

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 (559) 582-3211 EXT. 2675

MINUTES OF MEETING July 13, 2011

Call to Order:

Chairman Starling called the meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee to order at 1:35 p.m. in the Ag Commissioner's Multi-Purpose Room, 680 N. Campus, Hanford, California.

Committee Members Present:

Don Mills, Charles Draxler, Brian Potter,
Jim Gregory, Johnny Starling

Committee Members Absent:

Bill Tos, Bob Prys

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Kathy Sargent, Tim Niswander,
Jay Salyer

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Greg Gatzka, Carol Collar

Auxiliary Members Present:

Peggy Gregory

Auxiliary Members Absent:

Kerry Arroues, Jeff Tyner

Committee Coordinator Present

Committee Coordinator Absent

Joe Neves

County Staff Present:

Chuck Kinney, Terri Yarbrough,
Larry Spikes, Dave Robinson,
Michael Silverman

County Staff Absent:

Mark Sherman

Visitors Present:

Charles Meyer, Michele Costa, Joan Vernon,
Patrick Gorgin

Unscheduled Comments:

None

Minutes: January 12, 2011 Meeting:

A Motion was made and seconded (Mills/Gregory) to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2011 meeting. The Motion carried unanimously with Tos and Prys absent.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Kinney introduced Michele Costa as the new committee member representing the Farm Bureau.

NEW BUSINESS

Large Scale Solar Projects on Agricultural Land:

Mr. Gregory provided an overview of the discussion at the Planning Commission meeting regarding large solar projects. Several members expressed concern that prime agricultural land would be taken out of production. Mr. Kinney provided a copy of the California County Planning Directors Association's draft ordinance for the regulation of solar energy facilities and discussed proposed mitigation requirements. Mr. Spikes suggested that this Committee make a recommendation to the Planning Commission before the Planning Commission takes action.

SB676 – Industrial Hemp:

Mr. Niswander provided a fact sheet and a questions and answers sheet regarding SB676. Mr. Googin, representing Vote Hemp, gave an overview of SB676. Mr. Googin stated that this is an eight year pilot program in five counties (Kern, Kings, Imperial, San Joaquin and Yolo) and is already being done in Canada. Mr. Googin reported that there has been no opposition from farmers regarding industrial hemp. Sheriff Robinson reported that he had been doing research and has spoken with the Royal Mounted Police in Ottawa, Canada where the growing of industrial hemp has been allowed for more than five years with no issues. Mr. Charles Meyer spoke about the positive aspects of growing industrial hemp.

A motion was made and seconded (Mills/Gregory) to recommend supporting SB676 to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried unanimously with Tos and Prys absent.

Correspondence: Mr. Kinney read an email from Mr. Charles Meyer in support of growing industrial hemp.

Member Comments: Mr. Draxler asked about the election of the Vice Chair and asked if the meeting time could be moved back to 12:00. Mr. Kinney stated that both items would be on the next agenda.

Staff Comments: none

Adjournment

With no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:46 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is October 12, 2011 at 1:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chuck Kinney, Acting Secretary