

COUNTY OF PLACER AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

JOSHUA P. HUNTSINGER Agricultural Commissioner Sealer of Weights & Measures

Tony Aguilar Patricia Beard James Brenner Dan Macon

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEMBERS **Larry Jordan** William Morebeck John Nitta **Stewart Perry** Wayne Vineyard

11477 E AVENUE AUBURN, CALIFORNIA 95603 TELEPHONE: (530) 889-7372 FAX: (530) 823-1698 www.placer.ca.gov

MINUTES

PLACER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING January 9, 2012

Members Present: Tony Aquilar, Patricia Beard, James Brenner, Larry Jordan, Dan Macon,

William Morebeck, John Nitta, Stewart Perry, Wayne Vineyard

Members Absent: None

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JANUARY 9, 2012 AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF December 12, 2011. Motion to approve: Macon/Perry/MPUV

PUBLIC COMMENT III.

None

IV. **UPDATE STATUS OF SIERRA COLLEGE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM** – Michelle MacFarlane, Chair Sierra College Agriculture Department

Two years ago, the Agriculture Program started the Program Vitality process and from that process emerged the Sustainable Agriculture Degree/Certificate and the Sustainable Agriculture Business Skills Certificate. First offered in 2011/12, the courses had 100% fill rate, and has already had one student attain the Sustainable Agriculture A.S. degree.

Courses going through the curriculum process, if approved this year will be offer in 2013/14. These courses are for Sustainable Livestock Production and Sustainable Crop Production.

Working on a formal MOU with Lincoln School Farm for use of facilities and developing an Internship database.

V. PLACER LAND TRUST SMALL FARM PROGRAM – Jeff Darlington, Executive Director

The Placer Land Trust's mission is to protect natural and agriculture land in Placer County. The Placer Land Trust has protected 6,000 acres of Agriculture land, mostly dry pasture.

In order to accelerate efforts to preserve Agriculture land, the concept of Small Farm Program was instituted.

Obstacles to land conservation in the Agriculture Community is primarily lack of funding, and community awareness.

Seeking feedback from the Commission members on issues facing the program.

VI. REPORTS

- A. Agricultural Marketing Program Josh Huntsinger
 - Procurement released the RFP for the Agricultural Marketing Director on 12/16/11. Proposals are due by 1/12/12 with selection in February and Board of Supervisors approval on 3/13/12.
 - The Placeragguide.com website and Facebook account continue to improve.
 - PlacerGROWN Food and Farm Conference will be held 2/4/12. Keynote speaker is Dr. J Scott Vernon from Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo.
- B. Economic Development Board Lyndell Grey No Report
- C. Livestock and Natural Resources Farm Advisor Roger Ingram
 - Distributed 2012 PlacerGROWN Food and Farm Conference Registration form.
- D. Horticultural and Small Farms Advisor Cindy Fake
 - Discussed continuing effect weather conditions is having on local crops.
 - Discussed upcoming workshops:

Marketing Academy – January 13 and 14

Farm Business Planning Course - February 9, 2012

Contingency Planning – February 24, 2012

Beginning Farming Academy – March 12, 2012

- Met with NRCS about possible funding for water storage options, as well as fencing for pest control (deer). Fish and Game is reluctant to issue depredation permits if orchards are not fenced.
- E. Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) Agendas Patti Beard No Report
- F. Placer Parkway Meeting Update William Morebeck
 - At the December 6, 2011 meeting, the Placer County Board of Supervisors agreed to amend the county's General Plan to show the preferred route corridor for Placer Parkway.
- G. Rotating Agriculture Industry Update Foothill Farming, Patti Beard
 - Discussed how position added to Commission to promote small farms.
- H. Agricultural Water Supply Issues Josh Huntsinger
 - PCWA/NID/PG&E are being conservative with water releases due to the lack of rain.
 - A Fresno Agriculture radio show called to find out how the lack of rain has effected Placer County.
 - PG&E has completed the survey of the Bear River Canal.

VII. AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER'S REPORT - Josh Huntsinger

- The Placer County Board of Supervisors will vote tomorrow at 10:00 am on a recommendation to reduce the fire mitigation fee on agriculture buildings to \$.13 per square foot.
- Weights and Measures fees have been mailed.
- Meeting with Joel Buettner, Placer County Mosquito Abatement District, on Wednesday to impacts on Agriculture of the new NPDES Permit requirements.
- The Agriculture Department is hiring an Inspector.
- Distributed Placer County Air Pollution Control District Advisory Notice regarding grant funding for the replacement of registered diesel powered water pumps with electric pumps.

- Discussed alternate dates for the February meeting. The February meeting will be held on 2/15/12. UPDATE Meeting cancelled due to lack of Agenda items
- Dan Macon volunteered to be the next Commissioner to give an overview of the Livestock Industry.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS (NON-ACTION ITEM) - None

• John Nitta reported that there would be an EcoLandscape conference and trade show, January 28, 2012 in Woodland.

IX. ADJOURNMENT