

# SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

**Wednesday, January 12, 2022**

### **Teleconference Meeting**

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

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

Members Absent: Al Medvitz, Bruce Brazelton, Jen King

Guests Present: Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner; Allan Calder, Planning Manager; Misty Kaltreider, Water and Natural Resources Program Manager; Amy Sharp, District 5 Aide; Jim Currie, Sheriff's Office; Steve West, CHP; Jason Tyhurst, CHP; Morgan Doran, UCCE; Jim Laughlin, County Counsel.

#### Teleconference Meeting Resolution:

Approved Teleconference Meeting Resolution #2022-01, by unanimous committee vote authorizing the meeting to proceed via teleconference as a result of the continuing COVID pandemic state of emergency.

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

Review/Approval December 2021 Meeting Minutes: Minutes approved as prepared.

#### NEW BUSINESS

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

- Approved a MOU with Solano RCD for fire prevention and coordination services.
- Accepted a Cal Fire Safe Council grant to hire a county fire prevention coordinator.
- Authorized expenditure of Cal Fire grant funds awarded in 2021 for fire prevention and response work including drafting of a community wildfire protection plan, establishment of county and community-based fire safe councils, and evacuation planning work.
- Approved placing a revenue measure for a 1/8<sup>th</sup> cent general sales tax increase on the June ballot to fund firefighting and prevention efforts.

##### B. Update on recent Planning Commission activity

Two pending appeals on Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator items:

- Rosalynd winery special event facility on Morrison Lane in Suisun Valley approved through the ZA process in December is being appealed to the Planning Commission.
- The Turpin special event center, also on Morrison Lane, approved by the Planning Commission in December is being appealed to the Board of Supervisors. The hearing is scheduled for February 8.

Lisa Howard requested the AAC be informed of appeals for any ag zoned areas. She also asked for clarification on the ag use stipulation for the Turpin project, and how it would be enforced.

Jim Laughlin provided clarification between marketing events and event center uses.

Many members are concerned with event centers coming in under the guise of ag, but not much ag activity is being conducted.

- C. Update on Proposed Revisions to Agricultural Zoning Definitions and Regulations  
Allen Calder presented the draft zoning text changes amending Chapter 28 (Zoning Regulations) of the Solano County Code that, if approved, would revise and update the definitions and regulations for certain agricultural and highway commercial land uses. The Planning Commission is scheduled to consider the changes on January 19.

The proposed changes align county code with state law which defines greenhouse production as agricultural use and beer production and bottling as ag processing. Greenhouses are allowed by right but must adhere to building code requirements. Additional restrictions on greenhouse location, sizing or possible bonding requirements in the event of business failure are not allowed because greenhouse agriculture is equivalent to open field agriculture under state law. The newly proposed definition to be included in county code is intended to clarify greenhouse rules and reduce ambiguity.

Further changes included amended definitions of ag trucking services, labor supply employee housing, special event centers and agritourism.

The target date for Board of Supervisors consideration of these changes is February 1. Committee discussion strongly favored advising the Board to not adopt the changes until the committee and ag community can have adequate time to review the amendments. Allan and Jim agreed to hold an additional outreach meeting before the Board hearing with committee members and ag industry representatives to further review the proposed changes.

- D. 2022 Committee Goals  
Postponed till February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### CONTINUING BUSINESS

- A. Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough Partnership – Ag Sustainability Work Group  
Coordinating with Yolo County to advocate the state put more resources into the workgroup. Also working with the Delta Stewardship Council to coordinate with CDFA and initiate focus groups including landowners from the region to help better understand agricultural needs in the region in the face of climate change, proposed Delta conveyance changes and the Delta Adapts plan. Looking to start these focus groups in February.
- B. Sustainable Groundwater Management Plan  
All GSA's in the Solano subbasin adopted groundwater sustainability plan. The plan will be submitted to DWR by January 31, 2022. The next steps will be to look at how to go about

implementing the plan with the necessary items outlined in the plan e.g. monitoring and reporting.

C. County Ag Study

The new county ag study is officially underway. The first meeting with the project consultant and county was held last week. The next significant step will be to interview a range of ag stakeholders across the county to hear firsthand about issues and challenges and gather feedback on what the county can do to create an environment that is supportive of agriculture into the future.

D. Agricultural Department Updates

- Preparing for second round of glassy-winged sharpshooter eradication treatments in Vacaville that will start later in January. The Ag Department will be hosting a virtual public meeting with CDFA and Vacaville residents on January 26 to discuss the infestation and treatment plans.
- Currently renewing grower pesticide permits and pest control business registrations.
- Increasing apiary surveillance in preparation for almond bloom.
- Estimated walnut losses from October and November rains from a representative sample of growers. Although losses were significant, they were not to the point of exceeding the 30% yield reduction threshold to qualify for a USDA disaster declaration.
- Postponing spring 2022 ag tour plans due to ongoing pandemic concerns.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

None.

Next Meeting Date: February 9, 2022

Meeting Adjourned: 5:03 p.m.