**SOLANO COUNTY**
**AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)**
**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON**
**December 14, 2011**

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, Moira Burke, Barbara Comfort, Jeff Dittmer,Craig leathers, Russ Lester, Sue Lipstreu, Al Mevitz, James Wallace, Mary Helen Seeger

**Others Present**:

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| Simone Hardy | Asst. Ag Commissioner |
| Morgan Doran | Director, UC Cooperative Extension Solano County |
| Mike Yankovitch | Resource Management |
| Bob Schulze | Guest |
| Fred Zaragoza | BOS Dist 5 |
| Sasine Gocrke-Shrode | BOS Dist 3 |
| Wendy Rash | NRCS |
| Matt Tuggle | Resource Management |
| Josh Franco | Rep. Garamendi's Office |
| Peggy Nelson | BOS Dist 4 |

**Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Russ Lester at 3:10 PM.

**Item 2 Introductions of Members and Guests**

The Members and Guests in attendance introduced themselves.

**Item 3 Changes and Approval of the Agenda**

Agenda was approved unanimously.

**Item 4 Review/Approval of the Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2011**

The minutes for November 9th, 2011 were approved with one change to correct a spelling error.

**Item 5 New Business**

**(a)** Report on Board of Supervisors Meetings-Board Topics Related to Subject Matter of the AAC

The Committee was updated on the wind turbine approved for Superior Farms. The matter had been appealed to the Board of Supervisors due to view shed concerns. The wind tower was reduced in size and a landscaping element added to the original plans. .

**(b)** Matt Wallace Farm to School Program

Matt was unable to attend, but Jim Wallace announced that a meeting on the Farm to School program will be held at 7:30 PM on January 23rd.

**(c)** Jim Allan/Simone Hardy Disaster Declaration

Disaster declaration for Solano County was approved allowing for low interest loans to growers suffering damage from the late winter storms and unseasonable weather during the 2011 growing season. Russ asked about the scope of coverage and Wendy offered to contact Lynda Janne of the Farm Service Agency to speak at the next meeting.

**(d)** Bicycle Issues

Matt Tuggle was present and offered to put together a meeting of interested parties, including CHP, Solano Transportation Authority (STA) Bicycle Committee Members, AAC representatives, Resource Management and Bicycle Club representatives. Discussion was lengthy and focused on the need for Action Items rather than continued discussion of the issue. Barbara Comfort noted that she had attended the previous meetings on this issue several years ago and nothing had changed. Members spoke to personal experiences and to the overall concern of safety on rural roads. Bike lanes, signs, education and enforcement were all discussion items along with event permitting and impromptu events without permits. Several of those present used the routes personally for recreational cycling and also expressed concern. It was agreed that Russ Lester would attend the next STA meeting of the Bicycle Committee and that Matt would begin the dialog with those involved.

**(e)** Calendar Meetings for 2012

January 11, 2012, February 8th, 2012, March 7th, 2012, April 11th, 2012, May 9th, 2012, June 13th, 2012, August 8th 2012, October 10th, 2012, November 14th, 2012, December 12th, 2012.

**(f)** Nominate Officers for 2012

Russ Lester was nominated for Chair by Jim Wallace and Seconded by Moira Burke, voted and approved by all members in attendance.
Moira Burke was nominated as Vice-Chair by Mary Helen Seeger and Seconded by Russ Lester, voted and approved by all members in attendance.
A request to have a member of the Committee serve as Secretary was brought forward by Simone Hardy on behalf of the Department of Agriculture. There was discussion over the need for accuracy in the recording of the proceedings and how this could be ensured. Mary Helen Seeger volunteered to try recording notes at the next meeting using her computer, and a tape recording of the proceedings would be made as a back-up until minutes are approved. The Department will continue to post the Agenda.

**(g)** First discussion of proposed bylaws changes

I. Quorum requirements

After discussion it was decided that the language "Greater than 50% of the currently filled positions" would be added to the bylaws. This language change was predicated on the fact that not all positions are filled and that the current criteria hinders the committees effectiveness if a member is absent.

II. Consider dropping July meetings

As the July meetings for the last three out of four years did not have a quorum the committee was asked if this meeting was necessary. It was felt that the current 2 month break was already too long and members voted to forgo the July meeting and instead institute an August meeting breaking up the summer break period.

**Item 6 Continuing Business**

**(a)** General Plan Update/Agricultural Regions Study

Mike Yankovitch reported that the Dixon Ridge area planning is beginning. A meeting was held to discuss the industrial area in November. A second meeting will be held in late January or early February. Superior Farms is moving ahead with an expansion into beef processing.

**(b)** EGVM/LBAM Update-Jim Allan

Jim was in attendance at the EGVM Technical Working Group and will cover the results at the next meeting

**(c)** Future Budget Planning-Discussion

The operations of the Agricultural Commissioner and UCCE may be moved to other county-owned space.

**(d)** Delta Water Issues-Discussion

The Bay Delta Conservation Plan is moving ahead, there is both a project planning document and EIR available for comment. It was noted that the comment period appears to be very short. 150 million has been committed to the EIR process. Members who are following the water issues stated that "The BDCP is really the project plan for the export of water to Southern California". Now moving to center of the current effort is the mitigation for the long-term take of endangered species that is associated with the removal of fresh water from the Delta ecosystem. Concerns brought forward included salt water intrusion to farm wells used for irrigation and economic losses to area Counties when viable farmland is converted for EIR mitigation purposes.

**(e)**..Williamson Act

Expected to be revisited during the Budget process due to lack of revenues for the program

**(f)** Solano County Fair Plan

Discussion that this issue should be removed from standing agenda

**(g)** Local Food Shed Working Group

Economic Yolo Solano summit was held at UC Davis. Overall, found to be a beneficial and a step in the right direction. Those who attended felt that the recognition of this area as an agricultural region with the current and future potential to be a supplier of fresh food to the greater bay area and Sacramento was very valuable. Concern was expressed, that there was too much focus on bringing industry to the County for processing which was not necessarily related to area farm needs. Areas that the attendees thought may be more relevant include a Food Hub, Cold Storage, Commercial Kitchens, Crush Facilities for Wine or Olive Oil. The SACOG and ABAG local food was discussed along with the need for sourced aggregation and distribution. Value added facilities such as Campbell's that utilizes local produce were cited as good examples of area appropriate processing facilities. Moira Burke also discussed the development of beef processing for the area and the need to continue to support and interest of young farmers entering the business. She attended the kick off meeting for the new program at the Center for Land Based Learning which is geared to promoting and encouraging young farmers. The program includes how to get a business started, farming techniques and opportunities for hands on learning.

**(h)** Renewable Energy Working Group

The group will be working on Wind and Solar Installations on farm land.

**(i)** Pesticide Update

Simone updated the group on the upcoming Spray Safe Program and Departmental Training Sessions for Pesticide Handlers.

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

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

New: Report on Disaster Declaration
Deputy Currey on Rural Theft Issues
Bicycle Issue
Matt Wallace
Goal Setting/Strategic Planning

a. Delta Water Issues-Ongoing
b. EVGM Update- Jim Allan
c. Williamson Act Update- Ongoing
d. Bicycle Committee- Barbara C., Moira B., Russ L.
e. Local Food Shed working group Moira will calendar a meeting.
Jim W., Moira B., Russ L.
f. Renewable Energy working group – Solar Issues
Russ L – Ch., Mary Helen S.
g. Pesticide Update-Ag Dept-Ongoing
h. Strategic Plan Development Dixon Ridge-Ongoing

**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 - none

**(b)** Announcements

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**Item 9 Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, January 11, 2012 at 3:00 p.m., first floor conference room, 501 Texas Street, Fairfield.

**Item 10 Adjourn Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 5 PM.