



COUNTY OF NEVADA

Agricultural Advisory Commission (AAC)

Community Development Agency
Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures
950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 170
Nevada City, CA 95959
New.nevadacounty.com/nc/cda/agcomm

Brad Fowler, Chair – Other Livestock Industry
Laura Barhydt Vice Chair – Cattle Industry
Aleta Barrett - Farming Industry
Debbie Bierwagen – Agricultural Interests
Theo des Tombe- Forest & Related Industry
Robert Graham - Cattle Industry
Alyssa Mayo – Equine Industry
Seth Rosmarin- Agricultural Interests
Alex Szabo – Viticulture Industry

MEETING MINUTES

Agricultural Advisory Commission

March 17, 2021, Meeting

Members Present: Brad Fowler, Laura Barhydt, Sue Hoek, Seth Rosmarin and Aleta Barrett

Members absent: Robert Graham and Debbie Bierwagen

Staff Present: Chris de Nijs, Agricultural Commissioner; and Jennifer Acree, Office Assistant

Public Present: Dan Macon, Farm Advisor; Chip Close, Nevada Irrigation District (NID), Rich Johansen, Diana Gamzon -Cannabis Alliance, Deborah Totoonchie, Nevada County Farm Bureau, Malaika Bishop-Sierra Harvest

1. Call to Order

Commission Chair Fowler called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Commission Chair Fowler led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda

Commission Chair Fowler called for a motion to approve the agenda. Commission Member Barrett motioned. Commission Member Barhydt seconded the motion. **None abstained. None opposed. The motion was carried unanimously.**

4. Approval of Minutes of the January 20, 2021, Meeting

Commission Chair Fowler called for a motion to approve the January 20, 2021, Meeting Minutes. Commission Member motioned to approve the meeting minutes as written. Commission Member Barhydt seconded the motion. **None abstained. None opposed. The motion was carried unanimously.**

5. Public Comment

Diana Gamzon with the Nevada County Cannabis Alliance provided public comment regarding compassionate use program and the work that the Nevada County Cannabis Alliance is doing.

6. Agency Comment

A.) Nevada Irrigation District (NID)

Chip Close w/NID reported that to date, Bowman Reservoir has received 29.65 inches of precipitation which is 57% of average for that time of year. Current NID Reservoir Storage is at 177,953-acre feet, which is 66% of capacity and 82% of average. Snowpack is at 79% of average. NID is beginning to prep for dry year operations.

B.) Nevada County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD)

No report.

C.) UCCE Farm Advisor

Dan Macon reported on a webinar held last month which allowed agencies to better understanding the ranching business better. Dan provided an update on the livestock access pass. A prescribed burning on working landscape webinar scheduled for the end of the month. Burning demonstrations will be held in the next few months. Stock water may be a concern due to drought. Sierra Harvest is working on a farm guide.

D.) Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS)

No report.

F.) Sierra Harvest

Malaika provided an update on the virtual farm conference which had about 1,400 attendees. Working on the “every bite counts” campaign which highlights restaurants that purchase food from local producers. Sierra Harvest finished another Farm Business class, which had the most participants ever. Gleaning program is beginning to work year round.

7. New Business

A.) Presentation - Food Systems Assessment Report - Nevada County Food Policy Council

Malaika gave a presentation of a report completed by the Nevada County Food Policy Council, which conducted an assessment of the food system in Nevada County from 2015 to 2020. Highlights of the presentation included that locally produced food is a tiny part of our food market and that our food market is highly dependent on a national food system. It was estimated that Nevada County residents buy over \$340 million in food annually, but only a small percentage, 5%, was local. “Whole-sum” food was also discussed, which is a term given to food that has been produced locally, ecologically and or humanely produced. The goal of 20 percent of food consumed by the county’s population will be Whole-sum food by 2025 was also discussed.

Lastly Malaika discussed some of the next steps moving forward including, identify programs which address issues like policy change and development of infrastructure. Recruit local agencies, non-profits and others to incorporate the 20% by 2025 challenge. Measure progress towards the goal by improving indicators and developing baselines. And finally continue to maintain and increase participation within the Food Policy Council.

B.) AB 1103 (Dahle) - Agricultural Pass Program - Possible support recommendation to BOS (action)

Agricultural Commissioner Chris de Nijs reported that AB 1103 was introduced in February of 2021 by Assemblywoman Megan Dahle. This bill would create an agricultural pass program allowing farmers and producers to access their farmland during a disaster. If passed, this bill will authorize a county agricultural commissioner or other agency to issue an identification document granting a producer access to their farm or ranch during a natural disaster.

The bill mandates the State Fire Marshal, to develop training curriculum for agricultural producers eligible for the program. An ag pass program like this is being discussed currently at the local level and includes Placer and Nevada County agencies.

Chris included this item for possible support from the AAC. If supported, a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors may be made. The Commission expressed support for this bill and agreed to request the Board of Supervisors to support it also.

Commission Chair Fowler called for public comment. Seeing and hearing none, Commission Chair Fowler called for a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors they support AB 1103.

MOTION:

Commission Vice Chair Barhydt motioned to recommend to the Board of Supervisors they support the Agricultural Pass Program via AB 1103. Commission Member Barrett seconded the motion. **None abstained. None opposed. The motion carried unanimously.**

8.) Old Business

A.) Update to Land Use Development Code, Chapter XIV, Agricultural Lands, and Operations (Right to Farm Ordinance): Recommendation to BOS (action)

The Nevada County Farm Bureau's Executive Board presented the updates to the AAC for approval and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. The AAC reviewed the revisions during the November 18, 2020, regularly scheduled meeting. The revisions will make the ordinance more consistent with current state law. The Board of Realtors and County Counsel have reviewed the proposed revisions with little comment. Chris included the draft document showing the tracked changes. The updates/revisions included are as follows:

1. Addition of Agritourism.
2. Clarifies that ag operations will not be considered a nuisance.
3. Requires a statement of disclosure be signed and recorded with the County Recorder when there is a transfer of real property
4. Revises the resolution of disputes to allow the CAC to mediate the issue. The dispute may go to arbitration of an agreement is not reached.

There were no further questions for staff and no further commission discussion.

Commission Chair Fowler called for public comment. Seeing and hearing none, Commission Chair Fowler called for a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the revised Right to Farm Ordinance as presented.

MOTION:

Commission Member Barrett motioned to recommend to the Board of Supervisors they approve and adopt the revised Right to Farm Ordinance as presented. Commission Vice Chair Barhydt seconded the motion. **None abstained. None opposed. The motion was carried unanimously.** (Commission Members Bierwagen and Graham were absent).

B.) Update to Nevada County Agricultural Advisory Commission Bylaws: Possible recommendation to BOS (action)

Pursuant to recent discussion to update the commission bylaws, Chris included a draft document of the revisions in the commission meeting packet. Chris summarized the revisions previously suggested. The draft revisions are specific to the following sections of the bylaws:

1. Section IV (D) – Organization
2. Section V (A) (1) – Membership

The revisions will allow for one member appointed by the Board of Supervisors to serve as ex-officio (non-voting) member of the commission. It also allows the three industry vacancies to be filled.

There were no further questions for staff and no further commission discussion.

Commission Chair Fowler called for public comment. Seeing and hearing none, Commission Chair Fowler called for a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors they approve and adopt the revised AAC bylaws as written.

MOTION:

Commission Vice Chair Barhydt motioned to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the proposed revised bylaws. Commission Member Barrett seconded he motion. **None abstained. None opposed. The motion was carried unanimously.** (Commission Members Bierwagen and Graham were absent).

9. Agricultural Commissioner’s Report

Agricultural Commissioner Chris de Nijs informed the Commission that COVID vaccines were now available for the Food and Ag Industry. AAC interviews are set for next week. Chris also told of his participating in his advocacy work with USDA and federal legislatures. Also, the Department is recruiting for multiple Ag tech position. Chris also reported on the Noxious weed booklet that was completed with RCD as well as a Wolf from Oregon (OR93) that made it down to Mono County. Lastly that 2251 nutria have been taken in the California Central Valley since March 2017.

10. Member Announcements

Commission member Hoek-Theresa Youngman is the new Farm Service Agency advocate. Commission member Barhydt- PNSSNS is still trying to get producers to fill out their forms. Membership in PNSSNS for Nevada County has been declining. RCD is working on a farm trail map. Commission member Fowler- Calving is happen now, stock ponds are not yet full. Things are looking good.

11. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Chris de Nijs, Agricultural Commissioner

Approved on: 7/21/2021
Date

For Brad Fowler

Commission Chair, Brad Fowler