

Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Meeting
Wednesday, November 14, 2018
3:00 PM
501 Texas Street, Downstairs Conference Room
Fairfield, California 94534-9700
Phone 707-784-1310

MINUTES

Ag Advisory Meeting November 14, 2018

Meeting called to order at 3:00 by Moira Burke

Members present: Jennifer King, Bruce Brazelton, Craig Leathers, Barbara Comfort, Mary Helen Seeger, Moira Burke, Al Medvitz, Ian Anderson

Members not present: Lisa Howard, Russ Lester, Jeff Ditmer

Guests present: Simone Hardy, Sharon Garrett, Wendy Rash, David Kelly, Morgan Doran, Mike Yankovich

Bruce Brazelton moved and Craig Leathers seconded approving the agenda, passed unanimously.

Ian Anderson moved and Bruce Brazelton seconded approving the minutes. Approved unanimously.

New Business

A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

Vacation rentals regulation considered- board approved short term rentals in watershed, rural residential, Suisun Valley, and A-20 zoned lands. Hosted stays require an administrative permit, unhosted stays require a minor use permit, which is discretionary. So far one permit has been applied for.

B. Planning Commission

A few large ag parcels are up for subdivision to distribute to family, but they still meet zoning regulations, so not controversial.

C. Planning Report for Ag Tour Working Group

Committee has gone over the schedule for the tour, and it is coming together nicely. The activities have been budgeted for time and money and time seems to be good and the committee is under budget so far, assuming we have about 50 people attend the tour. David Kelly described to the committee a general idea of what he'd be talking about on the tour regarding the soils and showed an example of the kind of booklet he can put together to give to all of the tour participants. Is also looking for a place to do a hole with a backhoe

so they can do a show and tell. Al brought up trying to tie LESA into the tour as well, to show the local elected officials how useful that is to land use in the county. The committee members thought that may be a good note to end the tour on.

D. Farm Signage Size Limits

Solano Land Trust has certain rules for signs, but the County has different rules for signs. This creates some confusion for farmers, especially those who do direct marketing. It has been requested that county staff come to the December meeting to discuss this matter and clarify some rules/regulations in more detail. Currently a code compliance issue and enforced on a by-complaint basis.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

a. Agricultural Updates

Weed Management program being restarted by CDFA, a RFQ was put out by the State this month. There is/will be working group in the county to discuss direction of efforts.

Permits have been sent out last week, continuing education credits classes are being offered.

Supervisor Vasquez suggested the AAC send a letter of support for the County doing another agricultural study if the committee would like to see that happen. The topic of farm labor was suggested as a topic to include. A motion was made by Bruce Brazelton, seconded by Ian Anderson to make the topic of an ag study a continuing business topic.

There's a good deal of new staff in the Ag department, which is why there are groups of biologists going to farms instead of one at a time. The growers' patience with them has been very appreciated, but growers are encouraged to give feedback on how the new staff are doing.

- b. Local Food Shed Working Group- no update. A motion was made by Barbara Comfort and seconded by Mary Helen Seeger to eliminate this from the agenda. Discussion was brief. Motion passed unanimously.
- c. Renewable Energy Working Group- the state is now allowing farms to produce extra energy and sell it back to the grid.
- d. Farmbudsman- talked about some of the challenges of CSAs and how Sustainable Solano is trying to come up with a model to step in and find new markets.
- e. Bicycles- latest ride seemed to go well according to Moira, but not well according to Barbara. No law enforcement presence. Simone will reach out to law enforcement again regarding bicycle issues.

- f. LESA progress- pre-proposals are due in April. Guidelines for the grants were provided to the committee by Wendy. Match funding requirements are not terribly high and can be provided as in-kind match, as opposed to cash match.
Al Medvetz made a motion that the committee recommends that the county pursue and support developing a grant proposal that will be put forward by the County by committing staff time and support to develop a county-wide LESA program. Seconded by Ian Anderson. Discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously. Letter is expected to be available for review before the next meeting.
- g. GSA Report- TAC meetings keep getting postponed

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Reminder that Brown Act training needs to be done by members of the committee. If you have a copy of your certificate, pass them along to Sharon.

Suggestion made that a review of open positions on the committee looked at next meeting, and that we all make a concerted effort to find people to fill open positions. No one is getting any younger on the committee.

Next meeting will be December 12

Adjourn meeting at 4:40