

ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 4, 2013

Members and Alternates Present: Cindy Steinbeck, Jean-Pierre Wolff, Bill Struble, Jerry Diefenderfer, Claire Wineman, Eric Michielssen, Chuck Pritchard, Joy Fitzhugh, David Pruitt, Richard Hawley, Lisen Bonnier, Chuck Pritchard, and Dan Rodrigues.

Absent Members: Mark Pearce, Tom Ikeda, Don Warden, Dick Nock, Mark Battany, and Neil Roberts.

Guests Present: Jen Porter & Patricia Wilmore, Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance; Lisa Bodrogi, CCWA; Kelly van Buren & Rachel Monteith, Office of Emergency Services, Tracy Bardes, PG&E.

Staff: Marc Lea and Brenda Ouwerkerk, Agriculture Department.

Call to Order: 6:03 PM. Quorum present.

- **Open Comment:**

- Eric Michielssen discussed the recent EcoFarm Conference, which had representation from many organic growers and local Grange Halls. He also mentioned a recent food sovereignty ordinance that passed in El Dorado County and suggested that it be added to a future ALAB meeting agenda for discussion.
- Lisen Bonnier mentioned the availability of USDA loans for smaller local & organic growers; she also mentioned that organic is the fastest growing agricultural sector in the nation.
- Cindy Steinbeck commended the Ram Truck “God Made a Farmer” ad that ran during the Super Bowl.

- **Announcements from ALAB Members & County AG Dept Staff Updates**

- Jean-Pierre Wolff informed ALAB members that the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) had made several unannounced visits to local wineries recently. They were surveying for compliance with food safety rules and looking at things from cleanliness to rodent control measures and outdoor processing. Jean-Pierre also mentioned that he is now the vice-chair of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board for the Central Coast Region.
- Claire Wineman discussed a meeting that was held with representative Lois Capps regarding immigration reform and the need for a guest worker program. Claire described the meeting as positive and the vegetable industry is hopeful that legislation can be developed soon that will better serve their industry.
- Chuck Pritchard described the Upper Salinas/Las Tablas RCD’s involvement with alternative review for grading permits. Recently, the RCD has been referred a few projects too big for the RCD to assess, and they have referred those cases back to the Planning Department for a grading permit.
- Joy Fitzhugh gave us an update on the coastal zone grading permit situation. The Board of Supervisors voted not to acknowledge or agree with the Coastal Commission’s modifications to the County’s Coastal Zone Grading Ordinance.
- Marc Lea informed the group that County Environmental Health Services would be in front of the Board of Supervisors on March 12, 2013 to request direction on the County’s biosolids ordinance. Members requested that this item be added to the March

agenda and that a representative from Environmental Health be invited that could inform ALAB on the current situation. Marc L. will followup with Environmental Health to line up a speaker for the March meeting that can answer the group's questions in more detail.

MOTION: To add Biosolids discussion to the upcoming March agenda: **Motion Lisen Bonnier. 2nd Richard Hawley. Approved: Unanimous.**

1. Previous Minutes:

MOTION: Approve minutes: **Motion Bill Struble. 2nd Chuck Pritchard. Approved: Unanimous.**

2. Update on upcoming Board of Supervisor discussion of Ag Cluster Ordinance (Marc Lea, Agriculture Department)

- Marc Lea indicated that on February 19, 2013, the Planning Department and Board of Supervisors will be having a strategic study workshop on the Planning Department's work priorities. In this context, the ag cluster ordinance will be discussed in relation to all other work programs that the Planning Department is doing. The BOS may provide Planning Department staff direction on how to proceed.
- ALAB will track the outcome of any Ag Cluster discussions at the February 19th strategic meeting.

3. Presentation "Nuclear Power Plant Emergency Information for Agriculture" (Brenda Ouwerkerk, County Department of Agriculture; Kelly van Buren & Rachel Monte, County Office of Emergency Services; Tracey Vardas, Emergency Services Coordinator, PG&E)

- Kelly van Buren, Rachel Monte, Brenda Ouwerkerk, and Tracey Vardas gave a comprehensive presentation on the effects of a potential nuclear power plant emergency on local agriculture. Issues covered in the presentation included:
 - Emergency Planning and Ingestion Pathway Zones
 - Notification procedures in the case of a radiological emergency
 - Possible effects on local agriculture and agricultural products in the event of a radiological release
 - The government's emergency response plan and the subsequent notification and communication with agriculturalists regarding potential actions, which may include quarantine of animals, food, and other agricultural commodities
 - Reimbursement for losses
 - The availability of an Agricultural Information Center that agriculturalists can contact in the event of a radiological release in order to get detailed information on how best to respond and what actions need to be followed for their animals and/or crops.

4. Establishment of a subcommittee to assist with the development of the "Economic Contributions of SLO County Agriculture" - (Chair Wolff and Marc Lea, Agriculture Department)

- The group discussed the need to form a subcommittee for assisting with the development of the "Economic Contributions of SLO County Agriculture" study. The potential for various "sub-themes" of the report were discussed. Marc Lea informed the group that he had been working with the researchers and that one area that they suggested emphasizing was the diversity of crops grown in SLO County. The researchers indicated that there were robust economic models

that would enable them to adequately measure the economic contributions of this crop diversity. Marc Lea also reminded the group that this was one of the potential areas of emphasis discussed previously at the January ALAB meeting.

- After additional discussion, it was determined that a subcommittee was not immediately necessary to address the researchers questions. Rather, Marc Lea will act as a liaison between the researchers and industry groups, and facilitate contact whenever needed to insure that the researchers data and analysis adequately reflect the actual situation on the ground in SLO County. It was further determined that Marc would continue to update ALAB regarding the Economic Report at each monthly meeting, and if necessary, a subcommittee would be formed later.

Future Agenda Items: March 4, 2013, Farm Sovereignty ordinance discussion; tracking of any developments on the Ag Cluster ordinance; Biosolids presentation from Environmental Health.

Meeting adjourned: 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Marc Lea, County Agriculture Department.