

ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 1, 2019

Members and Alternates Present: Jean Pierre-Wolff, Lisen Bonnier, Krista Burke, Tom Ikeda, Mark Pearce, Sarah Kramer, Jutta Thoerner, Mary Bianchi, Butch Yamashita, Kaylee Ellis, and Marty Settevendemie

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

Absent Members: Dan Rodrigues, Dick Nock, David Pruitt, Claire Wineman, Mark Battany, Craig Pritchard, Don Warden, and George Kendall

Guests Present: James Green – San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau, Dan Jones

1. Call to Order: 5:06 pm Chair Wolff

2. ALAB Members – Organizational Updates

- Jutta Thoerner inquired about conference call capabilities. James Green indicated the service lines do not provide for a dependable system and improvements are in the works to accommodate future conference calls.

3. Updates from County Agriculture Department staff – Marty Settevendemie

- 2018 crop report statistics will be presented at the July 9, 2019, Board of Supervisors (BOS) hearing. The Economic Report previously discussed will be released in late summer or early fall.
- In May, Cal Fire and UC Berkeley conducted a Sudden Oak Death or SOD Blitz with 27 volunteers taking a total of 16 unofficial samples of Bay Laurel trees, a primary host of SOD, in wildland settings. The results of the samples are still pending for those taken by the volunteers. The Agriculture Department also took eight official samples, five of which have come back negative and three are still pending.
- The California State Board of Food and Agriculture will be hosting a public listening session on California's water future on Tuesday, July 2, 2019, at the Farm Bureau office in San Luis Obispo.
- Lynda Auchinachie indicated that cannabis compatibility concerns have been raised at recent Agricultural Preserve Review Committee (APRC) meetings. Specifically, she shared how a property owner with a lemon orchard, under Williamson Act contract, could not find an applicator to treat her orchard because of the risk associated with pesticide use proximate to cannabis cultivation. APCR members requested an additional meeting to further discuss concerns and potential unintended consequences of allowing cannabis cultivation on Williamson Act properties as a compatible use.

4. Previous Minutes – June 2019

Motion: Bonnier Approve June 2019 minutes.

Motion 2nd: Ikeda

Approved: Unanimous by all voting members. Mary Bianchi and Jutta Thoerner abstain.

5. ALAB Governance:

- Chair Wolff indicated Supervisorial Districts 4 and 5 seats are still vacant, as well as the Strawberry industry representative position. A question was raised regarding if we should reach out to the Cal Poly Strawberry Center to ask them to help identify potential strawberry growers that could be a good candidate for the open ALAB strawberry industry position.

6. Presentation: Industrial Hemp Urgency Ordinance – Temporary Moratorium Enacted on June 18, 2019, and Extension Hearing Scheduled for July 16, 2019 – Marty Settevendemie – San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner

- Marty Settevendemie provided a brief overview of recent BOS actions regarding hemp cultivation. Marty indicated concerns were raised about hemp odor and cross contamination with cannabis. On June 18, 2019, the BOS adopted an urgency ordinance applying a temporary moratorium on hemp cultivation with some exemptions. Those exempt from the ordinance included the 16 growers who were registered as a commercial grower prior to the effective date of the ordinance. Those growers can continue with their operation through the life of their registration, which is one year.

The BOS chose to not exempt 32 commercial growers who submitted registration packets but were not approved at the time the ordinance went into effect.

The other exemption allows “ag researchers” to grow through December 31, 2019, if they meet the provisions in the Food and Agriculture Code and have either already planted or incurred substantial costs or liabilities in preparation of cultivating hemp.

On July 16, 2019, the BOS will consider extending the urgency ordinance for a period of up to one year. The Planning Department will be looking at an ordinance to establish setbacks, prohibiting hemp cultivation in some land use categories, minimum parcel sizes and establishing a hemp advisory board.

- ALAB members discussed what “ag research” was and was not. ALAB members recognized ag research could be a loophole for growers to avoid testing of THC levels.
- Mark Pearce indicated that there are still challenges financing hemp related activities even though it is Federally legal.
- ALAB members discussed concerns about an urgency ordinance based on odor issues and the precedent setting nature of such an action. Other crops and associated activities also create odors.
- ALAB members discussed some of the incompatibility issues that have been identified with cannabis and how setback may not effectively reduce incompatibilities.
- ALAB members agreed that cannabis and hemp production are not the same and should

be discussed separately.

- ALAB members discussed how through education, cooperation, and coordination the agricultural industry had established protocols to address pollen cross contamination concerns.

Motion: Ikeda - Send a letter to the BOS about ALAB concerns regarding land use regulations for hemp production. Emphasize that hemp should not have land use restrictions different from other legal crops; hemp “agricultural research” should be clearly defined; and the precedent setting nature of establishing land use regulations for hemp production.

Motion 2nd: Bonnier

Approved: Unanimous.

7. **Future Agenda Items:** Water offset ordinance that is being updated in two phases

Next meeting – August 5, 2019

Meeting Adjourned 6.40 pm

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