solano are sold outside the county and that most of them are commodities and increasingly orchard crops rather than row crops.

F. Discuss Possible Ag Tour Ideas

John Vasquez, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors is supportive of an Ag Tour. He will promote with the Board. Chris Rogers says that funding has been put in the proposed budget per our previous meeting. Next meeting we will discuss timing of tour, and select a working group. John Vasquez offered his assistant, Ryan Chalk, to help co-ordinate. Jennifer, Mary Helen are willing to serve. Possibly Ian and also Craig will offer his experience and advice.

## 6. CONTINUING BUSINESS

### A. Agriculture Updates:

1. Simone Hardy mentioned the State of California had been sued for using a Negative Declaration in their justification for their use of insecticides on injurious pests. They are proceeding to treat for Medfly using their CEQA Authority. Discussion of continued need to inform and educate the public about the need to protect agriculture by not spreading pests on plants or fruit across quarantine lines.

2. Nutria, a giant white whiskered rodent, is being found in many central California counties. Eradication happened in CA in the 1970's, but it is back. It lives in wetlands, eats voraciously and is very destructive to the environment. Report any findings to the Ag Department or CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife.  
<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Invasives/Species/Nutria>

B. LOCAL FOOD SHED WORKING GROUP – no update-

C. RENEWABLE ENERGY WORKING GROUP – no answers from Solagra project managers

D. FARMBUDSMAN – not in attendance

E. BICYCLES – Sheriff's continuing their outreach to bicyclists

F. LESA Progress – no update

G. GSA – Russ Lester reports there is a meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup>. In July, there will be a stakeholder meeting to inform stakeholders.

Lisa Howard reports Solano County received \$1 Million to do research including planning and gathering data on existing wells and volumes. \$490 was received by the Fresh Water Trust for outreach for education for ground water recharge.

## 7. PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE -none

A. PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS - none

C. CORRESPONDENCE - none

8. NEXT MEETING DATE: May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 3:00 PM

9. ADJORN MEETING 4:45 PM