

Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) Meeting
Wednesday, August 14, 2019
3:00 PM
501 Texas Street, Downstairs Conference Room
Fairfield, CA 94533
Phone 707-784-1310

MINUTES

Ag Advisory Meeting August 14, 2019

Meeting called to order at 3:04 by Russ Lester

Members present: Bruce Brazelton, Moira Burke, Barbara Comfort, Jeff Dittmer, Lisa Howard, Jennifer King, Russ Lester, Mary Helen Seeger

Members not present: Ian Anderson, Craig Leathers, Al Medvitz

Guests present: Ed King Agricultural Commissioner; Sharon Garrett Office Assistant II (C); Sarah Hawkins, Farmbudsman;

NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

Jose presented 2018 Crop Report to the BOS

A church on Rockville Road is up for rezoning (to commercial) as a Sikh Temple, they want to expand and add details to the building. Land is currently agriculturally zoned land, going to the BOS on the last Tuesday in September. This church property is grandfathered in to some old land use, and the area is a small commercial area.

B. Planning Commission

See above, land use

C. Discussion of Committee Openings

Committee urged to continue to try to work on filling the openings.

D. Illegal Farm Stands

Concerns were expressed at the last meeting about a string of illegal pop up produce sellers on random corners in Suisun Valley with fruit that is clearly not grown locally. Some of these fruit types are host plants for fruit flies and other pests that can affect the crops grown in the county, which is one of the reasons local growers are concerned about these activities. Monitoring was set up by the Ag Department, and when staff asked to see the proper permits, the sellers did not have them. Fruit was confiscated, monitoring to shut these sellers down will continue.

Concerns raised about lack of bathroom facilities for the sellers, the danger of people with a good amount of cash as sitting ducks who may be robbed, small children in unsafe situations, possibility of human trafficking involved in these operations, and trespassing.

E. Farming is the New Normal: A workshop for growers on climate and agriculture will be held January 7, 2020 at the Ulatis Center in Vacaville. Morgan brought a tentative agenda with proposed breakout sessions for the workshop, Wendy Rush is organizing the event. Core organizing of event is around Solano County, but addresses regional issues. The planners are looking to get feedback on the breakout sessions from farmers, and also handed out a survey about the topics to send back to Morgan within the next week.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

a. LESA progress
No update

b. Agricultural Updates
Pest trapping is in full swing looking for damaging insect species. No finds so far this year in Solano. Contra Costa had a finding of peach fruit fly.
Light brown apple moth, a problem for a decade, is being considered for delisting from pest of economic importance by the USDA.

Pesticide: chlorpyrifos CDFA is still moving forward with banning it, moving forward with cancelling permits for it that producers currently hold. Solano hasn't had any applications to use this pesticide for at least a year. State is looking at funding research on alternatives.

Hemp: many people are coming into the office, asking about regulations, lots of interest in growing it. About 15,000 acres statewide, less than 500 acres in the county. If THC levels after harvest are too high, then the whole crop has to be destroyed, so it will be interesting to see how big of a problem that ends up being with this first harvest in California.

Nutria: local congressmen are putting through legislation to try to get \$7 million for nutria eradication. Sightings remain in San Joaquin County only so far.

c. Farmbudsman
New farmers market in Green Valley starting later this month, Friday evenings and possibly Sunday mornings

d. Bicycles
No update

e. GSA report
Met, approved contract for consultant that will be developing the water management plan. The plan should be ready within a year. Once the plan is ready, there will be public meetings to get feedback- trying to keep the information as public as possible

so people are not surprised when the official rollout happens. Rural Residential zoned properties will most likely be exempt from the plan- currently the thought that is if you pump less than three acre feet per well, you won't have to monitor.

Next meeting is September 12 for GSA Board

- f. Ag Futures Study for Solano County working group
Issue tabled until after fall harvests.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Sunday, August 25 Suisun Harvest Celebration, open to the public

Next meeting will be October 11, 2019

Adjourn meeting at 4:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Sharon Garrett