

# SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

**Wednesday, December 9, 2020, 3:00 P.M.**

### **Teleconference Meeting**

Meeting called to order at 3:05 by Russ Lester

Members present: Russ Lester, Moira Burke, Ian Anderson, Barbara Comfort, Lisa Howard, Jennifer King, Craig Leathers, Mary Helen Seeger, Al Medvitz.

Members absent: Jeff Dittmer, Bruce Brazelton

Guests present: Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner; Allan Calder, Resource Management Planning Manager; Misty Kaltreider, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager; Jim Currie, Sergeant, Sheriff's Office; Lt. Steve West, CHP; David Harvey, CHP; Chris Rogers, CAO's Office; Tanis Hicks, Office Supervisor; Dan Carey, grower.

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

Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the regular meeting of October 14, 2020 were unanimously approved as prepared.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### A. Update on recent Board of Supervisor's activity

- In November the BOS voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance regulating cultivation and processing of industrial hemp. Key points include:
  - Hemp may only be grown in a designated area in the far eastern part of the county
  - Growers must obtain a hemp permit from Resource Management
  - Permit process requires public notice and a public hearing
  - Sheriff must approve a security plan for each hemp permit
  - Requires 2500' buffer/separation from hemp fields to offsite residences
  - Growers must be the property deed holder or have notarized permission to grow hemp from the parcel owner
  - Must deposit security funds in an amount sufficient to cover county costs
  - Harvested hemp must not remain outdoors beyond the day it is harvested
  - Drying of hemp must be done indoors or in a hoop/greenhouse
  - Other processing activities must be done indoors; no volatile solvents permitted
  - County must approve labs to be used for crop preharvest THC testing

- Ordinance violations may result in permit revocation, crop destruction and/or possible misdemeanor or criminal charges
  - On December 15<sup>th</sup> the BOS will consider adopting an ordinance amending zoning regulations to permit short term rentals and event centers on private roads and clarify differences between second homes and accessory dwelling units.
- B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity  
No updates.
- C. Committee Openings  
Moira introduced Dan Carey, local walnut grower, as a potential new committee member. Dan is a 40 year resident of Solano County and has been farming walnuts in the Winters area for the past 24 years.
- D. Delta Conveyance Update – Misty Kaltreider  
The State Water Project is owned/operated by state water contractors (entities that pay for and receive water). Built in the 1960s; has 700 miles of canals, tunnels and pipelines and delivers around 4 million acre feet of water to urban (70%) and ag (30%) annually; 50% of all project water goes to the Metropolitan Water District.

The 2009 Delta Reform Act set coequal goals for ecosystem benefits and water supply and reliability and led to development of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan which included proposals for water delivery plans and 150,000 acres of habitat restoration—much of which is in Solano County. Subsequently the BDCP was re-envisioned into the WaterFix 2 tunnel proposal and EcoRestore overseeing habitat restorations which in turn led to formation of the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority tasked with designing a tunnel system to move water through the Delta. In 2019, the State Water Resilience Portfolio was released advocating for a single tunnel conveyance system which is now in initial planning review and environmental scoping—public review of the project is aimed for mid-2022. Because the size and scope of the proposed tunnel project it requires compliance with CEQA and NEPA.

US Army Corps of Engineers is considering two proposed tunnel alignment corridors with two intake designs and a range of operational capacities. The proposed eastern corridor parallels the western side of I-5, but crosses Hwy 12 which would impact Solano with an estimated 15 year construction timeline. Other Solano concerns include impacts to water quality, quantity and agriculture, climate change and changes to existing flood management areas.

Barbara motioned to draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors recommending they continue to unequivocally oppose expanded water exports as proposed in the current version of the State's Delta Conveyance Project. Motioned seconded by Moira and passed by unanimous vote. Barbara, Al and Moira will draft the recommendation to present to the committee in January for final input and approval.

E. 2021 Meeting Schedule

Barbara motioned, Al seconded to accept the committee's proposed 2021 meeting schedule which mirrors the 2020 schedule with meetings scheduled for every month except July and September. Passed by unanimous vote.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

A. COVID-19 Impacts on Solano Small Farms

No updates at this time but will keep on future agendas for ongoing discussion.

B. Ag Futures Study

Ed cautioned undertaking a revision to the study at this time considering the General Plan runs through 2030 and there is no budgeted funding currently available to do so. A better approach may be to continue discussions of possible approaches and topics to an updated study for the time being given current COVID restrictions. Ed will report back to Dan Sumner and Bill Matthews at the UCD Ag Issues Center and express the committee's interest in updating the study when conditions are more favorable. Will be a standing agenda item to check in on monthly.

C. Ag-Bicycle Issues

Matt Tuggle – Public Works is looking to make shoulder and signage improvements on Shiloh and Montezuma Hills roads due to past recommendations from the committee.

Matt reported that larger bike rides organized by Davis bike clubs are not happening as in previous years and we don't have a specific point of contact to reach out to in that community right now. UCD does have a bike coordinator who we can attempt to contact. Identifying potential problem areas and implementing improvements like shoulder widenings, striping and encouraging safer routes through use of wayfinding signs are productive uses of county resources.

Russ suggested resurrecting the committee that previously worked on these issues. Lt. West indicated that some of the Davis clubs have split up, but CHP is willing to participate in outreach efforts and further discussions. Matt recommended further coordination with STA's bicycle advisory committee who previously appointed two members to cooperate with the AAC. Ed will contact STA and work to schedule a joint meeting to further discuss these issues.

D. LESA – no update.

E. Agricultural Updates - Ag Department Staff

- Starting to renew pesticide permits for 2021. Making efforts to do so electronically through email. Every grower has been assigned a biologist to help them through the process.

- Also implementing a new statewide requirement for restricted materials permits. Prior to permit issuance growers must document that they have considered alternatives to restricted materials that may lessen potential environmental impacts. This process will help biologists evaluate the safety of proposed applications and ensure the pesticide permitting program continues to meet CEQA compliance standards.
- The Department will not be hosting in-person continuing education classes for certified applicators for the foreseeable future. A listing of approved online classes is available on the Department's website.

F. GSA Report – December Board meeting cancelled.

G. State Water Resilience Portfolio – no update.

H. Flannery Associates Land Acquisitions

AI was approached by Flannery Associates inquiring about willingness to sell their property, even with its conservation easement. Misty reported that recorded sales have slowed. Total acreage is now over 27,000.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

A. Public Comments – None.

B. Announcements

Misty reported that the Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership's Ag Sustainability Workgroup wants to work with local entities on a plan to ensure ag sustainability in the Delta and inquired if the committee may want to appoint a representative to the workgroup. Will discuss further during January's meeting.

C. Correspondence – None.

Next Meeting Date – January 13, 2021

ADJOURN MEETING – 4:51 p.m.