

ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 1, 2021

MEETING HELD REMOTELY DUE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS – ALL ATTENDED EITHER BY WEBINAR OR CONFERENCE CALL

Members and Alternates Attending: Dan Rodrigues, Kaylee Ellis, Jerry Diefenderfer, Mark Pearce, Mark Battany, Randy Diffenbaugh, Melissa Danehey, Joe Plummer, Brent Burchett, Seth Scribner, and Jean-Pierre Wolff

Staff Attending: Marc Lea and Lynda Auchinachie – San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture; Kylie Hensley, Brian Pedrotti, and Airlin Singewald – San Luis Obispo County Planning and Building Department

Absent Members: Lisen Bonnier, Tom Ikeda, Daniel Chavez, Craig Pritchard, Butch Yamashita, and Claire Wineman

Guests Attending: Bill Spencer – Future Direct Marketing/Organic Representative, Patricia Wilmore – Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance

1. Call to order, introductions, quorum determination: The meeting was called to order by Chair Rodrigues at 5:03 pm

Chair Dan Rodrigues acknowledged the recent loss of our ALAB family member Dick Nock. Dan read a condolence letter he had written to the Nock family on behalf of ALAB members. ALAB members shared memories of Dick and the fact he will truly be missed. A memorial fund has been set up in Dick's honor by the San Luis Obispo County Cattlemen's Association, and Marc will email the entire ALAB membership with additional details on how to donate.

2. Open comment: (for items not on the agenda):

- Marc Lea introduced Bill Spencer as the soon to be Direct Marketing/Organic representative. As the owner/operator of Windrose Farms, Bill has many years of experience with running a local agricultural business.

3. Review/approval of December 2020 meeting minutes:

Motion: Diefenderfer Approve December 2020 minutes.

Motion 2nd: Wolff

Approved: Unanimous by all voting members.

4. ALAB Membership Updates – Marc Lea

- Marc Lea provided a summary of numerous changes to ALAB membership that have or will occur: 1) George Kendall, representative for the Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD, has stepped down. Mary Bianchi and Michael Broadhurst will be the future primary and alternate representatives once RCD makes a determination of which person will fill which role. 2) Bill

Spencer will be the new Direct Marketing/Organic representative once his nomination process is finalized and approved. 3) Krista Burke, Environmental representative, has moved away from the area and Melissa Danehey, the current alternate, will fill that role in the short term until a permanent member is approved. 4) Seth Scribner will be the Cattlemen representative and Anthony Stornetta will be alternate. Seth shared that he raises cattle in the Shandon area and in multiple other counties. Seth will soon be president of the SLO County Cattlemen's Association. 5) Craig Pritchard and Jerry Diefenderfer, District 1 and 5 representatives, respectively, have been reappointed for new four-year terms. 6) Tom Ikeda will continue to be the District 3 representative for the next two years during Supervisor Ortiz-Legg's current term.

5. Discussion: Appointing an ALAB representative to the Agriculture Preserve Review Committee (APRC)

- Marc Lea reminded ALAB members that Don Warden had served as the ALAB representative on the APRC for several years. APRC reviews issues related to Williamson Act contracts and compatibility with such contracts. A new ALAB member will need to be appointed with Don's retirement from ALAB. Lynda Auchinachie indicated that meetings are generally held on Monday afternoons and that the meetings last anywhere from 30 minutes to a few hours.
- Dan Rodrigues asked that any members interested in serving on APRC let him know.

6. Presentation/Discussion: Paso Robles Planting Ordinance Update – Kylie Hensley, Brian Pedrotti, and Airlin Singewald, County of San Luis Obispo Planning and Building Department

- Kylie Hensley provided the background information and overview of the BOS direction to create a new planting ordinance to replace the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin agricultural offset ordinance. Please see PowerPoint presentation:
https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Agriculture-Weights-and-Measures/All-Forms-Documents/Information/Meeting-Minutes/ALAB-Meeting-Agendas,-Minutes,-Presentations/2021/ALAB-Presentation_2021_03_01-Paso-Ordinance-Agenda.pdf
- Kylie clarified that there is not another ordinance similar to the proposed new planting ordinance.
- Public comment was submitted by Randy Heinzen (via voicemail recording). Heinzen, a local farmer and someone who has experience with the Napa County ordinance, outlined his concerns with the proposal including the CEQA requirement and how issues could expand. Heinzen noted that while this ordinance may provide relief to some, it would be a detriment to many others. Heinzen supports letting the GSP process work, including a fallowing program.
- Brent Burchett asked about the timeline. Airlin Singewald responded that it is an aggressive timeline. The target date is before the existing offset ordinance expires on January 1, 2022. Brent also discussed concerns about how the tiered system was established with the 25-acre feet per year criteria.
- Patricia Wilmore stated the Paso Wine Country Alliance had similar concerns as Randy Heinzen. Patricia indicated the current ordinance resulting in water neutrality and that the allowance for 25-acre feet would not be neutral and would not address issues over the basin.
- Jean-Pierre Wolff expressed concerns about the ordinance and bringing the basin into balance.

- Chair Dan Rodrigues asked ALAB members if they would like to take any action such as writing a letter summarizing concerns or form a subcommittee. ALAB members discussed the various options and concerns considering the limited information available at this time. Kylie Hensley indicated the staff report for the April 6, 2021, hearing would not be available until March 30, 2021. Brent Burchett offered to write a draft letter, as part of a small subcommittee consisting of himself, Joe Plummer and Kaylee Ellis, expressing concerns in the letter with the proposed tiered system. The letter could be voted upon at the April 5 ALAB meeting and the feedback provided to the Board of Supervisors at the April 6 BOS meeting. The letter could also be adjusted or edited at the April 6 meeting, if necessary.

Motion: Diefenderfer – Authorize a subcommittee to review available information on the proposed new planting ordinance and draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors outlining ALAB’s concerns. The draft letter will be presented to ALAB members for approval at the April 5th ALAB meeting.

Motion 2nd: Wolff

Approved: Unanimous by all voting members.

6. Presentation/Discussion: Covid-19 Updates

Brent Burchett, San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau and Marc Lea, County of San Luis Obispo Department of Agriculture

- Brent Burchett summarized the logistical complexities of vaccinating farmworkers for Covid-19. Vaccinating farmworkers is a priority for the Public Health Department and a pilot project to administer 500 doses will begin mid-March. The pilot project will be implemented through employers to allow for easy verification of employment status. A mobile vaccine clinic is a goal for the future, but not yet available. Mobile efforts will likely not be run or coordinated by the SLO County Public Health Department, but rather by local community health organizations. Brent encouraged industry members to reach out to him with questions.
- ALAB members expressed appreciation for Brent’s efforts.

7. Updates from Ag Department staff

Marc Lea, San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture

- Statewide regulatory changes for industrial hemp are occurring to ensure state requirements for certified testing prior to harvest match USDA’s 15-day requirement. The five local growers will have to meet this requirement which is a reduction from the 30 days previously allowed.
- Rodenticide regulatory changes went into effect January 1, 2021 but will primarily impact structural pest control companies.
- Public Works water resources division will provide an overview of water resource issues they are currently overseeing at the March 16, 2021, BOS meeting.

9. Future agenda items: Paso Robles Planting Ordinance

Next meeting – April 5, 2021

Meeting Adjourned 6:29 pm

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