

DRAFT ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 6, 2018

Members and Alternates Present: Lisen Bonnier, Sarah Kramer, Dick Nock, Jean-Pierre Wolff, Don Warden, Kaylee Ellis, Dan Rodrigues, Mark Battany

Staff Present: Lynda Auchinachie – San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture, Dick Tzou – San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department

Absent Members: Mark Pearce, Craig Pritchard, Tom Ikeda, Greg France, Jutta Thoerner, David Pruitt, Charles Pritchard

Guests Present: James Green – SLO County Farm Bureau, Patricia Wilmore – Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance

1. Call to Order: 5:00 pm Chair Wolff

2. Open Comment:

- Mark Battany shared that the Farm Advisors have reorganized to tailor expertise to better serve growers. The reorganization is in response to fewer advisors due to retirements. Mark indicated the advisors will no longer be specific to a crop or variety of crops but rather themes of expertise (i.e. water, soils, salinity for all crops).

3. Previous Minutes – April 2018

MOTION: Ellis Approve April 2018 minutes.

MOTION 2nd: Rodrigues

Approved: Unanimous by all voting members. No “no” votes or abstentions.

4. Announcements from ALAB Members: Organizational Updates

5. ALAB Governance –

- Marc Lea has not been successful in obtaining a nominee from ECOSLO for the vacant Environmental Representative position. Dan Rodrigues had asked at a previous meeting if we could remove the Environmental Rep position from the makeup of the ALAB Board. Marc was able to determine, that just as we needed to seek the Board’s approval to add a new member representative, we would need to conduct the same process to remove a represented group or organization.
- The District Five member position, as well as the Strawberry Representative, remain vacant.
- Chuck Pritchard’s term as the rep for the Upper Salinas - Las Tablas RCD officially expired in January. However, Chuck agreed to continue to serve until the RCD was able to find a new member rep to take his place, which is in accordance with our operating guidelines. Devin Best anticipates that a new primary rep and a new alternate will be chosen at the RCD’s August board meeting.
- The Coastal RCD and Ag Finance member positions expire at the end of this month.

Marc will work with Jean-Pierre Wolff, Mark Pearce, and Sarah Kramer to have those reappointments approved by the Board of Supervisors.

6. Announcements from County Agriculture Department staff –

- 2017 Crop Report printed copy was provided to ALAB members. Lynda Auchinachie summarized statistical highlights.
- Cannabis Cultivation and Hemp Cultivation updates: Cal Cannabis Audit Inspections: A State (CalCannabis) inspector visited San Luis Obispo County in early June to conduct compliance inspections for local cannabis growers possessing temporary State cultivation licenses. County agricultural inspectors accompanied the CalCannabis inspector for eight local operations, and focused on educating the growers about the County and State laws and regulations pertaining to pesticide use and weights and measures specific to cannabis cultivation.

On the Hemp front, the County decided not to limit hemp cultivation; however, the State is still not finished with the development of necessary rules and regulations that will allow for commercial hemp cultivation. That process is expected to be ready by early 2019. We may already have a few hemp cultivators in SLO County operating under the ag research exemption, but we have not received paperwork from any of them or even heard anecdotally that there is any hemp currently being grown (technically, researchers are exempt from any notification so just because we haven't heard of someone who is already growing doesn't mean there aren't some out there).

In early July, the California Department of Public Health issued a press release concerning the use of CBD in food and medicines. According to the California Department of Public Health, only CBD derived from a licensed cannabis cultivator is an allowed additive in cannabis products. CBD derived from industrial hemp is not approved for use in cannabis products. In addition, CBD from any source is not an approved food additive, and cannot be added to human or animal foods in California. That statement could reduce the demand for local cultivation of industrial hemp, since a lot of the interest was from growers that were interested in hemp for the production of CBD:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/HEMP/Web%20template%20for%20FSS%20Rounded%20-%20Final.pdf>

- Residential Citrus Treatments to control the Asian Citrus Psyllid: Two weeks ago, the California Department of Food & Agriculture treated citrus trees in a residential portion of Nipomo where the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) has been detected. A total of 99 properties within 50 meters of the original ACP detection were notified about the potential for insecticide applications, and a public meeting was held to answer any questions or concerns posed by residents. Only those properties having citrus were affected. Of the 99 properties, 21 had citrus trees that were treated; a few additional properties are scheduled to be treated on July 23rd. This project is focused on preventing ACP from becoming established in the area, and this particular residential area is of

utmost concern due to its proximity to the majority of the County's commercial citrus orchards.

- Available methods for local citrus growers to meet the ACP quarantine requirements: There is the potential for a local grower to develop a washline facility in South County as an alternative to current requirements for pesticide treatments. Currently, growers must spray within a narrow window (roughly a week) prior to harvest with one of the approved, designated insecticides. This has led to increased pesticide applications for many local growers, which brings not only increased costs but in some cases increased problems with secondary pests.

7. Update/Discussion: Policy and Legislative Updates on Issues Affecting Agriculture

James Green, Government Affairs Specialist, San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau

- James Green provided a summary of issues Farm Bureau is currently tracking. James expressed that his comments were not the formal position of the Farm Bureau. James indicated the Planning Department continues to work on the update of the farmworker housing ordinance. James and Don Warden shared the complexity of issues involved in siting such housing including, but not limited to, distance from crops and urban services, type of housing, if mobile units are permissible for transient workers or on leased land, and use of farmworker housing for short-term vacation rentals. The Planning Department will be presenting stakeholder input information at the Board of Supervisors (BOS) August 21, 2018 hearing to receive direction on development of a draft ordinance. James also shared a variety of State and Federal legislation that may impact agriculture.
- James Green also informed ALAB members that the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) formed a subcommittee that may be proposing water conservation measures for agriculture. ALAB members expressed concern that an agricultural representative was not part of the original subcommittee to provide agricultural expertise and the effort may conflict or duplicate efforts by the Groundwater Sustainability Agencies. James indicated George Kendall had recently joined the subcommittee to represent agriculture.
- At the end of the meeting, Lisen Bonnier suggested a letter be sent to WRAC indicating ALAB would like to share expertise and to assist with educating and informing the subcommittee on agricultural water conservation. ALAB members supported Lisen's suggestion.
- Lynda Auchinachie indicated that the BOS August 21, 2018 hearing will also include a discussion of the Constraints and Opportunities mapping the Planning Department has been working on as part of the housing initiative package.

8. Update/Discussion: Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) – updates on recent SGMA related activities in San Luis Obispo County

Dick Tzou, Water Resources Engineer, San Luis Obispo County Public Works Department

- Dick Tzou provided highlights of recent SGMA activity and \$5 million grant funding

conditionally awarded to the San Luis Obispo County region as a whole for the purpose of developing Groundwater Sustainability Plans. Of note was the Draft 2018 SGMA Basin Prioritization information in which the Department of Water Resources (DWR) proposes changing Los Osos Valley's (nonadjudicated area) prioritization from High to Very Low; Atascadero Subbasin's prioritization from High to Very Low; and San Luis Obispo Valley's prioritization from Medium to High, without critical overdraft. Public Works continues to process boundary modification for the Los Osos Valley Basin as well as the Santa Maria Basin fringe area. Updates to the BOS on SGMA activity will continue to happen bimonthly as a consent agenda item.

- 9. Future Agenda Items:** Local impact of tariffs and Federal payments aimed at mitigating impact of tariffs

Next meeting – September 10, 2018 (not September 3rd, which is Labor Day)

Meeting Adjourned 6.30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Lynda Auchinachie, San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture

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