

SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, August 11, 2021, 3:00 P.M.

Teleconference Meeting

Meeting Called to Order at 3:05 p.m. by Chair Russ Lester

Members Present: Moira Burke, Ian Anderson, Barbara Comfort, Jeff Dittmer, Lisa Howard, Craig Leathers, Russ Lester.

Members Absent: Bruce Brazelton, Al Medvitz, Jen King

Guests Present: Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner; Morgan Doran, UCCE; Allan Calder, Planning Manager; Misty Kaltreider, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager; Amy Sharp, District 5 Board Aide; Teri Knight, NRCS; Nancy Nelson, CAO Analyst; Tracy Ellison, Solano Land Trust; Dave Harvey, CHP; James Currie, Sheriff; Dan Carey, grower.

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

Review/Approval June 2021 Meeting Minutes: June minutes approved as prepared.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

- Directed LAFCO to continue work on reorganizing the Cordelia, Vacaville and Suisun Fire Protection Districts.
- Adopted a MOU with cooperating fire protection districts to improve coordination on vegetation abatement efforts.
- Adopted the FY2021-2022 County budget.
- Agriculture Department presented the 2020 crop report to the Board. The gross values of ag production in the County for 2020 was calculated to be \$357 million, down 4% from 2019 due to the pandemic, drought, wildfires and record statewide almond and walnut crops which drove prices down. Almonds remained the top crop in reported value at \$50.7 million.

B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity

No recent activity, but ordinance development/amendments pending including short-term rentals, wind turbines, and a Williamson Act uniform rules update. The Williamson Act changes being considered include a determination on how much land within a contract should be in production as well as inclusion of Suisun Valley Strategic Plan uses, and relaxation of ag employee housing requirements during non-renewable periods. Also starting a Pleasants Valley agritourism initiative that may update two zoning districts to allow for ag tourism uses.

- C. Ag Advisory Committee Review Project
Discussions continue with consultant, Ag Innovations, on undertaking a project to review the current state of agriculture in Solano, where it is trending and emerging issues in order to best equip the Board to advocate for the continued viability of agriculture in the county, including possible recommendations for the AAC.
- D. California *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy* and *30 x 30* initiatives
The California Natural Resources Agency formed an advisory panel that just released a document outlining recommendations for achieving the goal of conserving 30% of the State's lands by 2030. CNRA is currently seeking feedback on the project before releasing a draft implementation guide, "*Pathways to 30x30*," this fall.
- E. Mobile Fruit/Flower Vendors
Lisa raised concern that roadside vending activity is occurring in Suisun Valley within ¼ mile of local producers. Unpermitted mobile vendors present direct competition to local growers and pose pest and health threats.

Agriculture Department authorities include requirements for vendors to have proof of ownership for lots of fruits and vegetables over 25 pounds, a CDFA issued cash buyers license and standardization rules apply for some fruits and vegetables.

Roadside vendors require a county-issued peddler's business license. Most vendors are coming in from Sacramento or Alameda. Individuals are dropped-off at roadside locations without any services then picked up 12-14 hours later. Vendors cited by the Sheriff often never show up for court appearances.

Sheriff, Ag Commissioner and Code Enforcement will discuss plans for a sweep to target sites frequented by vendors.

- F. Drought – Water Availability Discussion
The current dry conditions are being described as bad as anyone can recall. Solano is comparatively in better shape than other counties thanks to Lake Berryessa storage and groundwater supplies that although down or producing reduced yields, are still performing. Salinity intrusion in the Delta is becoming more of an issue. Depending on tide conditions water at certain times is not suitable for livestock. Morgan suggested reporting drought observations and impacts through the US Drought Monitor website.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

- A. Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership – Ag Sustainability Work Group
The working group (representatives from both Yolo and Solano County, Farm Bureau, and consultants) met August 6 to continue developing an Agricultural Sustainability Tool. This document builds upon the 2018 Agricultural and Land Stewardship Planning Matrix adopted by DWR which helps to assess agricultural impacts associated with flood

conveyance and restoration projects within the Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough region. The next working group meeting is scheduled Aug 19 at 2-3:30pm. On a parallel tract, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), as part of the Yolo Bypass Partnership, is preparing a draft framework to support agricultural stewardship in the Lower Sacramento/Delta North region.

B. Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan

GSP chapter 7 is posted for public review. A virtual town hall is scheduled for August 25th to provide updates on development of the GSP.

C. Ag-Bicycle Issues

Barbara mentioned that CHP recently monitored traffic on Pleasants Valley Road and noted that bicyclists were responsible for all violations observed. Officer Harvey reported that CHP has not received many complaints about bicyclists lately, but CHP continues to monitor and suggested that it would be helpful if residents report additional bicyclist issues. Russ recommended Sheriff and CHP renew bicyclist safety outreach efforts.

D. Agricultural Updates - Ag Department Staff

- Intercepted red imported fire ants on two separate occasions on incoming shipments at Fed Ex.
- Trapped a Japanese beetle at Travis Air Force Base. No additional finds to date. Follow up surveys will continue through August.
- Egyptian broomrape confirmed again in the County; eradication protocols are underway.
- California adopted a new Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) State Exterior Quarantine. SLF is a leafhopper pest native to China that has become established in the northeastern U.S. It has a broad host list and is particularly destructive to grapes. Tree of Heaven is SLFs preferred host. The Ag Department is working to map and eventually control tree of heaven infestations around local vineyards to create a protective buffer around vineyards.
- Ag Department has N95 respirators available for wildfire smoke protection for ag workers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Russ shared that Jenny Lester-Moffitt was confirmed by the Senate to serve as USDA Undersecretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

ADJOURN MEETING – 4:35 p.m.

Next Meeting Date – October 13, 2021