

SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 13, 2020, 3:00 P.M.

Teleconference Meeting

Meeting called to order at 3:05 by Chair Russ Lester

Members present: Russ Lester, Moira Burke, Ian Anderson, Bruce Brazelton, Jeff Dittmer, Lisa Howard, Jennifer King, Craig Leathers, Al Medvitz, Mary Helen Seeger.

Members absent: Barbara Comfort

Guests present: Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner; Priscilla Yeane, Assistant Ag Commissioner; Letitia Perkins, Office Assistant II; Bill Emlen, Director of Resource Management, Misty Kaltreider, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager; Morgan Doran, UCANR; Traci Ellison, Solano Land Trust; Wendy Rash, NRCS; Richard Hamilton.

Agenda Approval: The Agenda was approved with no additions or deletions.

Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the regular meeting of February 13, 2020 were unanimously approved as prepared.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

- Received annual biosolids report in March.
- Approved a revenue agreement with DWR in April for further development of the Cache Slough Habitat Conservation plan.
- Approved a General Plan amendment and rezone of the Pippo Ranch property located at the southwest corner of Cantelow and Gibson Canyon Road.

B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity

No updates from the Planning Commissioner. Zoning Administrator approved a Ruhstaller Brewery/Taproom proposal on Sievers Rd under condition that hops must be grown on the property prior to opening for public events.

C. Committee Openings

Committee has 3 vacant seats.

D. Flannery Group Land Acquisitions Update

Bill Emlen and Misty Kaltreider with Resource Management reported that since February 2018 Flannery Associates has acquired over 26,000 acres in unincorporated portions of the County, mostly between Fairfield and Rio Vista including significant areas within the Montezuma Hills and parcels bordering Travis Air Force Base. There is no definitive indication at this point what Flannery's intentions for the properties are. No neighboring counties are reporting similar large scale property sales. Russ, Al and Ian will serve on an ad hoc committee to monitor the situation.

E. Cache Slough Habitat Conservation Plan Update

Bill Emlen and Misty Kaltreider reported that in accordance with the Lookout Slough Restoration Project MOU between the County and DWR, the County will complete Phases 2 and 3 of the habitat conservation plan with funding provided by the State. The planning portion of the HCP, Phase 1, has already been completed. Phases 2 and 3 involve environmental review and final permitting. The HCP will provide CEQA/NEPA

incidental take protections for agricultural, municipal and industrial water diversions in the Cache Slough area. Project completion timeline is 24-32 months.

4:15 6. CONTINUING BUSINESS

A. LESA progress – No update.

B. Agricultural Updates – Ag Department Staff

- Agriculture Department office remains closed to walk-in traffic due for COVID-19 protections, but department services are available by phone or appointment. Currently working on plans to reopen the office to the public in late June. The Department website contains a variety of COVID-19 resources for the agriculture industry.
- Monitoring shortages of PPE for growers and pesticide applicators due to COVID-19. A recent CDFR/DPR survey showed that 70% of growers and applicators are facing shortages of PPE, particularly N-95 respirators. CalOES has supplied the Ag Department with disposable face masks to distribute to our local ag industry.
- Pest detection trapping is fully underway for the summer season. New activities this year include Asian defoliating moth trapping around the Port of Benicia and vineyard trapping for the European grape berry moth—a grape pest not yet found in the U.S.
- In February the BOS provided direction to the Agriculture Department and Resource Management to further explore options for a local hemp ordinance. An initial stakeholder meeting was held in April to discuss concerns.
- CDFW reports 1,078 nutria taken to date. No confirmed sightings north of Stockton.
- The 2019 crop report is being compiled and will be presented to the BOS in late June.

C. Farmbudsman – No update.

D. GSA Report – No update. Next Solano GSA meeting is June 11.

E. State Water Resilience Portfolio – No update.

F. Ag Futures Study for Solano County working group – Moira and AI will consider drafting a report based on the 10 recommendations put forth in the 2007 study.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

A. Public Comments – None.

B. Announcements – None.

C. Correspondence – None.

8. Next Meeting Date – June 10, 2020

9. Meeting adjourned 4:50 PM.