

KINGS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CHARLES DRAXLER - DAIRY INDUSTRY
JIM GREGORY - AG CHEMICALS & PETROLEUM
DIANA PECK - KINGS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

DON MILLS - WATER
BILL TOS - NUT CROPS
VACANT - SMALL FARMS

JOHNNY STARLING - AG PROCESSING
BOB PRYS - FEED/SEED & GRAIN
BRIAN POTTER - AG EQUIPMENT

STAFF: MARK SHERMAN (589) 582-3211 EXT. 2675

MINUTES OF MEETING January 12, 2011

Call to Order:

Chairman Mills called the meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee to order at 1:34 p.m. in the Ag Commissioner's Multi-Purpose Room, 680 N. Campus, Hanford, California.

Committee Members Present:

Don Mills, Bill Tos, Bob Prys
Charles Draxler, Brian Potter
Jim Gregory, Johnny Starling,

Committee Members Absent:

Diana Peck

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Kathy Sargent, Greg Gatzka, Carol Collar,
Jay Salyer

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Tim Niswander

Auxiliary Members Present:

Auxiliary Members Absent:

Kerry Arroues, Jeff Tyner, Peggy Gregory

Committee Coordinator Present

Committee Coordinator Absent

Joe Neves

County Staff Present:

Chuck Kinney, Mark Sherman,
Terri Yarbrough, Johanna Hartley
Larry Spikes, Ken Baird, Yvonne Jessup

County Staff Absent:

Visitors Present:

R.G. Trapnell

Unscheduled Comments:

None

Minutes: July 14, 2010 Meeting:

A Motion was made and seconded (Gregory/Draxler) to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2010 meeting. The Motion carried unanimously with Peck absent.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Gatzka introduced Brian Potter as the new committee member representing the Ag Equipment category.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman Mills stated that he had served two terms as Chairman and would not be eligible to serve another term. Secretary Gatzka opened nominations for the election of Officers for the Agricultural Advisory Committee. A motion was made (Tos) to nominate Mr. Gregory. Mr. Gregory declined the nomination. A motion was made and seconded (Draxler/Starling) to nominate Diana Peck for Chairperson and close the nominations. Motion carried unanimously with Peck absent. A motion was made and seconded (Draxler/Gregory) to nominate Mr. Starling for Vice Chairman. Motion carried unanimously with Peck absent.

Mr. Starling assumed the responsibility for chairing the remainder of the meeting due to Chairman Peck's absence.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Water Conditions in Kings County and the State:

Mr. Mills updated the Committee on current water conditions in the State and the County. He reported that on December 31, 2010 the Army Corps of Engineers ordered Pine Flat Dam and several other reservoirs into flood release mode. He reported that approximately 1,500 acre feet of water is currently going out of the service area and that the water districts are encouraging farmers to pull water out of the canals for on-site storage.

Recent Changes to the California Land Conservation "Williamson" Act Program:

Mr. Kinney gave a brief summary of the changes to the "Williamson" Act Program. He reported that the County receives reimbursement for lost property tax revenue from the State for the "Williamson" Act Program. Kings County would normally have received approximately \$2.5 million per year but only received \$75.19 for the 2009-2010 budget year. He also reported that the Kings County Board of Supervisors approved the implementation of Senate Bill No. 863 to modify "Williamson" Act and Farmland Security Zone contracts. Governor Brown's budget proposal for 2011-2012 eliminates the current year appropriation for "Williamson" Act subventions and does not provide ongoing state funding.

Ken Baird, Kings County Assessor, gave a presentation on the impacts to property owners. He stated that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the property owners under the "Williamson" Act Contract are taxed on the restricted value rather than the market value of their property. Mr. Baird reported that a spreadsheet was being developed for the County web site so that property owners would be able to determine the financial impacts as a result of the enactment of SB863. Mr. Mills asked how much revenue would be generated for the County with the enactment of SB863. Mr. Baird stated it was approximately \$650,000. Mr. Tos asked how the shortfall to the County was being addressed. Mr. Spikes responded that the County has already been making cuts and has agreements with the Unions. Mr. Gatzka also explained that the Board of Supervisors action to implement Senate Bill No. 863 was only for one year. The Board of Supervisors may elect to enact Senate Bill No. 863 until the year 2015 but would be required to take action each year.

Correspondence: none

Member Comments: Mr. Mills asked Mr. Spikes to clarify the recent Board of Supervisors decision regarding the drought declaration. Mr. Spikes stated that since we are still in a serious overdraft

position, the Board of Supervisors wanted to wait another year and see if the rainfall levels continue. Mr. Mills expressed a concern that the public will begin perceptions. Mr. Spikes stated that he would be looking at another way to keep focus on the overdraft issue without declaring an emergency.

Staff Comments: Mark Sherman announced that due to Gerald Theodore's resignation, there is a vacant position on the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Mr. Gatzka reported that the Water Commission supported and the Board of Supervisors approved an MOU that would allow Kings River Conservation District to serve as the monitoring entity for the Tulare Lake Groundwater Basin for monitoring and reporting of groundwater elevations in accordance with SBx7-6.

Adjournment

With no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is April 13, 2011 at 12:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory R. Gatzka", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gregory R. Gatzka, Secretary