

**SOLANO COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON
May 14, 2008**

The meeting of the Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) was held at the Department of Agriculture and UC Cooperative Extension Building, Downstairs Conference Room, 501 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA.

Members Present:

Jeff Dittmer, Don Johnson, Craig Leathers, Russ Lester, Sue Lippstreu, John Mangels, Betty Mason, Al Medvitz, Mary Helen Seeger

Others Present:

Jim Allan	Agriculture
Birgitta Corsello	Resource Management
Sabine Goerke-Shrode	Aide to Supervisor Spering-District 3
Fred Zaragoza	Aide to Supervisor Reagan-District 5
Mario Moratorio	UC Cooperative Extension
Moira Burke	Agricola

Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting began at 3:10. A quorum was present with the arrival of Russ Lester at 3:12.

Item 2 Introductions of Members and Guests

Chair John Mangels, introduced the new Agricultural Commissioner, Jim Allan, who comes to Solano County from San Joaquin County. The Members and Guests in attendance then introduced themselves.

Item 3 Changes and Approval of the Agenda

The minutes for approval are for April 9, 2008, not March 12. No other changes to the agenda were offered.

Item 4 Review/Approval of the Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2008

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of April 9, 2008 as presented. The motion carried on a unanimous vote of the members present.

Item 5 New Business

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| (a) Report on Board of Supervisors Meetings – Board Topics Related to the Subject Matter of the AAC –
Birgitta Corsello |
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On May 6 the Board approved increases to all fees effective July 6. They approved another Increase in the scope of work of the company working on General Plan. This involves additional preparation for public information for dissemination.

On May 13, the Board approved and adopted zoning ordinance changes. Ms. Corsello summarized some of these changes, and encouraged the Committee to visit the website for detailed information.

On May 15, there will be a hearing in front of the Planning Commission on the draft EIR for the new draft General Plan, and starting the next week there will be continued hearings at the Planning Commission on the new draft General Plan.

A question was raised regarding parking/handicap access for a home-stay business. Ms. Corsello stated that businesses open to the public are subject to ADA requirements. This is a federal law.

(b) Legislative Updates-Birgitta Corsello

Ms. Corsello reported that there were no new legislative issues directly related to ag, but the Board approved two things that are indirectly related to ag issues. A consulting firm already on board has been authorized by the Board to do Resource Management department customer service review. As a part of this process they will be sending out questionnaires to customers who have pulled permits and/or gone through the permit process in the last three years. Ms. Corsello said that the three main things of concern are: 1) Is information provided clear and useful? 2) Is the process timely? 3) Where can things be streamlined (Elimination of steps and bottlenecks) to cut down time and cost to pull permit? (This in turn may reduce fees). Ms. Corsello encouraged committee members to be straightforward and honest if contacted.

Item 6 Continuing Business

(a) General Plan Update-Birgitta Corsello

Several meetings are scheduled through first week of June, and recommendations will be made to the BOS for their consideration in July. The Airport Land Use Commission will review draft General Plan for consistency in June at their meeting.

(b) Prioritize Recommendations from Ag Futures Study – Birgitta Corsello

The Committee relooked at the "Concepts to Protect and Enhance Agriculture in Solano County April 2008", a summary of prioritizing the recommendations from the Ag Futures Study. After much discussion, additional changes were made, and the document will be revised for review at the June AAC meeting.

Mr. Allan took the opportunity to inform the committee that recruitment has started for the ombudsman position (FARM Coordinator) that was referred to in the above document. He stated that when this person comes on board, he would appreciate any input from the committee in the area of utilization of this position, especially in the marketing area.

(c) Major Land Use Decisions Pending Adoption of the New General Plan - Committee

Possible subdivisions cropping up between now and the time the new General Plan is in place has been an ongoing topic of discussion of the Committee over the past few meetings. There was further discussion of this topic, which then bled over into concerns with regard to the Delta area.

The Chair, Mr. Mangels brought the discussion back to the original topic, and expressed the opinion that based on Ms. Corsello's input, the reality is that based on property rights, existing zoning, and existing General Plan, as well as the new draft General Plan, some fragmentation of agricultural lands is inevitable. Ms. Corsello suggested that if the Committee wants to offer input when these types of actions are pending, it would be good if they were familiar with the General Plan, and in particular the agricultural piece of the General Plan before they do so.

Ms. Corsello stated that she would invite someone from the County Administrator's office to come and do a presentation on the Delta along with the discussion of the draft General Plan so that the committee

understands where the Board is and what they are doing. A member stated that then perhaps in the end the Committee could make a statement that it concerns the committee that there is continuing rapid transformation of farmland into rural residential and that the committee understands that there are property rights issues, but the Board is urged to take all steps legally available to mitigate damage to agriculture. It was noted that the Board has moved toward firm statements that agriculture is a valid part of society.

Mr. Lester stated that he will invite the California Representative of Farmland Trust, Ed Thompson, to make a presentation at the June meeting, as well as forwarding AFT information previously referred to as well as any other information on programs, and will put together some tangible suggestions for the next meeting. This information will be forwarded to Mr. Allan, along with any other pertinent information.

A concern was raised by a member as to the appropriateness of Mr. Thompson advising the committee and these concerns were discussed and it was resolved that this was appropriate.

(d) Report Farm/Agriculture Education Tour Planning Work Group Update – Work Group-ACTION ITEM

Mr. Lester will forward the tour route and itinerary to Mr. Allan, who will distribute it to the committee members. He outlined the tour and progress to date. Mr. Lester, on behalf of the work group, asked for volunteers to help with various aspects of the tour (set up, clean-up, direct parking, etc.). All needs were met by various committee members, and a debriefing of the tour will be scheduled for next month's agenda.

Item 7 Identify and Clarify Future Agenda Topics and Timing of Discussion

The Future Agenda Topics and Timing of Discussion are as follows:

- a. Compatible/Incompatible Land Uses – Fall/Winter
- b. Horse Facilities/Farming Operations Update - TBA
- c. Large Animal Catastrophe/Carcass Disposal Plan – Fall/Winter

Item 8 Public Comments/Announcements/Correspondence

This is the opportunity to address the committee on a matter not listed on the agenda, but within the subject jurisdiction of the Committee.

(a) Public Comments

Moira Burke made comments regarding the preservation of ag land and stated that there is a precedent for up-zoning in Dixon Ridge. In 1979 they changed from A10 to A40 (upwards rather than downwards). She commented on the issue of what is to be done about the encroachment on ag lands by stating that SID is not following through very well to make sure that there is SID water access to each of the parcels when the division takes place and this may be an issue that would slow down the division of parcels. Chair Mangels said these comments would be taken into consideration.

(b) Announcements

Mr. Medvitz brought to the Committee's attention a pending lawsuit, Center for Biological Diversity versus EPA, in Federal District Court #9, San Francisco, that the EPA did not do proper consultation on a certain group of pesticides. Mr. Allan stated that if/when this case moved forward, as agricultural commissioner, he would receive guidance from DPR and would then update the committee.

Mr. Allan addressed the committee regarding the expired terms and soon-to-expire terms of the Ag Advisory Committee and stated that he plans to expedite the filing of Board items for these positions. There is an advertisement and legal publication process, and all positions must be scheduled as Board agenda items.

(c) Correspondence

There were no correspondences.

Item 9 Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, July 9, 2008 at 3:00 p.m., first floor conference room, 501 Texas Street, Fairfield.

Item 10 Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.