

Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Meeting
Wednesday, April 10, 2019
3:00 PM
501 Texas Street, Downstairs Conference Room
Fairfield, California 94534-9700
Phone 707-784-1310

MINUTES

Ag Advisory Meeting April 10, 2019

Meeting called to order at 3:15 by Russ Lester

Members present: Mary Helen Seeger, Moira Burke, Jeff Dittmer, Russ Lester, Craig Leathers, Barbara Comfort, Ian Anderson,

Members not present: Lisa Howard, Al Medvitz, Bruce Brazelton, Jennifer King

Guests present: Jose Arriaga, Acting Agricultural Commissioner; Chris Rogers, CAO's Office; Priscilla Yeaney, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner; Misty Kaltreider, Environmental Health; Wendy Rash, NRCS; Morgan Doran, UC Ag Extension; Sharon Garrett, Agricultural Office Staff; Sarah Hawkins, Farmbudsman;

Ian Anderson moved and Moira Burke seconded approving the agenda, passed unanimously.

Barbara Comfort moved and Craig Leathers seconded approving the minutes with an addition of April 30, 2019 as the Farm Tour date to the February and March minutes, passed unanimously.

New Business

A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

Volunteers were recognized at the last meeting, including members of the committee

B. Planning Commission

No update

C. Planning Report for Ag Tour Working Group

It's almost here, so tying up some loose ends, and shuffling around some of the speakers as a few of the people who were originally scheduled have had to pull out due to last minute conflicts. About 45 people have RSVP'd to the event- the bus holds 56, so we still have room for more people to come. The information packet is nearly done and a draft was passed around for the committee to take a look at.

D. Discussion of Committee Openings

Discussion of recruiting for new committee members- how it should be done, protocol, if a list of people should be drawn up of people to approach.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

a. LESA progress

It's been very difficult to get on Bill Emlign's schedule to talk about the LESA preproposal, so at this point, we are without a county sponsor to move forward with it. LAFCO doesn't have the staff resources to work on this project, and the Agricultural Department isn't really the appropriate department to lead up the effort. Upon further discussion, a plan was made to try to develop a partnership between the Agricultural and Resources Departments to jointly work on the preproposal, as we really don't want to lose the opportunity to get the LESA project done on a county-wide basis. The deadline for the preproposal is April 19, so if the project is going to move forward, there's a small window to get this done.

b. Agricultural Updates

UCLA study shows that the pesticide review process right now doesn't meet the CEQA EIR equivalency requirements. If the county can't show that they are meeting these requirements, then growers will have to do the full EIR study for each substance they want to use. Counties are working together to figure out a remedy.

No new nutria have been found in Solano County.

Industrial hemp regulations have been submitted to CDFA, so there's another comment period open right now. Some interest has been shown in producing hemp in Solano County, so it will be interesting to see where that goes.

Exotic Pest Update:

c. Farmbudsman

A few East Coast businesses that were thinking about relocating to Solano county have decided not to make the move at this time.

d. Bicycles

No update

e. GSA report

GSA board meeting is tomorrow night- first one since October of last year. There have been three community outreach events, including one tonight, to increase public awareness of what is happening with respect to groundwater monitoring. The chapters of the GSP are going to be posted at solanogsp.com so the public can comment on them as they are put together.

f. Ag Futures Study for Solano County working group

The working group still needs to be put together. It was decided to table forming the working group until after the farm tour has happened.

- g. Lookout Slough in the Cache Slough area and agricultural mitigation
The Lookout Slough project is pretty far along already, as a good portion of the property is already managed as a wetland. The state doesn't necessarily have to follow the county general plans, so the county is looking for ways to fortify it's own plan to be able to make a stronger case for things like buffers and management plans. Individual committee members are encouraged to contact their Supervisors to give input about being involved in the process earlier.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Next meeting will be May 8, 2019

Adjourn meeting at 4:41pm

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Hawkins, Farmbudsman