

**SOLANO COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON
April 11, 2007**

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:

Bruce Brazelton, Barbara Comfort, Jeff Dittmer, Alan Freese, Donald Johnson, Craig Leathers, Susan Lippstreu, John Mangels, Albert Medvitz, and Mary Helen Seeger.

Others Present:

Jearl Howard	Agricultural Commissioner
Carole Paterson	Director, UCCE
Birgitta Corsello	Director, Resource Management
Kathy Gibson	County Administrator's Office
Steven Pierce	Aide to Supervisor Reagan
Sabine Goerke-Schrode	Aide to Supervisor Spering
Patricia Gatz	Citizens Advisory Committee Member
Peggy Nelson	Aide to Supervisor Vasquez
David Marianno	Solano County Farm Bureau
Tina Reikes	Bear Flag Farm
Kurt Richter	UCDAg Issues Center

Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m.

Item 2 Introductions of Members and Guests

Members and Guests in attendance introduced themselves.

Item 3 Changes and Approval of the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda offered.

Item 4 Review/Approval of the Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2007

It was noted that Don Pippo's name was misspelled and should be corrected from "Don Poppo" to "Don Pippo". It was then moved and seconded to approve the Minutes of the March 12, 2007 meeting. The motion was carried on a unanimous vote of the members present.

Item 5 New Business

<p>(a) Report on Board of Supervisors Meetings – Board Topics Related to the Subject Matter of the AAC – Birgitta Corsello</p>
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Mrs. Corsello reported that the Board of Supervisors has approved funding for four special General Plan study areas: Green Valley, Suisun Valley, Colinsville/Birds

Landing, and old town Cordelia. The Citizens Advisory Committee will form smaller groups to look at proposals from property owners regarding land use changes in those areas. The groups will start in May. CPAG will create a smaller group this summer. The Board of Supervisors has approved additional funds to study environmental documents.

Mrs. Corsello reported that the Board of Supervisors will be looking at other general plan projects on the 24th of April. This is a list of already-existing things that need to be addressed and corrected. If AAC members have anything in this category, the Board of Supervisors should be advised.

Mrs. Corsello reported that the Board of Supervisors approved moving forward on the pilot Green Business Program. It will begin in the 2007/08 fiscal year. The first year will be funded by Solano County.

(b) Request for Letter of Support for 2007/08 SAREP Grant Application – Carole Paterson

Mrs. Paterson informed the committee that the fourth meeting of the National Issues Forum took place on April 10, 2007 at the new Cordelia branch of the Solano County Library. There were twenty-one participants, including a Board of Supervisor member from Yolo County, and their aide. Mrs. Paterson stated that this indicated an interest from other counties in how Solano is looking at agriculture for the future. The issue of agriculture integrated into future growth is a complex issue, and the Citizens Advisory Committee is interested in being involved. The general feeling is that people in the community want agriculture to stay. The full context of the National Issues Forum can be found at: www.nifica.org.

Mrs. Paterson further stated that the series of workshops on the subject have concluded, and investigation of agriculture sustainability can begin. Mrs. Paterson asked the committee for support in asking for a 2nd round of SAREP monies to come into Solano to expand workshops to look at marketing options (budget a little over \$20,000). This process can begin in June if the grant request is approved.

Mrs. Paterson indicated that letters of support had been received from Solano County Board of Supervisors, the Solano County Agricultural Commissioner, and the Solano Farm Bureau. She encouraged the committee to show support by signing a letter as well. A motion was made and seconded to authorize the AAC Chair to sign the letter of support. The motion was carried on a unanimous vote of the members present.

(c) Review of County Fee Process and Resource Management and Agriculture Department 2007/08 Proposed Fees – Birgitta Corsello/Jearl Howard

Mr. Howard provided a packet of information to the committee and gave an overview on the process by which Solano County set the fees that are on the fee schedule. He directed the committee's attention to the comparison provided of Solano, Contra Costa, Napa, Sonoma, and Yolo Counties.

Mr. Howard pointed out that there were distinct differences between the counties in some areas. Some counties do not include indirect costs in their fees; Solano is required to include these costs. Many fees are restricted by law to a certain amount. When the question was raised as to what ordinance restricts these fees, Mr. Howard replied that

state statutes restrict some fees. There are other sections of law that authorize County Boards of Supervisors to set fees not to exceed the actual cost of the time it takes to do the service.

In 2005, state legislation was enacted that allowed counties recovery of full cost of performing weights and measures inspections. It was a significant increase for device registration fees, so the law mandated implementation in a three-year time period. This year marks the second of this three-year period, and next year will be the third. At that time the department will proceed with 100% implementation. Some counties have not implemented this legislation.

A comment was made that it was nice to see the Farmer's Market permit, and the allowance of more time to inspect properties for pests before the produce gets to the market.

A concern was raised that the proposed increase of \$79 is rather high. Mr. Howard explained that this is due to the fact that in the past, fees were based on the previous fiscal year's actual budget, rather than basing it on the coming year's proposed budget. In relation to the increase in fees, a committee member stated that the importance of agriculture is not understood by the Board of Supervisors. It was also stated that the rural community contributes more in taxes to the county than they use in services, and agriculture is an important economic engine. Therefore, fees for agriculture should be lower.

After much discussion, there was a question as to what the committee was trying to achieve by reviewing the fees. Mr. Howard said that the Farm Bureau brought up the issue that fees were not being reviewed before approval, and Mr. Howard and Mrs. Corsello thought that the AAC would be a good forum for doing this. It was made clear that Mr. Howard only makes recommendations, but the Board of Supervisors directs the Agricultural Commissioner to recover the fees. Mr. Howard commented that it was felt presenting the fee information would shed light on the fee process, and take away mystery about how the fees are calculated.

An idea was presented with regard to drafting a letter to the Board of Supervisors expressing concerns about the increase in fees. At this point Mrs. Corsello offered that the committee might revisit how business is done and what fees might be eliminated in order to reduce operating costs rather than approach the Board of Supervisors with complaints about fee increases. However, she also stated the Board of Supervisors needs to hear concerns about increased fees.

At this time Mrs. Corsello presented fee information for the Resource Management side, stating that the methodology was the same used by the Agricultural Commissioner. Resource Management fee increase information was more general: 4% increase on the planning side, 4.5% increase on the environmental side, 5% public works, and 8% for building inspections.

It was suggested that fee increases be put on the next agenda so that committee members can review the information provided by Mr. Howard, and further discussion can continue.

**(d) Initial Discussion on Looking at Compatible and Incompatible Land Uses in Agriculture
– Birgitta Corsello**

Mrs. Corsello addressed the committee seeking direction with regards to review of ordinances and the general plan; what is the best avenue to determine compatible/incompatible land use in agricultural areas? There are forthcoming projects where this issue will need to be addressed.

Mrs. Corsello inquired as to what process would work to have a good dialogue about this issue? For example, the Suisun Valley group wants agricultural tourism (wineries w/activities); how do we make this compatible? It was suggested that it may be worth the time to re-form a working group for land use to work closely with Resource Management and come back and address the committee as a whole. The committee asked if a list of these future projects could be provided, and Mrs. Corsello agreed to provide a list. Someone thought it would be helpful to get info from counties who have these situations, and how they were handled.

Mrs. Corsello stated that the draft general plan is slated for the December/January timeframe. The committee decided that when the list was received, and looked over, the decision of whether or not to form a work group would be made. At this juncture, it was pointed out that small farmers would like to have a voice in these processes as well.

(e) Light Brown Apple Moth – Jearl Howard

Mr. Howard informed the committee that a new pest was discovered in February and March in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. A retired UC Berkeley professor found a light brown apple moth (LBAM) in a light trap in his yard. It has since been confirmed that LBAM has been discovered in Marin, San Francisco, and Santa Clara Counties.

LBAM is native to Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. It is not native to North America. The discovery in Alameda County is the first find ever in North America. The LBAM is a multi-host; up to 250 different hosts. It is a leaf roller, which makes it difficult to control.

In Australia, LBAM was found in extensive numbers in vineyards, and has wiped out Chardonnay grape industry in some areas. It damages fruit cosmetically, but doesn't eat fruit except for grapes. It is a voracious defoliator.

Mr. Howard stated that the CDFA is deploying delimitation traps covering a 50-mile radius. So far 400 traps have been set; many of which have been checked at least once, with nothing found. Eventually a total of 1,000 traps will be set, including around three facilities that receive green waste. Solano County has been positive in responding, and the Agriculture Department is bringing on additional staff. It was asked if there were any other visual indications to identify LBAM. Mr. Howard stated that it is a common-looking light brown moth. CDFA will do preliminary confirmation and then send to Australia for confirmation. Mr. Howard provided a picture of the moth at the committee's request, and it was passed around. There is potential economic impact if the pest is found in Solano County.

Item 6 Continuing Business

(a) U C Davis Ag Futures Project Update – Kurt Richter

Mr. Richter addressed the things that are being done to make the Ag Futures Project work. These things included visiting with regulators in other counties, phone interviews with Agriculture Commissions, buying data and going through it as quickly as possible. Phase II includes examination of almonds, tree fruits, direct organics, olive oil, and several other crops.

Mr. Richter stated that it is important to show how the products in Solano County are connected to the plate, and accurate statistics on what is produced in Solano County is essential. Each attendee was provided with a draft, which includes a map that should be used to mark where each type of commodity is produced. What is grown where? Mr. Richter asked that each member go over the draft and make remarks, comments, etc. Input is essential, and the goal is to do another draft by the end of the month. What's grown where? It was suggested that it might be helpful to have a map to put on a website or at a future meeting. It was mentioned that nurseries did not appear to be included, and Mr. Richter said that he had not gotten to nurseries yet.

(b) AFT Suisun Valley Study Update – Jerry Howard

Mr. Howard stated that the report was submitted to Agriculture, and he will make a presentation to the Board of Supervisors in May.

(c) General Plan Update – Birgitta Corsello

Mrs. Corsello stated that this was already covered in the New Business portion of the meeting.

(d) Dixon Downs (Racetrack) Project Status – Birgitta Corsello

Mrs. Corsello reminded the AAC that the Project goes before the voters in Dixon on April 17th.

(g) Agricultural Pesticide/Hazardous Material Waste Disposal Day Update – Jearl Howard

Mr. Howard presented the following information, which was obtained from Angel Santiago, Environmental Compliance and Safety Officer with Vacaville Sanitary.

There is an available program for conditionally exempt small quantity generators. Vacaville Sanitary acts as the middle man to arrange a pick up by an outside environmental company.

Mr. Howard stated that a temporary EPA ID# can be obtained (should be no charge for this). The service is open to customers or those in the region serviced by Vacaville or Dixon Sanitary Service. The limit is 220 pounds or 27 gallons per month.

There is a long list of charges, but the average cost is \$7 – 10 per gallon; \$28 for flammable organic solids.

It was pointed out that if you get an ID number, then you have to do a report. It was suggested that those who go to the Farm Bureau meetings should check with the Farm Bureau regarding this issue, and come back next time with information. It was also pointed out that the last county-wide collection day was in the 1990s.

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

Mr. Howard solicited AAC member input on revisions to the list of future topics and timing of discussions. The following input was provided: 1) Schedule Horse Facilities/Farming Operations Update discussion for June, 2) drop the Agricultural Disaster Notification Network as the Agriculture Department now has a system in place, and 3) schedule a discussion of the Bio-Solids Ordinance for May/June. The revised Future Agenda Topics and Timing of Discussion is as follows:

- a. Items from Board of Supervisors on Subject Matter of the AAC – Ongoing
- b. Dixon Downs (Racetrack) Project Status – Ongoing
- c. Trails – Update on Regional Project Status – Ongoing
- d. Agricultural Pesticide/Hazardous Waste Disposal Day – Ongoing
- e. Antiquated Maps - Ongoing
- f. Horse Facilities/Farming Operations Update – June
- g. Large Animal Carcass Catastrophe/Carcass Disposal Plan – Fall/Winter
- h. Agricultural Center - TBA
- i. Bio-Solids Ordinance – May/June

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

There were no comments from the public.

(b) Announcements

Volunteer Appreciation Day will be recognized at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, April 24.

(c) Correspondence

There were no correspondences.

Item 9 Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, May 9, 2007 at 3:00 p.m., first floor conference room, 501 Texas Street, Fairfield.

Item 10 Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.