

DRAFT ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September, 10, 2012

Members and Alternates Present: Cindy Steinbeck, Jean-Pierre Wolff, Tom Ikeda, Don Warden, Lisen Bonnier, Richard Quandt, Dick Nock, Eric Michielssen, David Pruitt, Mark Battany, Charles Pritchard, and Dan Rodrigues.

Absent Members: Joy Fitzhugh, Mark Pearce, Bill Struble, Claire Wineman, Noah Small, Richard Hawley, and Neil Roberts

Guests Present: Joel Diring, SLO County Food System Coalition, Lisa Bodrogi, Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Krista Herlihy, Central Coast Greenhouse Growers Association.

Staff: Marc Lea and Lynda Auchinachie, Agriculture Department.

Call to Order: 6:05 PM. Quorum present.

- **Open Comment:** Lisa Bodrogi shared her concern regarding the proposed subdivision prohibition over the Paso Robles groundwater basin. Lisa indicated that the net water benefit would be about 300 acre feet and that the prohibition was not the right step. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) will discuss this issue and others associated with the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Water Conservation Ordinance on September 25, 2012. Lisa reminded ALAB members that ALAB sent a letter to the BOS expressing concerns over the subdivision prohibition during 2011.

Jean-Pierre Wolff provided an update on a variety of Regional Water Quality Control Board issues. Jean-Pierre indicated that Governor Brown was reducing the size of the Board from the current nine members down to seven members through attrition. Jean-Pierre also shared that conflict of interest rules have been revised to allow for more vetting opportunities and that board members will no longer have a designated seat, all seats will be generic. Additionally, the Assembly has voted to change ex parte communication rules. In regards to the Irrigated Ag Order, a written statement on the stay order should be available soon. Roger Briggs retired as Executive Officer (EO) and during the recruitment process the acting EO is Ken Harrison.

Dan Rodrigues shared that wine grape harvest has started in North County and the San Luis Obispo area harvest should be starting soon.

David Pruitt indicated that a determination was made that Viva Farms was not operating as a distribution center. David also indicated that both Arroyo Grande and Nipomo were participating in the "America in Bloom" competition to beautify local communities and that the effort was very good for community.

Announcements included a celebration of the Farm Bureau's 90th anniversary at the Madonna Inn on September 25, 2012, and a field trip focused on rural road design and maintenance October 22, 2012 at Ranchita Canyon.

1. Previous Minutes:

MOTION: Approve minutes: **Motion – Tom Ikeda. 2nd – Lisen Bonnier. Approved: Unanimous.**

2. ALAB Membership Updates (Marc Lea, Agriculture Department)

- Marc Lea indicated that 1) Cindy Steinbeck had officially replaced Dee Lacey as District 1 representative, 2) Claire Wineman and Richard Quandt swapped positions and Richard will now be the alternate vegetable representative, and 3) Dan Rodrigues has replaced Lisa Bodrogi as alternate wine grape representative.

3. Planning Department Updates (Marc Lea, Agriculture Department)

- Marc provided an update of Planning Department efforts: 1) ALAB's recommended change to the Economic Element was incorporated into the draft document the Planning Commission has recommended to the BOS. The BOS hearing date is scheduled for October 23, 2012, 2) the Planning Commission also recommended adoption of the proposed ordinance changes to allow for olive oil processing as an agricultural processing use and changes to roadside sales. The proposed ordinance is scheduled to be before the BOS hearing on October 23, 2012, and 3) the proposed Inland and Coastal Agricultural Cluster Ordinances and associated Agriculture Element policies were recommended to the BOS with a 3-2 vote. While changes were not recommended, Planning Commission members did suggest the BOS consider extending the area in which Inland clusters could occur to five miles from designated URLs rather than the proposed two miles and consideration of reducing the density bonus rather than eliminating the bonus. At this time, a BOS hearing date has not been established.
- Lisen Bonnier shared that the Economic Element had been revised by the Planning Commission to specifically call out Agriculture as part of the Uniquely SLO Cluster.

4. Potential Study to Determine Economic Contributions of San Luis Obispo County Agriculture (Marc Lea, Agriculture Department)

- Marc Lea provided ALAB members with copies of the economic report that was prepared for Monterey County. Marc indicated that the Agriculture Department is considering contracting for a similar study for San Luis Obispo County. ALAB members recognized the study provided basic information that received positive press coverage, however, the report also left many unanswered questions. ALAB members suggested that more specificity be included in the report. ALAB members also suggested that if a similar study was to be undertaken that perhaps a local agricultural university should be used and that the report should not be filed away in a drawer. The recommendation was also made to consult with Steve Sinton's son who may currently be conducting such a study. Marc concluded by saying the process for such a study is in the very initial stages and additional input is welcome.

5. Presentation on "A Community Roadmap for Overcoming Hunger in San Luis Obispo County (Joel Diringer, SLO County Food System Coalition)

- Joel Diringer provided an update on the progress of the work conducted under a USDA grant to study the nature of hunger in San Luis Obispo County and to prepare a plan to overcome such hunger. Joel indicated that many in the community participated in the effort including Jackie Crabb from the Farm Bureau, the Agriculture Department, and Cal Poly. During the information gathering period, it was determined that this county produces enough food for each resident to eat 7.5 pounds a day and that the hunger problem is not about availability but instead it is about choice and distribution. Joel indicated that 40,000 people in our county are food insecure. As part of the grant effort, SLO County Food System Coalition prepared the report, "Paradox of Plenty: A Community Roadmap for Overcoming Hunger in San Luis Obispo County," that identifies five goals. Discussions revolved around Goal 3: A sustainable local food system that is able to meet the food needs of SLO County residents. This goal includes strategies to increase opportunities for local food processing, distribution, marketing and sales; enhance gleaning efforts in San Luis Obispo County; promote agriculture as an economic development tool; and protect and enhance food production resources (e.g. land, water, air quality) and raise public awareness of threats to productivity.
- Lisen Bonnier shared her positive artichoke gleaning experience. Tom Ikeda announced he is

coordinating gleaning efforts and is looking for locations.

Motion – Approval for sending “Declaration of Support” for the SLO County Food System Coalition’s Hunger-Free Community plan. **Motion:** Dick Nock. **Second:** Lisen Bonnier. **Approved: Unanimous.**
Abstentions: none.

Future Agenda Items: October 1, 2012, agenda items to be determined.

Meeting adjourned: 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lynda Auchinachie, County Agriculture Department.