SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC) MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON April 9, 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:

Bruce Brazelton, Barbara Comfort, Jeff Dittmer, Don Johnson, Craig Leathers, Russ Lester, Sue Lippstreu, Betty Mason, Mary Helen Seeger

Others Present:

Carole Paterson UC Cooperative Extension

Kathy Barnes-Jones CAO Chris Rogers CAO

Mike Yankovich Resource Management

Sabine Goerke-Shrode Aide to Supervisor Spering-District 3

Moira Burke

Fred Zaragoza Aide to Supervisor Reagan-District 5

Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting began at 3:02. 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

There were no changes to the agenda offered.

Item 4 Review/Approval of the Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2008

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of March 12, 2008 as presented. The motion carried on a unanimous vote of the members present.

Item 5 New Business

(a) Report on Board of Supervisors Meetings – Board Topics Related to the Subject Matter of the AAC – Michael Yankovich

The Board is dealing with several legislative issues; however, Mr. Yankovich reported that there have not been any significant changes since the last Ag Advisory Committee meeting. The Board of Supervisors as a whole is very interested in what may be happening in the Delta, and how it will affect agricultural lands. The Board of Supervisors is following this very closely. There will be periodic updates as they come available.

(b) Legislative Updates-Kathy Barnes-Jones/Christine Rogers (County Administrator's Office)

Kathy Barnes-Jones distributed an updated version of the Solano County Guiding Principles for Use in Delta and Statewide Water Policy Development as approved by the Board of Supervisors on April 1, 2008. As

she went over the document with the committee she stated that there will be further development and changes. She advised the committee to watch for this topic on upcoming Board agendas. She also said that at the April 22 Board of Supervisors meeting there will be presentations from other groups interested in water policy. She encouraged the committee to review this document at their convenience.

Ms. Rogers stated that the most current update on legislative items was March 11, which the Committee already has. She said that there has not been much progress on the Farm Bill, and it appears that at this time they are not going to come to an agreement. If an agreement is reach, it most likely will be a one or two-year extension. The present extension expires on April 18.

Ms. Jones passed out a copy of the specifications of the new FARM Coordinator position, which goes before the Civil Service Commission tonight, April 9. This position came out of the Ag Futures Study and will be in the Agriculture Department.

Ms. Jones turned the floor over to Ms. Rogers for legislative updates. A question was asked with regard to a set acre in order to have horses as agriculture in relation to equine use compatibility under the Williamson Act. Ms. Rogers said that she is not familiar with this issue, but would take any questions back to her office. It was felt that there should be guidelines as to the number of acres when owning horses; this statement was specifically geared towards horses not being used for agriculture purposes.

Mr. Lester said that the State Board of Agriculture has an adoption pending that would include equine facilities as a part of agriculture. His understanding of the intent of the proposers and getting it passed through the State Board is that the next step would be to get it approved for Williamson Act consideration. This may be possible if all other criteria are met along with the equine use. He said that this is something being moved through the process.

Mr. Johnson asked if the Delta document referenced the Suisun Marsh. Ms. Barnes-Jones referred the Committee's attention the paragraph right above #4 in the document. She stated that Mr. Chappell would be addressing this information at the April 22 Board of Supervisors meeting, and encouraged the Committee to attend or tune in to that meeting.

Moira Burke, a visitor, offered comment on the horse issue. She stated that she formerly belonged to the California Thoroughbred Breeder Association which many years ago worked to have horse-breeding operations recognized as agriculture in California. She wanted to point out the difference between commercial horse-breeding and recreational horse facilities.

Ms. Rogers stated that the legislative priority list that the Committee has before them is the Board priorities that were adopted in December.

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

This item had been scheduled for this month in order for the committee to explore avenues to guard against any minor/major land use decisions between now and the adoption of the new General Plan, and then forward possible recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on the subject. However, Ms. Corsello, who was slated to provide information and facilitate this discussion, was not able to attend the meeting.

Mr. Yankovich stated that to his knowledge there were no major subdivisions being planned between now and the adoption of the General Plan other than those already included in the General Plan. It was his understanding that each of the 10 regions will have its own set of policies and/or standards. Mr. Lester said that the Committee's concern was the interim period before these policies and standards are in place; would there be subdividing at will? Mr. Yankovich said that if it appeared that this was happening before the finalization of the General Plan, the Board would have to make a decision as to whether or not they would

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put ordinances in place to prevent such actions. The Committee could provide input/recommendations to the Board in these situations.

It was requested that this item be placed on next month's agenda, and that Mr. Yankovich please relay this information to Ms. Corsello. Mr. Yankovich, for clarification purposes, repeated back that the information the Committee wanted was to be notified of any land subdivisions effecting agriculture land between now and finalization of the General Plan. Mr. Lester said this was a piece of it, but the bigger picture would be for the Committee to come forward with a letter or recommendation as to how the Board might proceed in the interim between now and when the General Plan is adopted.

Item 6 Continuing Business

(a) General Plan Update-Michael Yankovich

Mr. Yankovich stated that tonight, April 9, is the first of a series of open houses to be held throughout the county to get the General Plan update information out to the public for review. Tonight's open house is in Rio Vista. There will be five open houses total. The times are from 7-9 pm. On Monday, April 14, an open house will be held in Fairfield-Suisun at the Government Center, Wednesday, April 16 in Dixon, Monday, April 21 in Vacaville, and April 28 in Vallejo. There will stations set up with different information, one of which will be a PowerPoint presentation. He also stated that newsletters went out with general information, as well as the dates for the open houses and also a schedule of future public hearings before the Planning Commission in May. The environmental impact report is close to finished (next week), and this info will be sent out. The website with this information is solanocountygeneralplan.net.

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

Ms. Corsello was not present. Mary Helen presented and explained a hand-drawn chart she created which represented an overview of what the Committee discussed at the March meeting. It was requested that a digital version be created and e-mailed to Committee members before the next meeting.

(c) Report Farm/Agriculture Education Tour Planning Work Group Update – Work Group

The Work Group requested help from the committee members in putting the tour together. Mr. Lester gave a synopsis of what the tour will entail, including a presentation at Superior Farms and Campbell's by a representative of each of those companies. The date for the tour will be Friday, May 30, and an e-mail blast has been sent out. The Committee asked Mr. Yankovich to convey to Ms. Corsello that the Committee would like a Board agenda item requesting \$6,000 in funding for the tour. A motion was made to request \$6,000 for the Ag Tour

A motion was made to ask the board of Supervisors for \$6,000 funds for the tour. It was seconded and passed on unanimous vote. Mr. Yankovich stated that this was duly noted and he would speak to Ms. Corsello about a board item.

The next workgroup meeting is next Monday, April 14, at 3:00 at Campbell's, 8380 Pedrick Road, Dixon. The meeting should last about an hour. Any and all help is welcome and needed. Ms. Paterson said that at the next meeting there should be discussion on what the take-home message will be for the tour, and also the written pieces for each of the stops that will be made. The goal is for a consistent message to be conveyed throughout the entire tour.

<u>Item 7 Identify and Clarify Future Agenda Topics and Timing of Discussion</u>

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

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- 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

Earlier in the meeting a statement was read by Moira Burke with regard to the Ag Futures recommendations asking that Item 3 be given priority. She distributed this statement to the Committee.

(b) Announcements

The new Agricultural Commissioner and will start on Monday, April 14.

(c) Correspondence

There were no correspondences.

Item 9 Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, May 14, 2008 at 3:00 p.m., first floor conference room, 501 Texas Street, Fairfield.

Item 10 Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

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