

**CITRUS PEST DETECTION PROGRAM
CENTRAL CALIFORNIA TRISTEZA ERADICATION AGENCY**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
22847 Road 140, Tulare, California**

October 18, 2017

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners: Central Valley PCD (CVPCD) – Stan Ishii, Dennis McFarlin (alternate); Kern County Citrus PCD (KCCPCD) – John Fisher, Dennis Johnston (alternate), Jonathan Moody; Southern Tulare County Citrus PCD (STCCPCD) – Steve Scarbrough, Jim Zimmerman. **Staff:** Jill Barnier, Program Manager; Dr. Subhas Hajeri, Plant Pathologist/Lab Operations Manager; Karen Westerman, Field Operations Manager. **Others:** Tom Mulholland, Kevin Severns (growers); Marilyn Kinoshita, Tulare County Ag Commissioner; Teri Blaser, Sylvie Robillard, Judy Zaninovich (grower liaisons); Lynn Lampe, CPA, auditor. **Commissioners absent:** John Corkins (KCCPCD); James McKinney (CVPCD).

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Ishii called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. and welcomed attendees.

II. OPEN SESSION:

A. Public Comments: Chairman Ishii indicated that public comments would be welcome during the course of the meeting as each agenda item was addressed.

B. Minutes: It was moved by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner alternate McFarlin, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 29, 2017 as presented. The motion carried on a voice vote, all present voting AYE.

C. Presentation of 2016-17 Annual Audit: Lynn Lampe, CPA, of M. Green and Company, explained that in performing the audit they performed a sampling of transactions and reviewed internal controls. Since there were no problems in either case, it was unnecessary to issue a management letter. She offered an overview of the “*Management’s Discussion and Analysis*” section, and pointed out the operational details prepared by Program Manager Jill Barnier. Ms. Lampe explained that the unqualified opinion in the *Independent Auditors’ Report* is the best available. She reviewed key details of the Financial Statements (*Balance Sheet* and *Statement of Activity*), *Notes to Financial Statements*, *Required Supplemental Information*, and *Yellow Book* analysis required due to the Agency’s Specialty Crop Block Grant award.

D. Joint Meeting of Boards of Directors of the San Joaquin Valley Citrus Pest Control District held August 29, 2017 (Approve Notes): The group reviewed the Notes. There were no corrections.

E. Technical Advisory Committee Meeting held September 28, 2017: Referring to the draft minutes provided, Ms. Barnier reported on the TAC meeting, focusing on the formal recommendations, which were:

- “to proceed with the HLB Pilot Project as proposed, with the following additions: 1) include testing of multiple pests; 2) provide in-depth training of personnel; 3) evaluate while in progress, recording any and all problems encountered, and conclude with a SWOT Analysis (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) to report back to the TAC;” and
- to develop “a new Effective Plan, transferring emphasis from CTV to HLB in a multi-pest program utilizing a high-risk survey model, including an appropriate amount of CTV sampling in order to retain suppressive quarantine status and to protect the Lindcove Research and Extension Center.”

With regard to the recommended training, Ms. Barnier reported that plans are already under way to get the needed in-depth training by sending 12 staff members to Florida at the end of October for direct exposure to HLB symptoms and impacts. This includes four seasonal crew leaders who will

become trainers in the spring when the program expands. On their return from Florida, these 12 employees will be engaged in the fall pilot project, which will provide an opportunity to work with new collection pattern(s), sample tissue selection, and sample handling protocols. Field work will be conducted over approximately three weeks, to accumulate a significant number of samples to increase the throughput of the PCR laboratory, where testing for multiple pathogens will occur.

F. Joint Districts Discussion: Potential for Regional Application of TAC Recommendation for Development of New Effective Plan Transferring Emphasis from CTV to HLB: Grower liaisons reported that total HLB positives in the state to date have risen to 206, all in southern California. Sylvie Robillard and Teri Blaser gave an update on recent ACP finds in Fresno and northern Tulare counties. Judy Zaninovich reported that Kern County ACP finds have jumped, though they remain much lower than last year at the same time. A discovery of nymphs in a commercial orchard has been treated, and all other finds were adults on traps. She stated that there has been a pattern of increased finds in the fall, so they are watching carefully. A change this year is that recent finds have been mostly in commercial groves, rather than in residential areas as in the past.

In general discussion, a wide variety of opinions, concerns, and suggestions were offered, including:

- Acknowledgement of the value of using a risk model, but concern about the extended amount of time it has been taking to get model updates.
- The importance of applying practical common sense to scientific design, maintaining a grower-focused vision.
- The importance of getting everyone on board for a joint effort, balanced by a question about what could be done jointly that individual Districts couldn't do alone.
- Time is of the essence, and it is critical to get an activity plan designed (with a definition of operations, and a budget developed) for presentation to all potential participants in order to achieve a cohesive effort.
- The plan must be legally defensible.
- CDFA response time: while it has been very good as regards removal of PCR-confirmed HLB positive trees, a desire was expressed for more response to "inconclusive" PCR results. Further, a desire was expressed to have some CPDPC funding and test information shared back to the Districts. It was pointed out that there is unlikely to be any sharing of information from CDFA to Districts that have no removal program.
- County Boards of Supervisors must also be engaged.
- There should be more information flow to and from growers, i.e., educational mailer(s) and/or a grower survey to determine what growers will support. It may be necessary to hire a consultant to pull this together.
- Districts may be able to implement Early Detection Technologies before CDFA would find it acceptable to do so.
- Confirmed positive nymphs should be considered a solid basis for host tree removal.
- After this third joint meeting, it is time to turn from talk to action. Potential candidates representing growers, CPDPC, science and Districts were mentioned to serve on a plan development committee to move this effort forward, with a hired facilitator.

It was moved by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner alternate Johnston, to form a committee and hire a facilitator to create a white paper addressing these issues, with targeted completion in 30 days. The motion carried on a voice vote, all present voting AYE.

G. Reports:

1. **Ag Commissioners:** Tulare County Ag Commissioner Marilyn Kinoshita reported that she recently attended a meeting in Sacramento that resulted in DPR approval of phosphine use in sweatshouses, under tarp, for packed fruit, for shipment to Australia and Korea. She also reported

that there is an item on the agenda for the November 14 Board of Supervisors' meeting to address abatement of abandoned citrus groves.

2. Pest Control District Updates: Reporting for the KCCPCD, District Chair Dennis Johnston stated that the District's voluntary, proactive non-commercial tree removal program is continuing. They are finding the cost to be about \$300 per tree, including staff time, removal expenses, and incentive payment. Chairman Ishii reported that the CVPCD Board met and agrees with the TAC recommendations. STCCPCD Chair Jim Zimmerman reported that his District Board met, and are highly supportive of a cooperative effort engaging all valley pest control districts in the fight against HLB. He shared comments from the District's draft minutes, again emphasizing the importance of a collective effort.

3. Departmental Operations:

a. Field Activities – August and September, 2017: Field Operations Manager Karen Westerman reviewed the written report of field activities.

b. Laboratory Activities – August and September, 2017: Laboratory Operations Manager Subhas Hajeri reviewed the written report.

i. Update on Molecular Biology (PCR) Laboratory Activities: Dr. Hajeri stated that 180 samples taken from the screenhouse had been processed, and RNA was provided for use in Dr. Ray Yokomi's lab.

c. Greenhouse/Screenhouse Activities: Nothing new to report.

d. Administrative Activities:

i. Update on Risk-based Survey Model Development Project: Ms. Barnier noted that the technician hired in August will participate in the training during the late-October Florida trip mentioned previously.

ii. Income and Expenses: August and September, 2017: Ms. Barnier reviewed the reports.

iii. Review and Ratify Warrant Lists – August and September, 2017: **It was moved by Commissioner alternate Johnston, seconded by Commissioner alternate McFarlin, to ratify payment of the bills as listed on the warrant lists for August and September, 2017. The motion carried on a voice vote, all present voting AYE.**

iv. Capital Expenditures: None.

D. Announcements: None.

III. ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Ishii adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Stan Ishii, Chair

Jill Barnier, Assistant Secretary