

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

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To: Board of Supervisors
From: Birgitta Corsello, County Administrator
Date: January 9, 2012
Subject: Biweekly Update of Significant Issues

1. County Administrator's Update on Contracts

The County Administrator signed the following contracts of significance since the last Significant Issues update:

- Department of Information Technology, a net contract amendment of \$34,630 with IntelliTime (effective December 30, 2011 to December 31, 2012) to complete the installation and configuration of the automated time entry system, \$403,270. The amendment was within the delegated authority that the Board granted the County Administrator.

2. Probation Managers Win State Awards

Solano County managers won two of the four affiliate awards presented at the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) Annual Awards Luncheon on December 8, 2011. Richard Watson received the Employee of the Year Award representing the California Association of Probation Institutions Administrators (CAPIA). He serves as the state president of CAPIA. Donna Robinson received the Employee of the Year Award representing the California Association of Probation Services Administrators (CAPSA). She serves as the State Treasurer for CAPSA.

- Contact: Donna Robinson, Interim Chief Probation Officer, 784-7614

3. Solano County Selected to Expand Nurse-Family Partnership

Solano County Health & Social Services has been awarded a \$1,373,694 two-year grant from the California Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division, Home Visiting Program to expand the County's Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP). This evidence-based program is currently funded to serve 100 first-time low-income families, and this new federal funding will increase the number of families served.

The NFP Program demonstrates positive outcomes, such as improving maternal and child health and development, and reducing child abuse, neglect, injuries, and juvenile delinquency. The 2011 Solano NFP Evaluation Report highlights that NFP has made significant strides this year by becoming an established and respected program in meeting the complex needs of its participants. Solano County's NFP had better than expected fidelity and outcome measures, when compared to California and national NFP data, including: full-term births; healthy birth

weight; initiation of breastfeeding; up-to-date immunizations; and higher rates of completion of a High School or Graduation Education Diploma. For a copy of the Executive Summary or complete NFP Evaluation Report, contact: Anita Dockery at adockery@solanocounty.com.

- Contact: Nancy Calvo, H&SS Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health Director, 784-8610

4. New Employment Initiative for Veterans – Gold Card

The Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA) has announced a new initiative to provide unemployed post 9/11 era veterans with the intensive and follow-up services that they need to succeed in today's job market.

In cooperation with the California Employment Development Department Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), the Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) and One-Stop Career Centers, the ETA created the "Gold Card" Certificate. An eligible veteran can present the Gold Card at any local One-Stop Career Center to receive enhanced services, which includes case management, skills assessment and interest surveys, career guidance, and job search assistance. Veterans can print out a Gold Card certificate by going to the Department of Labor's website at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/goldcard.html>.

The WIB of Solano County and the local regional Employment Development Department offices are prepared to receive the post 9/11 veterans and to provide these "Gold Card" services. Interested veterans should bring their Gold Card to one of the Solano Employment Connection One-Stop Career Centers at 320 Campus Lane in Fairfield or 1440 Marin Street in Vallejo.

- Contact: Robert Bloom, Workforce Investment Board, 863-3501

5. Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Regional Career Fair

The 13th Biannual WIB Regional Career Fair on October 6, 2011 was open to job seekers and employers at no-cost. The event was attended by approximately 1,000 job seekers. Candidates were able to interact with 136 employer representatives, representing 66 employers who had current job openings to fill.

The event was a success with employers reporting that they were able to meet many qualified job seekers. WIB employees and managers staffed the event in cooperation with the staff and management of the University of Phoenix. Major sponsors included the University of Phoenix, Coast Radio Inc. (95.3 KUIC), Daily Republic, Vacaville Reporter / Times Herald, Solano Garbage / Republic Services and Westfield Solano Mall. The Spring WIB Regional Career Fair will be held on Thursday, April 5, 2012, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University of Phoenix in Fairfield.

- Contact: Robert Bloom, Workforce Investment Board, 863-3501

6. Follow-up Review of H&SS Computer Processes

The Internal Audit Division of the Auditor-Controller's Office conducted a follow-up review of its findings identified in the Health & Social Services (H&SS) Inventory of New Computer Equipment and Computer Purchase and Distribution Processes presented to the Board of Supervisors on December 14, 2010. The review evaluated management's progress in resolving the five findings identified in the previous report, which include:

1. Master listing of computer equipment was not accurate.

2. Roles and responsibilities for installation of computer equipment were not clearly defined.
3. The purchase and distribution of computer equipment was inefficient.
4. An inefficient annual physical inventory of computer equipment created a computer equipment installation backlog.
5. Warranties were expiring prior to installation of computers.

Based on the follow-up review, the division determined findings 4 and 5 are resolved and findings 1, 2 and 3 were not fully unresolved at the time of the review. The three remaining findings represent significant areas that require corrective action to ensure accountability, accuracy, and timeliness of computer equipment installations in H&SS.

H&SS and the Department of Information Technology, with the assistance of the Auditor-Controller, are continuing to work together to correct the unresolved findings. Corrective actions are expected to be completed by June 30, 2012.

- Contact: Ian Goldberg, Deputy Auditor Controller Internal Audit Services, Auditor-Controller, 784-3057

7. Update on Weather-Related Disaster Declarations

2011 Ice and Rain: The County's recent request for a disaster declaration for last spring's ice and rain is now completely formalized. Growers may soon be asking County staff for information on how to obtain benefits pursuant to the declaration. They should be referred to the Dixon USDA Farm Service Agency Branch at (707) 678-1931, Ext. 111. Eligible growers may qualify for low-interest loans.

Effects of 2011/12 Dry Winter Conditions: Solano County is coming off of one of the driest Decembers on record. Ag Commissioners throughout the region are anticipating some form of weather-related disaster declaration depending on quantifiable losses reported by growers. Local growers are irrigating dormant trees and vines, and losses of germinated winter grains and seedling alfalfa have already occurred. A reduction in forage on grazing range is also a certainty. Some growers are considering re-seeding and hoping for rain; some are planning on taking losses rather than a possible "good-money-after-bad" gamble. Range reduction will result in growers incurring increased costs associated with supplemental feeding or the transportation of livestock to fresh pastures. There is rampant speculation about the costs of alfalfa and baled green grass forage, such as Orchard Grass and Timothy Hay, being affected by both increasing demand and lower local supply.

- Contact: Jim Allan, Ag Commissioner/Sealer of Weights & Measures, 784-1480

8. County Using New Statewide Software System to Issue Pesticide Permits

This year begins the use of a new software product for issuing pesticide permits. Previously, a variety of applications were used by counties that resulted in inconsistency across jurisdictions in issuance, maintenance, reporting and funding. Restricted use pesticide permits are issued at no charge to growers and provide an environmental review that is CEQA equivalent. The permitting system also provides the mechanism for pesticide use reporting.

The new system – a joint venture by the County Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) – is a web-based

program that will harmonize permit issuance and pesticide use-reporting throughout the state. Solano was one of the first counties to roll out the new product and experienced some initial hiccups with data migration and bug fixes. The software vendor has been diligent in address the identified issues.

In other pesticide regulatory issues, the DPR issued a press release in late December – <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/pressrls/2011/111228.htm> – discussing how pesticide use was up 9.5% in 2010 after a four-year decline. The counties showing the biggest increases were in the Central Valley, with increased water allocations and good commodity pricing generating the demand for crop protection materials.

Solano County's total pesticide use was up approximately 16%. Commodity prices and aberrant weather drove local increases, with sulfur and fungicide applications being made in response to spring rains. Elemental Sulfur, a naturally occurring mineral product that is effective against powdery mildew and mites, remains Solano's most heavily utilized product. Unlike the state as a whole, Solano did not see big increases in the use of highly toxic fumigant materials.

- Contact: Jim Allan, Ag Commissioner/Sealer of Weights & Measures, 784-1480

9. Rooster Ordinance Update: No Applications for Exemptions in Works

Sheriff's Deputies and Animal Control Officers have been delivering bilingual notifications of the County's new Rooster Ordinance to persons observed in possession of roosters. Approximately a dozen application packets for exemption from the provisions of the ordinance have been picked up at the Agricultural Commissioner's Office. A similar number of verbal inquiries have also been made. To date, no application for exemption has been accepted for consideration.

In a related note, several groups have proposed an interesting gambit to circumvent the zoning ordinance by using a sub-tenancy strategy; i.e. "This lot of birds belong to subtenant A, and this lot to subtenant B." This approach is not consistent with the ordinance, which states that if there are over 100 birds on a parcel, a permit from Resource Management is required.

- Contact: Jim Allan, Ag Commissioner/Sealer of Weights & Measures, 784-1480

10. Update on Pest Control Efforts on EGVM, LBAM and Oriental Fruit Fly

The following is an update on pest control efforts affecting Solano County with emergency projects associated with them:

European Grapevine Moth (EGVM): Solano County had no finds for this pest in 2011. Statewide detections dropped from over 100,000 in 2010 to less than 200 in 2011. The Technical Working Group, serving in an advisory capacity to USDA Incident Command, has proposed a reduction in quarantine boundaries and a de-regulation strategy for Solano Growers in 2012. If implemented as expected, a majority of Solano's grapes could be released from quarantine restrictions by next year's harvest. Unfortunately, growers in the north end of Suisun Valley will continue to be impacted by finds in Napa County's Gordon Valley.

Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM): Solano County is now broadly infested with Light Brown Apple Moth; the only large area where the moth has not been found is near Winters. Growers have not reported any losses of crops or markets from this pest, but have incurred costs of compliance in assuring that shipments are free from and safeguarded from LBAM. The moth has continued its push beyond Solano and Yolo, into Sacramento and San Joaquin counties.

While demobilization from eradication is being implemented, strategies for producers of Central Valley crops, such as citrus, are being developed.

Oriental Fruit Fly: Multiple detections of this pest in the Stockton area resulted in a large and costly, late season quarantine being implemented. Male annihilation, an eradication technique that has been used successfully many times before on this pest, has been initiated. This method involves the combined use of a pheromone attractant with a mild insecticide being applied to surfaces, such as telephone poles near fruit-fly finds. Solano County growers may be impacted this spring by having to safeguard host commodities transiting the infested area by shipping in closed, sealed conveyances. The Agricultural Commissioner and staff have been carefully monitoring this situation to mitigate interruptions in commerce.

- Contact: Jim Allan, Ag Commissioner/Sealer of Weights & Measures, 784-1480

11. Update on Statewide User Fees for Device Registration and Plant Product Exports

Trailer bill attachments in this year's state budget legislation provided for the Secretary of Agriculture to promulgate regulations to collect user fees on county Weights and Measures device registrations and Phytosanitary (plant product export) certifications issued by county departments of agriculture. Rule-making for both regulation sets has begun. The first round of comments received from stakeholders resulted in re-drafting of the proposed language in both regulation packages. The purpose of the fees is to compensate state agency support for county activities, such as providing traceable standards for Weights and Measures and insect and plant pathogen ID labs for agricultural exports.

The Weights and Measures surcharges will not be implemented for current year billings in Solano County, as those invoices have already been mailed and the regulations are not yet final. New device registrants and all of next year's applications will have the surcharge applied to them. Early stakeholder comments objected to the state using surcharge money for retail package inspections when the fee was only being applied to devices. The proposed fees have been lowered in response to this argument and another, perhaps legislatively initiated mechanism may be found for state support of quantity control inspections on prepackaged goods. There is a provision in the proposed regulation for the county to retain 15% of the fee for administrative costs associated with collecting the fee and remitting the charge to the state. A letter explaining the proposed fees was sent to all device registrants along with this year's billing to inform them of the likelihood of increased costs for next year. The website for the proposed regulations may be found at: <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/dms/regulations.html>.

The Phytosanitary fee would be collected through the USDA Phytosanitary Certification and Tracking program (PCIT), a web-based program for issuance, tracking and billing for shipment inspection and certification. Solano County already uses this system. Early stakeholder comments questioned the methodology used in arriving at the fee levels. The proposed fees were lowered, and the comment periods extended to respond to this issue. Local stakeholders have commented that the state fee will sometimes exceed that charged by the county, when the county biologists actually research inspect and certify the shipments. The rulemaking proposal may be viewed at http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/countygag/postings/files/SKMBT_C360111214.pdf.

- Contact: Jim Allan, Ag Commissioner/Sealer of Weights & Measures, 784-1480