

ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 4, 2019

Members and Alternates Present: Jean Pierre-Wolff, Lisen Bonnier, Dan Rodrigues, Don Warden, Kaylee Ellis, Craig Pritchard, Butch Yamashita, and Mary Bianchi

On Conference Call: Sarah Kramer and Jutta Thoerner

Staff Present: Marc Lea and Lynda Auchinachie – San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture

Absent Members: Mark Pearce, Dick Nock, Claire Wineman, Mark Battany, Krista Burke, Tom Ikeda, and David Pruitt

Guests Present: Brent Burchett – SLO County Farm Bureau, Patricia Wilmore – Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Daniel Jones – Central Coast Greenhouse Growers Association, Alan Peters – CAL FIRE

1. Call to Order: 5:05 pm Chair Wolff

2. ALAB Members – Organizational Updates

- Don Warden indicated the Farm Bureau is forming a cannabis committee to explore a variety of concerns that have come forward regarding proposed cannabis projects. Since the Board of Supervisors (BOS) is scheduled to have its quarterly update later this month, the Farm Bureau thought it was an opportune time to collectively identify issues which include potential impacts to wine grape vineyards from odors, visual impacts associated with an extensive amount of hoopouses and large greenhouses, concentration of projects etc. ALAB members suggested cannabis continue to be a discussion item with future consideration of guidance to the BOS.
- Central Coast Greenhouse Growers Association (CCGGA) will be having its annual open house scholarship fundraiser April 6, 2019, from 9 am to 2 pm. Six greenhouse facilities will be open to the public that day.

3. Previous Minutes – February 2019

Motion: Rodrigues Approve February 2019 minutes.

Motion 2nd: Pritchard

Approved: Unanimous by all voting members.

4. ALAB Governance: Marc Lea gave a series of updates on recent and upcoming membership items.

- Supervisors for Districts 4 and 5 have not identified individuals to fill vacancies.
- George Kendall is not official yet but should be approved March 26, 2019. No other terms expire during 2019.
- It was recommended that the ALAB bylaws be updated to include details on the conference call option and also to make minor adjustments recognizing the electronic communication methods that now serve as the primary method of communication to the membership. Marc Lea will draft the proposed bylaw changes and provide to Chair Wolff and Vice-Chair Rodrigues prior to bringing any proposed changes to the entire

ALAB membership for a vote.

5. Presentation: Preventing Wildfire on Agricultural Lands

Alan Peters, CalFire 805.593.3406 alan.peters @ fire.ca.gov

- Alan Peters provided an overview of forestry and fire protection versus forestry and resource management. Alan indicated that there has been considerable philosophical, legislative, and funding/liability changes since the drought and fires started in 2012. Prescribed burns and fuel reduction are recognized as important fire prevention methods and CalFire and the Fire Safe Council are available to work with landowners to develop a plan to carry out these and other effective fire prevention activities. Grant funding is available. Services are potentially available to all varieties of rural landowners and land managers, including small and large acreage areas.
- ALAB members raised concerns about potential smoke taint to wine grape vineyards if controlled burns were conducted near harvest times. Alan indicated those issues are taken into consideration and that the aim is to have burns during the winter after vineyards have been harvested or when the vines are dormant.
- Alan's contact information is 805.593.3406 or alan.peters@fire.ca.gov.

6. Discussion: Public Review Draft of Agricultural Worker Housing Ordinance Update

ALAB Membership

- ALAB members generalized that the proposed ordinance was a step in the right direction but not a silver bullet. Formal comments are due to County Planning on April 5, 2019.
- Kaylee Ellis indicated the Grower-Shipper Association has been working closely with Planning on the agricultural worker housing ordinance update and would be sending separate comments. Those comments will include, ensuring that the established definitions allow for farm labor contractors to be interchangeable with farmers/growers, and that qualifying group quarters have an appropriate employee ratio that is representative of the labor requirements for vegetable crops.
- Mary Bianchi noted the ordinance changes and definitions appear to remove the connection between the landowner and who is involved in agriculture.

7. Updates from County Agriculture Department staff – Marc Lea

- The Agriculture Department and UC Cooperative Extension will be conducting a Ground Squirrel Control workshop on March 26, 2019, from 8.30 am to 11.00 am at the UC Cooperative Extension Auditorium. The workshop is free, but registration is necessary.
- The Agriculture Department has contracted with a consultant to prepare another "Economic Contributions of San Luis Obispo Agriculture" study based on 2017 data. Industry expertise may be sought to answer consultant questions. The final report is anticipated summer 2019.
- It appears that the State is on track to develop the required regulations that will allow for commercial industrial hemp to be planted in San Luis Obispo County (and across the state) within the coming months. State rules that have been proposed, but have not yet

taken effect, will require commercial hemp growers to fill out an application identifying their growing location, and pay a registration fee currently proposed at \$900 annually. State law also requires that any industrial hemp growers sample and test their crop within 30 days of harvest to ensure that it meets the legal threshold for THC levels to qualify as industrial hemp as opposed to cannabis (less than 0.3% THC). The testing and sampling regulations have not yet been proposed; however, those regulations are currently in development and are anticipated to be in place prior to expected harvest times later this year.

- The BOS directed staff to explore creating a countywide discretionary well permit process for certain water systems.

8. Future Agenda Items: Cannabis, Rural Crime Officer to discuss trespass, cannabis, and animal related issues

Next meeting – April 1, 2019

Meeting Adjourned 6:25 pm

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