

**SOLANO COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON
June 14, 2006**

The meeting of the Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) was held at the Department of Agriculture, Downstairs Conference room, 501 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA.

Members Present:

Bruce Brazelton, Jeff Dittmer, Donald Johnson, Craig Leathers, Russell Lester, John Mangels, Betty Mason, Al Medvitz, and Mary Helen Seeger

Others Present:

Jearl Howard	Agricultural Commissioner
Brigitta Corsello	Director, Resource Management
John Currey	Dixon RCD
Sabine Goerke-Shrode	Assistant Board of Supervisor, District 3

Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

Item 2 Introductions of Members and Guests

Members and Guests in attendance introduced themselves.

Item 3 Changes and Approval of the Agenda

It was moved and seconded to accept the agenda without change. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the members present.

Item 4 Review/Approval of the Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2006

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of May 12, 2006 as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the members present.

Item 5 New Business

<p>(a) Report on Board of Supervisors Meeting – Topics Related to the Subject Matter of the AAC – Birgitta Corsello.</p>
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Ms. Corsello reported that the Board of Supervisors approved the first Solano County Mills Act Contract. She stated the Mills Act is similar to the Williamson Act in that property owners enter into a contract with the county to preserve historical sites. The contract was for the Abrams property on Hay road. Ms. Corsello reported that the property had been the home of a former member of the Board of Supervisors and a former County Assessor.

Ms. Corsello also reported on a recent appeal of a Planning Commission decision to approve a Certificate of Compliance based on a 1909 map. It is expected that the appeal will be heard by the Board in July or August. She stated that this decision is significant because there were not many standards prior to 1929. She also reported that 100 or more maps created prior to 1929 are known to exist. These maps involve land mostly in the unincorporated area of the county (agricultural land). Ms. Corsello stated that there are several issues involved with these antique maps including the fact that they could provide a means to avoid current general plan, zoning, and Orderly Growth Initiative standards and requirements. She stated that the Board of Supervisors must determine:

1. Were the requirements of 1909 adequate for today?
2. Does the map contain all pertinent modern requirements?

Ms. Corsello stated that the map issues are a real challenge for the Board. She stated that Sonoma County had a similar situation and their case went to the State Supreme Court. Ultimately, the court found partially in favor of the county and partially in favor of the land owner in the Sonoma case. The Solano County map involves 140 acres of agricultural land in the middle of Suisun Valley.

Ms. Corsello reported briefly on Public Works Contracts for summer road projects. She stated that the projects are not expected to interfere with agricultural operations or special events in the affected areas.

She also reported that the Board would be considering a process for handling updates to the General Plan during the General Plan Revision Process at their meeting on June 27th. She stated that Resource Management is recommending that current applications proceed independently and that the Planning Department continue to accept applications through 2007. They are further recommending suspending applications after 2007 until the General Plan revision is completed.

Ms. Corsello was asked about the status of the revised Williamson Act Rules and Standards. She responded that it is not currently on the Planning Commission's schedule.

(b) Presentation on Status of Agricultural Waiver for Irrigated Lands – John Currey

Mr. Currey began by clarifying that only the Sacramento Valley portion of Solano County (approximately 120,000 acres of irrigated agricultural land) is subject to the Conditional Waiver for Irrigated Lands.

He stated that the Dixon and Solano RCD'S have been assisting local land owners on this issue since October 2002 and jointly administering local efforts since September 2003 under the title of Dixon/Solano RCD Water Quality Coalition. He said they also partnered with the larger Sacramento Valley Water Coalition in order to have a more powerful voice with the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Mr. Currey reported that since enrollments began in 2003, approximately 105,000 of the estimated 120,000 acres of irrigated land have been enrolled with the coalition. The fee for enrolling in the coalition is \$2.00 per acre. Enrollment from October 2003 represents

635 individual owners and operators. He informed the committee that in January 2006 renewal notices were sent to all current enrollees along with a bill for a \$2.00 per irrigated acre fee. He reported that to date 499 individuals (85% of the prior enrollment) have renewed. A second notice was sent out which is resulting in additional renewals. Mr. Currey reported that in July, letters will be mailed to additional landowners believed to have irrigated lands, who have not yet enrolled in the coalition.

Mr. Currey stated that the Regional Water Quality Control Board will be considering a five year renewal of the conditional waiver at its meeting on June 22 in Sacramento. He stated that all of the groups are supporting the renewal because the alternatives are far worse for agriculture. He stated that a five year renewal would be good as they will be able to focus on implementation rather than constantly negotiating with the Regional Board on proposed waiver requirements.

Mr. Currey then moved to a discussion of the coalition's water monitoring activities. He stated that there are two monitoring sites in Solano County; one on the Z-drain and one on Ulatis Creek at Brown Road. Mr. Currey reported that monitoring began in Solano County in July 2004 and to date ten samples have been taken at each site. He reported that on February 28, 2006, the pesticides diazinon and chlorpyrophos were detected at the Ulatis Creek monitoring site. Because of these detections, outreach letters will be sent to all users of these products in this time frame emphasizing the need to use "Best Management Practices" to negate runoff. He also stated that the Agricultural Commissioners Office will do additional outreach at their pesticide workshops this fall and winter.

Mr. Currey stated that the Regional Board sent letters to 105 landowners in Solano County in April who they believed to be irrigators. Ten recipients of the letter were already members of the coalition, while nine others have enrolled after receiving the letters. He said that the Regional Board will continue to follow-up until they are satisfied all are in compliance.

Mr. Currey was questioned about how the money collected by the coalition is used. He responded that they are required to take monitoring samples at each site eight times a year. He reported that the annual monitoring costs are \$60,000. Membership in the Sacramento Valley Water Coalition is \$20,000 per year. Fees to the State Water Board are \$.15 per acre (\$15,750). The remaining funds are spent on local administration. He said he would provide a powerpoint presentation from February 2006 with a more detailed description of the coalition's costs (see attached slides 23 & 24).

Another question was raised regarding the possibility that contamination could be from urban rather than agricultural runoff. Mr. Currey responded that the Z-Drain is exclusively agricultural water. There is a possibility that the Ulatis Creek monitoring site could be impacted by urban runoff. He stated that if it becomes an issue they could move the monitoring site with the approval of the regional board.

Mr. Howard distributed copies of the 2005 Crop and Livestock Report to the members of the AAC. He reported that the total value of production was \$238,689,600, a new all-time record for Solano County. He also summarized the highlights of the report. The report can be found on the department's website: www.solanocounty.com/ag.

Item 6 Continuing Business

(a) Ag Sustainability Study Update/Discussion – Craig Leathers/Brigitta Corsello

Mr. Leathers and Ms. Corsello reported on the Project Oversight Committee held earlier in the day. They reported that only 29 surveys have been received by the U.C. team to date. Mr. Leathers noted that growers have been very busy trying to catch-up with planting due to the late spring. It was noted that a recent Focus Group meeting with forage crop producers was cancelled due to a lack of attendance. This meeting will be rescheduled for a later date.

(b) General Plan Update – Brigitta Corsello

Ms. Corsello reported that 150,000 General Plan Newsletters with postcards were sent to county residents who indicated an interest in being kept informed about the process. She also stated that her department had displays at the Dixon May Fair and the recent Delta Commission Meeting in Stockton. She stated that the consultant held a visioning session on Saturday, June 10th that was attended by about 25 people.

Ms. Corsello reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee meets monthly on the third Monday from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. She stated the plan is to continue meeting on specific subjects through December. Last month the committee focused on the Ag Study and this month they will focus on Travis Air Force Base.

Ms. Corsello reported that two agriculture representatives recently resigned from the committee. She said she was not aware if these vacancies would be filled or not. That is a decision the Board of Supervisors will have to make. She emphasized the importance for strong agricultural representation as 90% of the General Plan deals with agricultural land in the unincorporated area of the county.

(c) Wine Services CDBG Grant Proposal Update – Brigitta Corsello

There was nothing new to report on this topic.

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

Ms. Corsello stated that the Dixon City Council met last night (June 13, 2006). The citizens for Quality Growth were very vocal. They requested that the project be placed on the ballot for a vote. She reported that the EIR is expected to be in circulation in July or August. The review process will probably carry into September or October. It was noted that there is considerable opposition to the project.

On a related note, Ms. Corsello reported that LAFCO will be considering annexation of the Milk Farm property into the City of Dixon in July.

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

- a. Items from Board of Supervisors on Subject Matters of the AAC - Ongoing
- b. Dixon Downs (Racetrack) Project Status - Ongoing
- c. Trails – Update on Regional Project Efforts
- d. Resource Conservation Districts, LAFCO Study Update – Sept/Oct
- e. Horse Facilities/Farming Operations Update
- f. Agricultural Pesticide Hazardous Material Waste Disposal Day - November
- g. Large Animal catastrophe/Carcass Disposal Plan – Fall/Winter
 - 1. Overview of county plans
 - 2. CDFA – Animal Health Branch
- h. Agricultural Disaster Notification Network
- i. Agricultural Center
- j. Antiquated Maps - July

Item 8 Public Comments/Announcements/Correspondence

(a) Public Comments

There were no public comments.

(b) Announcements

There were no announcements.

(c) Correspondence

Mr. Howard reviewed a memorandum he had written to convey the concerns of the AAC to the Board of Supervisors regarding S.B. 1556, The Great California Delta Trail System.

Item 9 Next Meeting Date

(a) Schedule Summer Meeting Break and Return Date

By consensus, it was decided to meet on July 12, 2006, have no meeting in August, and resume the regular monthly meeting schedule on September 13, 2006.

Item 10 Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.