

SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, November 10, 2021, 3:00 P.M.

Teleconference Meeting

Meeting Called to Order at 3:02 p.m. by Russ Lester

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

Members Absent: Ian Anderson, Jen King, Al Medvitz.

Guests Present: Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner; Morgan Doran, UCCE; Misty Kaltreider, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager; Amy Sharp and Danette Mercado, District 5 Aides; Jim Currie, Sheriff's Office; Tracy Ellison, Solano Land Trust; Matt Tuggle, Public Works Engineering Manager; Frances Neade; Public Works; Matt Walsh, Planning; Nedzlene Ferrario, Planning; Priscilla Yeane, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner; Tanis Hicks, Agriculture Department Office Supervisor.

Teleconference Meeting Resolution:

Governor Newsom signed AB 361 in September extending Brown Act virtual meeting exemptions for legislative bodies, including local boards and commissions. To comply with the changes in meeting rules the committee adopted a 30-day resolution on October 13th approving teleconferences for the October and November meetings.

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

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

Future Meeting Plans:

Committee agreed to continue meeting virtually until further notice. Motion during October's meeting covers today's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity:
Approved annual State and Federal legislative platforms includes several ag related issues centered around continued/adequate funding, resources for our pest prevention programs, full mitigation for ag losses/impacts due to habitat restoration projects, local control over water resources, local say in Delta policies, opposing Federal funding for the proposed Delta conveyance project, items on groundwater, and an item for continued USDA farm service disaster assistance funding.

Also, adopted a recommendation letter to go to DWR in support of levy upgrades and

repairs in the Cache Slough area: 4 projects totaling over \$5M for various repairs and upgrades to levies in that area.

Planning Commission has a policy plan overlay going to the Board on December 7th for an area north of TAFB along and around Northgate Rd., which is going to allow some ag-related commercial service uses, recycling area, etc.

- B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity:
Planning Services kicked off the Pleasants Valley Zoning Project. This is the implementation of the Solano County General Plan policy that allows a mix of tourist uses in the Pleasants Valley area between Putah Creek Rd. and Interstate 80. Hired a consultant to help facilitate the effort. Three workshops are planned with the first one on November 17th at Ulatis Community Center. The end goal is to develop flexible zoning regulations to introduce these uses. Website for more information: www.solanocounty.com/PleasantsValleyProject.
- C. Public Works Capital Improvement Plan Review:
Matt Tuggle shared and explained the process for the Capital Improvement Plan including current projects, projects schedule for the next 2 years, and longer-term projects, most all of which have bike improvement elements.
- D. Fairfield General Plan Update:
Matt Walsh gave an update on the City of Fairfield's general plan update process. Three potential alternatives were presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for comment. All three of the alternatives proposed some encroachment into the Suisun Valley on both sides of I-80. The community was not happy with the alternatives proposed due to the amount of encroachment. City Council was unanimous in that they had no intent to expand urban and commercial development into Suisun Valley. Additional general plan study sessions are planned for the next few months.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

- A. Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership – Ag Sustainability Work Group
No update.
- B. Dry Well Reporting:
No new updates. Have only had a handful of reports.
- C. Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan:
The complete draft GSP for the Solano Subbasin is available for review and comment. A virtual townhall meeting was held last night to review the draft plan. GSP Board meets again on November 11th and is scheduled to adopt the plan on December 9th.
- D. Ag-Bicycle Issues:
Jim Currie – No update, bikes have slowed down. Barbara Comfort and Russ Lester are still very concerned with the number of bicyclists on Pleasant's Valley and Putah Creek roads and lack of following the rules; feel random citations would improve these issues.

- E. Ag Advisory Committee Review Project:
The county is now in contract with Ag Innovations to assistance in conducting a new ag study. The study includes a series of interviews with the various stakeholders in the local ag community beginning next year, with a final report going to the Board next summer. The goal is to give the Board a fully updated understanding of the conditions of agriculture in the county regarding various current and forecasted challenges and in consideration of the next general plan update.
- F. Agricultural Updates - Ag Department Staff:
Ag staff are working non-stop on the GWSS finds in Browns Valley. At this time, 50 adult GWSS, and 50 egg masses have been found across 50 residential properties. Ag surveyed over 1100 properties in the last six weeks and contracted with Neighborly Pest Management to treat infested and adjacent properties. The first round of treatments will be completed by the end of the year, weather permitting. Will re-survey and re-treat next year as needed. Complete eradication may take a couple of years, but so far, the infestation is confined to the residential area and not impacting ag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Morgan - With an increase in state funding UCCE is hiring advisor and specialist positions. A new Food Systems Advisor will be located in the Fairfield office and a new Environmental Horticulture Advisor will be located in Sacramento. Also, recommending 3 additional advisor hires for Vegetable Crops, Youth Development, and Viticulture and Fruit Crops serving Solano, Yolo and Sacramento. Potentially may also add a Water Systems Advisor to address water issues including irrigation, and an Ag Economic and Enterprise Development Advisor. The Capitol Corridor Director position recruitment is still underway. When that position is filled Morgan will return full-time to his previous position as Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor.

Tracy with Solano Land Trust offered assistance in understanding development-ag mitigation requirements. SLT also just finished their 20-year ag conservation plan.

Russ shared that walnut growers are struggling with the rain and getting their crops harvested, some may not be able to harvest.

Barbara shared that after replacing LNU fire damaged fencing along PVR someone took out 150' of fence and did not report the incident to CHP.

Next Meeting Date: December 8, 2021

Meeting Adjourned: 4:48 p.m.