

KINGS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CHARLES DRAXLER – DAIRY INDUSTRY
JIM GREGORY – AG CHEMICALS & PETROLEUM
RYAN BERTAIO – KINGS COUNTY FARM BUREAU

DON MILLS – WATER
BILL TOS – NUT CROPS
GERALD THEODORE – SMALL FARMS

JOHNNY STARLING – AG PROCESSING
BOB PRYS – FEED/SEED & GRAIN
JIM MACIEL – AG EQUIPMENT

STAFF: MARK SHERMAN (559) 582-3211 EXT. 2675

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING February 28, 2008

Call to Order:

Chairman Bertao called the special meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee to order at 12:05 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room of the Agricultural Center of the Kings County Government Center, 680 N. Campus Dr., Hanford, CA.

Members Present:

Don Mills, Bill Tos, Charles Draxler,
Ryan Bertao, Gerald Theodore,
Jim Maciel, Jim Gregory, Chuck Draxler
Joe Neves

Members Absent:

Johnny Starling, Bob Prys

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Bill Zumwalt, Tim Niswander

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Kathy Sargent

Auxiliary Members Present:

Carol Collar, Peggy Gregory

Auxiliary Members Absent:

Jay Salyer, Jeff Tyner, Kerry Arroues

County Staff Present:

Mark Sherman, Jeremy Kinney,
Terri Yarbrough, Chuck Kinney

Visitors Present:

See attached sign-in sheet

Unscheduled Comments:

None

Minutes: January 9, 2008 Special Meeting:

A Motion was made and seconded (Mills/Gregory) to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2008 meeting. The Motion carried unanimously.

Examination of the Use of Hail Cannons in Agriculture:

Bill Zumwalt opened the discussion and asked the Committee to examine if the use of hail cannons is considered to be a normal and customary farming practice under the context of the Kings County Right-to-Farm Ordinance. He also asked the Committee to decide if there should be a recommendation made to the Board of Supervisors to consider whether hail cannons should be regulated through the requirement for a zoning permit. Mr. Zumwalt informed those present that that Agricultural Advisory Committee only makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Chairman Bertao opened the floor to members of the public who came to speak about the hail cannon issue. The following people gave testimony regarding hail cannons in general and specifically regarding the hail cannon in the area of Chico and 5th Avenues: Hal Workman, Steve Eaton, John Strickner, Larry Workman, Mrs. Stanley Kjar, Manuel Ramirez, Kimberly Ramirez, Stan Palm, Larry Workman, Alicia Jacobo, Lisa Workman, Richard Diaz, David Rosedale, Penny Workman, Grant Anderson, Nick Soares, John Diepersloot, Linda Workman, Ryan Palm, Jeff White, Kevin Mercer, Vivian Bengle and Monte Panero.

The concerns of those giving testimony included: That the cannons scare animals; could cause hearing loss from the loud noise; that the shaking and rattling caused by the hail cannons could cause damage to homes; that the hail cannon located at Chico and 5th Avenues is too close to residences; that there is no advance warning before the cannon fires; that there is no scientific proof that the cannons work; that they degrade the quality of life in the area; and that cannons should have some type of restrictions for their use. Ag Commissioner, Tim Niswander, stated that he had attended a hail cannon demonstration on the morning of February 28 and gave a brief review. He also noted that the best results from the use of these cannons require that the hail cannon must start firing when the storm cloud is up-wind of the area it is protecting.

Chairman Bertao requested a show of hands from the audience as to whether it was their opinion that hail cannons are considered to be a normal and customary farming practice under the context of the Right to Farm Ordinance or if hail cannons are not normal and customary and should be regulated in Kings County. Thirty eight (38) people responded indicating they believe that hail cannons are not a normal and customary farming practice and should be regulated. Two (2) people responded indicating that they believe hail cannons are considered to be a normal and customary farming practice. Mr. Zumwalt reiterated that the show of hands was strictly an opinion of the people present and that the Ag Advisory Committee has no decision making power, and would only make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

After a discussion by the Committee members, a motion was made and seconded (Gregory/Mills) to form a subcommittee to examine the effects of the hail cannon at the site and also to request the Kings County Environmental Health Department to do sound readings of the hail cannon at Chico and 5th Avenue. The Motion carried unanimously. A subcommittee of Theodore, Mills, Tos and Maciel was appointed by Chairman Bertao to attend the sound study. The public asked that it be recognized and entered into the record that Mr. Tos, a subcommittee member, has a vested interest in hail cannons since Mr. Tos uses hail cannons in his farming operation. Chairman Bertao stated that a special meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible after the Health Department obtains sound readings and to allow the subcommittee to report back to the committee as a whole.

Miscellaneous:

Correspondence: none

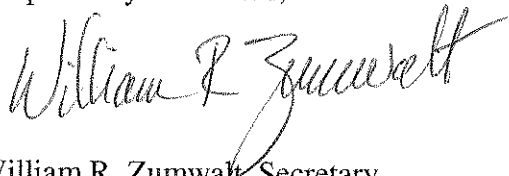
Member Comments: none

Staff Comments: none

Adjournment

With no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. A special meeting will be called as soon as possible after the subcommittee and the Environmental Health Department conclude their site visit. The next scheduled meeting is set for April 9, 2008, and will be held at the Agricultural Multi-Purpose Room of the Kings County Government Center at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William R. Zumwalt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

William R. Zumwalt, Secretary