

SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Teleconference Meeting

Meeting called to order at 3:10 by Chair Lester.

Members Present: Russ Lester, Moira Burke, Jeff Dittmer, Lisa Howard, Ian Anderson, Craig Leathers, Al Medvitz, Jennifer King

Members Absent: Barbara Comfort

Guests Present: Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner; Priscilla Yeane, Asst. Agricultural Commissioner; Allan Calder, Planning Manager; Misty Kaltreider, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager; Steve West, CHP; Morgan Doran, UCCE; Stephanie Jordan, Sustainable Solano; Tracy Ellison, Solano Land Trust; Teri Knight, NCRS; Matt Tuggle, Public Works Engineering Manager; Nancy Nelson, CAOs Office.

Teleconference Meeting Resolution:

Approved Teleconference Meeting Resolution #2022-01, by unanimous committee vote authorizing the meeting to proceed via teleconference as a result of the continuing COVID pandemic state of emergency.

Approval of the Agenda: Agenda approved with no additions or deletions.

Review/Approval January 2022 Meeting Minutes: Minutes approved as prepared.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

- Considered an appeal of the Turpin Special Event Center in Suisun Valley, a project that the Planning Commission approved in December. The Board continued the appeal hearing to March 22 in order to allow time for the project applicant to respond to concerns and staff to gather more information for the Board's consideration
- Approved highway commercial land use zoning text changes.
- Delayed action on proposed ag zoning text amendments until the committee, Farm Bureau and other interests have additional time to review the changes and provided staff direction to return on March 22 with an update.
- Solano joined the Rural County Representatives of California advocacy coalition for rural counties.
- Bill Emlen was appointed as the new CAO replacing Birgitta Corsello effective March 27.

B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity

Two recent appeals on Planning Commission actions:

- US Ecology proposal in Dixon as a consumable waste transfer facility. Appeal was denied and the facility was approved. May be further appeal to the Board within the next 10

days.

- Appeal of a poultry ranch in Dixon with capacity for 18,000 hens was continued at the request of Planning staff for additional time for review.

C. Proposed Revisions to Agricultural Zoning Definitions and Regulations

Since the last committee meeting Planning and County Counsel staff have met with committee members and Farm Bureau representatives to review and further describe reasons for the proposed ag zoning text changes. Most of the discussions in those meetings focused on greenhouses and proposed changes to the agritourism definition in county code. Al motioned/Ian seconded that future meetings discussing the zoning text changes be noticed as special committee meetings so that all committee members may attend. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

D. 2022 Committee Goals

The committee recommended the following items as current goals that will be considered for adoption during their March meeting:

- Monitor ag-related LNU fire recovery efforts and other fire prevention, mitigation and control work including:
 - Inclusion of agricultural representation in new fire safe councils
 - State of rural fire districts and their capacity to serve agriculture
 - Potential creation of an ag pass program for grower/rancher access to ranches or farms during emergency events
 - Farm/ranch property insurance issues
 - Wildfire smoke impacts on grapes and other crops
- Continue to assess effects of climate change on agriculture.
- Promote agritourism as a valid method to preserve family farms.
- Assist in planning and coordinating a 2023 County Ag Tour.
- Encourage education, outreach and collaboration with local groups and agencies to advance and promote the public's understanding and appreciation of agriculture.
- Monitor and contribute to the implementation of the groundwater sustainability plan.
- Work with Public Works, STA and CHP on projects to promote safe ag transport and bicycle traffic on rural roadways.
- Monitor and assess Delta water issues affecting agriculture including:
 - The proposed Delta Conveyance project.
 - Levee maintenance
 - Salt water intrusion
 - Participate in the Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership's Ag Sustainability Work Group
- Monitor impacts of large land acquisitions on agriculture.
- Monitor potential actions to annex ag lands and assess related impacts.
- Improve efforts to effectively advise and communicate important agricultural issues to the Board of Supervisors.

E. Committee Officer Nominations and Elections

Moira Burke opted to step down as vice chair. Craig Leathers moved to reappoint Russ as committee chair and nominated Lisa Howard to serve as vice chair. Moira seconded the motion. Passed by unanimous vote.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- A. Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership – Ag Sustainability Work Group
The work group last met at the end of January. The Delta Stewardship Counsel is also looking at climate adaptation strategies for Delta agriculture. They are holding focus group meetings with Delta landowners to seek input on potential programs.
- B. Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan
The first annual review of the new GSP is due to DWR in April. The next GSA Board meeting is February 10th.
- C. County Ag Study
The first ag stakeholder interviews for the study will begin later in February. A variety of growers, processors, transporters and retailers are being invited to participate.
- D. Agricultural Department Updates
- The next phase of glassy-winged sharpshooter eradication treatments in Vacaville is underway. Additional surveys, trapping and biocontrol releases will follow this spring.
 - Currently renewing grower pesticide permits.
 - Upcoming DPR regulatory proposals include new rules regarding neonicotinoid pollinator mitigation and decontamination stations.
 - The county received a Calrecycle grant to help growers dispose of legacy ag pesticides. Solano RCD is facilitating the program.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

None.

Next Meeting Date – March 9, 2022

ADJOURNED MEETING – 4:44 p.m.