ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday – February 2, 2026
SLO County Farm Bureau Office – 4815 Morabito Place, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Members and Alternates Present: Lisen Bonnier, Tom Ikeda, Ron Harben, Dylan Theobald, Hallie Richards, Paul Clark, Eric Michielssen, Claire Wineman, Dan Rodrigues

Staff Present: David Aguayo and Ian Landreth – SLO County Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures, Christopher Greer – University Cooperative Extension, Kip Morais and Mark LaRue – SLO County Department of Planning & Building

Absent Members: Craig Pritchard, Jerry Diefenderfer, Sarah Kramer, Jeff McKee

Guests Present: Patricia Wilmore – Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance (MS Teams), Hillary Phillips – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service, Russell Todd – USDA Farm Service Agency

I. Call to Order, introductions, quorum determination

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rodrigues at 5:07 p.m. There were enough members present to have a quorum.

II. Open Comment

Members wishing to address the ALAB on matters other than the scheduled items may do so at this time, when recognized by the Chairman.

Dan Rodrigues opened public comment.

Dan Rodrigues closed public comment.

III. Previous Minutes – January 5, 2026

Thereafter on Motion to approve January 2026 minutes as presented by: Tom Ikeda, Second by: Paul Clark, and on the following vote:

REPRESENTATIVE:	AYES:	NOES:	ABSTAIN:	RECUSE:
Lisen Bonnier	X			
Tom Ikeda	X			
Ron Harben	X			
Dylan Theobald	X			
Hallie Richards	X			
Paul Clark	X			
Eric Michielssen	X			
Claire Wineman	X			
Dan Rodrigues	X			

The ALAB approved the January 2026, minutes.

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IV. Discussion

a. New referral process proposal for Williamson Act Contracts – Presentation by SLO County Planning and Building Staff

- Kip Morais with the Planning Division of the Department of Planning and Building provided background on the proposed process to streamline project reviews for Williamson Act contracts. The updated framework is designed to provide members with greater flexibility, improve review consistency in review timelines, and to remove the requirement for in-person Agricultural Preserve Review Committee (APRC) from the requirements. A copy of the presentation can be found here: alab_presentation_2026_02_02
- Tom Ikeda asked whether, under the proposed process, applications would be routed directly to APRC stakeholders for review upon submittal rather than waiting for a quarterly meeting. Kip Morais confirmed this was correct.
- Paul Clark emphasized the value of in-person meetings for member dialogue, but noted quarterly meetings can delay projects. Kip Morais mentioned that Zoom discussions would remain an option and that, under the proposed non-Brown Act structure, feedback could be gathered without a quorum. Morais added that this could streamline straightforward applications while reserving meetings for more complex items.
- Claire Wineman asked whether APRC is currently Brown Act–noticed and whether the proposal would shift APRC to a non–Brown Act noticed structure. Kip Morais confirmed this and stated the shift would move from in-person meetings to a referral review process.
- Paul Clark asked if there were other boards that operated in a similar capacity to the proposed process. Kip Morais identified the Airport Land Use Committee as an example.
- Dan Rodrigues asked how many applicants the program receives per year. Kip Morais stated it depends, two years ago it was 12, last year was 5.
- Claire Wineman asked what the frequency of projects going to the APRC was. Kip Morais clarified that the APRC operates on a cyclical cycle. Applications for final action and consideration are taken to the Board of Supervisors at the end of the year. Projects associated with Williamson Act contract compliance need to be submitted by the first of July to get on that years cycle resulting in tax benefits to kick in the next calendar year. The APRC meets 4 times a year and the BOS meets once a year for these contract considerations.
- Chris Greer agreed that removing the in-person component does take out some of that interaction component but said if it is 4 or 5 a year it's probably reasonable to schedule a zoom meeting.
- Claire Wineman expressed concerns about situations where an applicant doesn't have Zoom access. Kip Morais stated they could coordinate with the applicant to participate in a Zoom call from the Planning Department.
- Tom Ikeda noted the value of in-person meetings for applicant explanation. Kip Morais stated the process would likely be conducted via Zoom and, under a non–Brown Act structure, could proceed without quorum-related delays while still allowing applicant/member interaction.

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- Ron Harben asked what APRC reviews and in what format. Kip Morais stated APRC evaluates applications for consistency with the Williamson Act Rules of Procedure, focusing primarily on soils type and acreage, and provides recommendations on qualification for new applications and contract reconfigurations.
- Claire Wineman suggested right-sizing the committee, referencing ALAB's recent consolidation to improve quorum reliability. Wineman asked about neighbor noticing; Kip Morais confirmed notice occurs for the Board of Supervisors action. Wineman also suggested considering alternate meeting venues and developing criteria for when to schedule a hearing
- Ian Landreth asked for clarification that a hearing would still be held for actions such as amendments to the Rules of Procedure, noting that these discussions often foster the most productive dialogue among APRC members. Kip Morais agreed that amendments to the Rules of Procedure would undergo an in-person hearing.
- PW expressed concern regarding the increase to fees proposed for contract and compliance review. Mark LaRue, with the Department of Planning and Building, informed the ALAB that fee adjustments had been made and that the Department would return to the Board of Supervisors on April 21st to present the revised adjustments. Wilmore asked if LaRue knew what the fees were adjusted to. LaRue noted he did not have the updated figures available and offered a rough estimate: approximately one thousand for items not requiring a hearing and approximately four to five thousand for items requiring a hearing. LaRue reiterated that the proposed process change is based on KPMG recommendations intended to improve departmental efficiency and reduce staff time. The presenter stated that, if a project is identified during or after the referral review as complex or controversial and requiring additional discussion, the matter could be elevated for further review, including an in-person hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting or a special hearing, as needed.
- Lisen Bonnier asked whether the proposed process would affect compliance for existing contracts on land that is fallowed. Kip Morais referenced the multi-benefit irrigated land repurposing program and noted proposed amendments to the Rules of Procedure that would exempt properties participating in the fallowed land registry from contract violations. Morais also discussed using satellite and other imagery platforms to help reduce the number of site visits.
- Kip Morais mentioned that Planning staff will be presenting the proposed APRC process changes to the APRC later this month on February 24th.
- Dan Rodrigues asked how many membership slots made up the APRC. Kip Morais mentioned that APRC consisted of 11 membership slots, most of which are not filled, but there are enough members to make quorum at this time. Morais noted that shifting to an online meeting format could help fill vacant positions by reducing barriers to participation and attendance.
- ALAB members re-discussed whether APRC should operate as a Brown Act–noticed body. Members generally indicated that formal Brown Act noticing may not be necessary given the historically limited level of public attendance and comment at APRC meetings. It was also noted that this change could reduce Planning & Building staff time while preserving the

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option to hold in-person hearings for matters such as amendments to the Rules of Procedure.

b. Biosolids Update of Action Item from Subcommittee – Subcommittee Members

- Dan Rodrigues introduced the item and provided a recap to the ALAB that Paul Clark, Claire Wineman, and himself had created a draft letter to the Board of Supervisors for review regarding ALAB's position on the upcoming expiration and possible extension of the biosolids application moratorium for San Luis Obispo County.
- ALAB members discussed possible concerns and reviewed the draft letter and recommended changes which were then incorporated into the final draft.

Thereafter on Motion to send ALAB's letter as edited to the Board of Supervisors regarding the ALAB's recommendations on the proposed biosolids ordinance amending chapter 8.13 of San Luis Obispo County code concerning land application of treated sewage sludge/biosolids, presented by: Paul Clark, Second by: Lisen Bonnier, and on the following vote:

REPRESENTATIVE:	AYES:	NOES:	ABSTAIN:	RECUSE:
Lisen Bonnier	X			
Tom Ikeda	X			
Ron Harben	X			
Dylan Theobald	X			
Hallie Richards	X			
Paul Clark	X			
Eric Michielssen	X			
Claire Wineman	X			
Dan Rodrigues	X			

The ALAB approved sending ALAB's letter as edited to the Board of Supervisors regarding the ALAB's recommendations on the proposed biosolids ordinance amending chapter 8.13 of San Luis Obispo County code concerning land application of treated sewage sludge/biosolids.

c. Chair and Vice-chair nomination

- ALAB members discussed whether there were any members interested in serving as chair/vice-chair. No other members expressed interest.

Thereafter on Motion to nominate and elect Dan Rodrigues as Chair and Sarah Kramer as Vice Chair of the ALAB, as presented by: Claire Wineman, Second by: Tom Ikeda, and on the following vote:

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REPRESENTATIVE:	AYES:	NOES:	ABSTAIN:	RECUSE:
Lisen Bonnier	X			
Tom Ikeda	X			
Ron Harben	X			
Dylan Theobald	X			
Hallie Richards	X			
Paul Clark	X			
Eric Michielssen	X			
Claire Wineman	X			
Dan Rodrigues			X	

The ALAB nominated and elected Dan Rodrigues as Chair and Sarah Kramer as Vice Chair of the ALAB.

V. Updates from Ag Department Staff.

- Ian Landreth mentioned that the MILR program previously discussed was going to the Board of Supervisors for approval tomorrow. Claire Wineman shared concerns about the program documenting language such as what defines a farming unit as well as clarifying the intent to rotate fields.
- There are four Ag Pass trainings this April. Dates, Times, and locations are available on the departments website: Ag Pass - County of San Luis Obispo.

VI. Future agenda items/meeting dates, adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 PM. The next monthly ALAB meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2026.

Respectfully submitted by Ian Landreth, San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures.

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