

ALAB MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 1, 2019

Members and Alternates Present: Jean Pierre-Wolff, Lisen Bonnier, Dan Rodrigues, David Pruitt, Kaylee Ellis, and Krista Burke **On Conference Call:** Tom Ikeda

Staff Present: Marc Lea and Lynda Auchinachie – San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture; Dick Tzou – San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Works

Absent Members: Mark Pearce, Dick Nock, Claire Wineman, Mark Battany, Don Warden, and Craig Pritchard. Sarah Kramer and Jutta Thoerner missed the meeting due to technical difficulties with the conference call.

Guests Present: Patricia Wilmore – Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, James Green – San Luis Obispo County Farm Bureau, George Kendall – Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD, Stephanie Shakofsky – Saint Marie Vineyard, Jeff Nichols and Andy Danley – San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office

1. **Call to Order:** 5:05 pm Chair Wolff

2. **ALAB Members – Organizational Updates**

- David Pruitt reminded ALAB members that the Central Coast Greenhouse Growers Association will be having its annual open house scholarship fundraiser April 6, 2019. A raffle for a dinner in the flower fields of Lompoc will also be taking place.
- Marc Lea announced that a Conservation Burn/Biochar Workshop will be held at J Lohr Winery. (Revised date April 11, 2019)
- Chair Jean-Pierre Wolff and Dan Rodrigues discussed the various reasons that vineyard acreage is being removed and replanted both in north and south counties. A combination of lower prices, new varietal trends, age of vines, and plant disease are the primary reasons for the change. The viral infection red blotch has been a continuing problem that affects grape maturity by reducing photosynthesis. UC Davis' Protocol 2010 has been implemented to clean wood prior to grafting. The process of replanting is very costly.
- David Pruitt indicated that the domestic cut flower market is rebounding, in part due to a significant portion of the available greenhouse capacity being converted to cannabis production, resulting in a reduction of reduced domestic flower production and competition.

3. **Previous Minutes – March 2019**

Motion: Rodrigues Approve March 2019 minutes.

Motion 2nd: Bonnier

Approved: Unanimous by all voting members. One abstention due to absence from the March meeting (Burke)

4. **ALAB Governance:** Marc Lea

- The confidential membership contact list has been updated.

- George Kendall’s ALAB nomination will come before the Board of Supervisors on 4/9/19; it is anticipated that he will be confirmed without issue and will become an official ALAB member prior to the next meeting. No other members’ terms are up in 2019, but four members’ terms will expire in April 2020 (Pruitt, Rodrigues, Thoerner, and Wineman); those members should start considering if they are interested in serving another term once their current term expires early next year.

5. Presentation: Jeff Nichols and Andy Danley – San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s Office, Rural Crime Unit - Updates for Local Growers

- Jeff Nichols and Andy Danley discussed three primary rural crime issues: Trespass, cannabis grows, and animal cruelty. Trespassing remains a top concern for rural farmers particularly with the increase in the homeless population that will often establish transient camps on agricultural property. Case law is evolving, and it is more difficult to make arrests and remove encampments than in previous years. Concerns include environmental damage, financial liability, and safety issues. The Sheriff’s office is using a multi-pronged approach, including working with social services to reach out to the homeless population and develop a comprehensive plan to address the issues. Despite extensive efforts, there is a certain subset of the homeless population that are either unwilling or unable to change their current situation.
- Posting no trespassing or no public access signs at every entry point or gate, as well as every third mile is recommended. If trespass occurs, the Sheriff’s will respond. Trespass is considered a misdemeanor crime.
- A “Smart Water” coating program is being evaluated by the Sheriff’s Office for future implementation to help identify stolen property.
- The Sheriff’s office works with The County Planning Department’s Code Enforcement Division to address cannabis grows that are not compliant with land use regulations.
- There is considerable public sensitivity to livestock in the fields during rain events. The Sheriff’s office receives many calls suggesting animals be provided shelter during storm events.
- Cock fights are also something that the Sheriff’s office responds to. However, these cases are difficult to prove since those involved are adept at keeping their roosters separate from the items (e.g. metal spurs and other implements) typically used during the actual cockfights.

6. Presentation: Potential Amendments to County Code as Applicable to Expanding Cannabis Manufacturing in Agricultural Lands

- Megan Martin did not attend meeting as planned. Marc Lea provided a brief overview of concerns raised by Board of Supervisors regarding manufacturing of cannabis products outside of urban areas. Lynda Auchinachie explained that cannabis processing (drying, curing etc.) is included as part of the cannabis cultivation definition and that manufacturing of cannabis on agricultural lands is currently limited to non-volatile oil extraction of cannabis grown onsite only.

7. Updates from County Agriculture Department staff – Marc Lea

- Marc Lea indicated trap deployment for the European grapevine moth has been delayed until vineyard roads are passable. Ag Department staff will be contacting vineyards prior to deploying the EGVM traps.
- UCLA recently released a report “Governance on the Ground: Evaluating the Role of County Agricultural Commissioners in Reducing Toxic Pesticide Exposures.” The report explains how the restricted material permitting process should include an analysis of alternatives and cumulative impacts. The report indicates that many county agricultural commissioners across the state are not adequately addressing these CEQA related requirements.
- ALAB members discussed public concerns with the use of Round Up as a result of recent court decisions.
- Marc Lea reminded ALAB members that every lot of cannabis is tested for trace amounts of pesticides. If pesticides are detected, cannabis growers can request the Agriculture Department conduct an investigation to determine source of the pesticide.
- James Green shared Farm Bureau member concerns regarding potential wine grape taint from cannabis or hemp.

8. Future Agenda Items: Energy related issues

Next meeting – May 6, 2019

Meeting Adjourned 7.05 pm

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