County of San Mateo Planning & Building Department

Agricultural Advisory Committee

Natalie Sare, Chair
Peter Marchi, Vice Chair
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou
Crystal Chaix
Daniel Theobald
Ryan Casey
James Oku
John Vars
Marilyn Johnson
Andrew Miller
Jess Brown
Koren Widdel

County Office Building
455 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, California 94063
650/363-1825
planning.smcgov.org

MINUTES-REVISED

REVISED A CHAIR COMMENT FOR ITEM 3

Monday, August 10, 2026

IN-PERSON WITH REMOTE PARTICIPATION

A full recording of this meeting can be accessed on the official government YouTube channel of the County of San Mateo at: https://www.smcgov.org/planning/event/agricultural-advisory-committee-meeting-august-10-2026.

Call to Order
Chair Natalie Sare called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Member Roll Call

Regular Committee Members Present:
James Oku
Natalie Sare
Peter Marchi
Ryan Casey
John Vars
Crystal Chaix
Marilyn Johnson

Regular Committee Members Not Present:
Cole Mazariegos-Anastassiou
Daniel Theobald

Nonvoting Committee Members Present:
Koren Widdel, San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner

Nonvoting Committee Members Not Present:
Andrew Miller, UC Co-Op Extension Representative
Jess Brown, San Mateo County Farm Bureau Executive Director

Planning Liaisons Present:
Robby Miller, San Mateo County Planning & Building Department

Public Comment to allow the public to address the Committee on any matter **not** on the agenda. If your subject is not on the agenda, the Chair will recognize you at this time.

SPEAKERS
Kerry Burke, announces Half Moon Bay event and issues about capturing stormwater runoff in rural areas.

Action To Set Agenda & To Approve Consent Agenda Items

1. Consideration of the Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee for February 10, 2025, March 10, 2025, and July 13, 2026.

SPEAKERS
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks what to do if she wants to vote against one of the minutes or needs to abstain.
County Counsel, Brian Pettit, responds that the Committee should break the minutes out.

COMMITTEE ACTION:
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, motions approve the February 10, 2025 minutes. Committee Member, James Oku, seconds motion. **Motion passed 5-0-1 (Abstain: Johnson).**

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, motions to approve the March 10, 2025 minutes. Committee Member, James Oku, seconds motion. **Motion passed 6-0.**

Committee Member, James Oku, motions to approve the July 13, 2026 minutes. Committee Member, Peter Marchi, seconds motion. **Motion fails 2-2-3 (Nays: Johnson and Chaix; Abstain: Vars, Casey and Sare).**

Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, motions to approve the July 13, 2026 with revision noting that the inaudible transcript is questionable. Committee Member, James Oku, seconds motion. **Motion passed 4-0-3 (Abstain: Vars, Casey and Sare).**

Committee Member, James Oku, motions to set the agenda. Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, seconds motion. **Motion passed 7-0.**

Regular Agenda

2. Wells and Domestic Water Systems Ordinance Update Presenter: San Mateo County Director of Environmental Health, Charles Ice.

SPEAKERS
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, asks if fee is per unit or all units.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that it is all units.
Committee Member, James Oku, asks if this is only for farm labor housing or includes other non-farming units like ADU's.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that this is only for farm labor housing and modeled

after apartments. Adds that this was proposed due to contamination found during the farm labor housing task force.
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks if there are any existing regulations for housing units under 5 units.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that testing only happens when the water source is established.
Committee Member, John Vars, asks whether this is an annual fee
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds in the affirmative.
Committee Member, John Vars, asks whether the fees change based on number of units.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that fees are the same for units between 1-4.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, asks how often tests need to be submitted for analysis and urges annually instead of quarterly to reduce paperwork for farmers, and what the 5 year inspections of units will be looking at.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that fees were reduced and quarterly proposed to balance that.
San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner, Koren Widdel, asks how the tests are submitted by farmers.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that they are electronically submitted and dropped off at labs approved by the State.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, responds that the cost is more than $42 because there is shipping cost, packed in ice, and most of the labs are in Salinas.
Committee Member, John Vars, asks if the tests are per unit or per water system.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds per water system.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, responds that he likes the old way better.
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks how 5 and over units are done.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds annual testing and visit every three years.
Chair, Natalie Sare, states that she is concerned that this might deter farmers from creating and maintaining farm labor housing units.
Committee Member, James Oku, shares the concern and asks about the application process.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds.
Committee Member, John Vars, shares the concern about these proposed rules and adds it's a bit unfair to farmers since it is not being applied to other.
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, agrees.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that the farm labor task force found that 55% of these units were found to have contamination.
Committee Member, James Oku, asks how many of the 55% farm labor housing units were already enrolled in the farm labor housing programs.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that he does not have an answer.
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks for comparison of the 5 and over fees and regs with the under 5 proposal, and to see if farmers could be allowed to opt into the 5 and over rules.
Presenter, Charles Ice, agreed to send to Planning Liaison.
Chair, Natalie Sare, opens public comment.

Public Member, BJ Burns asks about whether new applicants need a 50-foot seal for wells.
Public Member, Kerry Burke, states that affordable housing is more restrictive on owners due to deed restrictions and not allowed on Williamson Act properties. The Health Department has the right to ensure farm laborers are safe since many have no other options to live. Suggests an option where the county does the testing instead of

the farmer.
Presenter, Charles Ice, responds that there are great suggestions and the inspections will mirror what currently happens with units 5 and over.
Public Member, Bridget Jett, voices concern over current regulations of water testing, encourages a committee to advocate for better regulation for the County, and wants more clarification about what the testing is looking for and consistency between well regulations.
Chair, Natalie Sare, closes public comment.

3. <u>Annual Workplan</u> Presenters: San Mateo County Planning & Building Assistant Director, Sophie Mintier and Planning Liaison, Robby Miller.

SPEAKERS:
Committee Member, James Oku, states concern about Moonridge audit being removed and delay in the Agritourism guidelines.
Presenter, Sophie Mintier, responds that the County cannot commit to an Moonridge audit, but will reach out for answers and include in a future Planning Liaison Report.
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks to have the Committee review the Agritourism Guidelines before promoting it, and agrees with James about Moonridge update being needed particularly around ownership.
Planning Liaison, Robby Miller, asks that the indicator for progress be changed to Q2 2027 if the Committee wants to review Agritourism Guidelines.
Presenter, Sophie Mintier, responds that Q1 can stay as it is not mandatory, and reiterates that an audit is not something the Department or AAC can commit to.
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks if the Farm Stand Guidelines covers pop-up farm stands.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, responds in the affirmative.
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks if enforcement of pop-ups was included.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, responds that he believes it is included.
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks that any Farm Stand Guidelines do not take away existing stands.
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, asks if the Farm Stand Guidelines are the same as what was worked on a few years ago.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, responds in the affirmative and adds that a subcommittee was created.
Committee Member, John Vars, asks if Staff could share the past comments from the Committee.
Presenter, Sophie Mintier, responds in the affirmative.
Supervisor Mueller Aide, Mike O'Neill, states that the Sheriff has been responsive about enforcing pop-up stands and shutting them down.
Presenter, Sophie Mintier, asks for clarification on the goal to improve communication with agricultural related organizations.
Committee Member, James Oku, responds that Midpeninsula Open Space practices about leasing and water issues are top of mind.
Chair, Natalie Sare, mentions a workshop included to invite Mid Pen Open Space to attend the AAC meeting and give us information on their policies in leasing and they accept it.
Presenter, Sophie Mintier, responds that the Committee cannot control whether agencies come for input.
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, adds that the Committee wanted information regarding their grazing leases and row crop.

Presenter, Sophie Mintier, suggests adding 'through regular or periodic information updates' at the end of the Goal.
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, states that the Agricultural Ombudsmen no longer attends meetings and would be helpful.
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, mentions that POST used to come and make presentations and no longer does so, and that their recent project at the beach took away farm labor housing.
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks for public comment.

COMMITTEE ACTION:
Committee Member, James Oku, motions to approve the Workplan with revisions discussed. Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, seconds motion. **Motion passes, 7-0**.

4. SB 707-Teleconferencing (20 min) Presenters: Deputy County Attorney, Brian Pettit.

SPEAKERS:
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks if applies to long term or short-term disability.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that it applies to both.
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, asks who needs to be disclosed when remote.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that anyone over the age of 18 and need to disclose their relationship to you.
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks if just cause quorum is in person or online.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that only in person counts toward quorum.
Public Speaker, Bridget Jett, asks if it is possible that all Committee members could participate remotely.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds in the affirmative.
Committee Member, John Vars, asks if the remote option for public remains the same.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that the remote option would be required instead of optional.
Committee Member, James Oku, asks if the public will be required to have their camera on like member would need to.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that the public would not be required.
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks if the Chair and Vice Chair could be remote.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that that is possible and adds that it is common practice for the Chair to relinquish their duties to the Vice Chair if they are participating remotely because it is easier to control the meetings in person.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, states for the record that it is 8 p.m. and the Committee has a habit of going overtime.
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, responds that the Committee has no end time.
Chair, Natalie Sare, opens public comment.
Public Speaker, Bridget Jett, asks if there is a sunset clause and whether the Board of Supervisor considered this in their recommendation to the Committee.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that the Board of Supervisors took action to authorize the Committee to approve fully remote options, but did not make any recommendations; Believes that the sunsetting provision was removed by SB 707.
Public Speaker, James, asks if a member could start the meeting in person and leave and dial in or vice versa.
Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds in the affirmative. Adds that the sunsetting clause is 2030.
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, asks what other Boards are doing this.

Presenter, Brian Pettit, responds that he knows of the Committee on Disabilities voted to do a hybrid version, and the North Fair Oaks Community Council voted to do fully remote option.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, states that this fully remote option could improve Member and public participation.

COMMITTEE ACTION:
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, motions to approve fully remote option allowed under SB 707. Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, seconds motion. **Motion passes, 6-1 (Nay: Chaix)**.

5. Meeting Location & Time - Presenter: Planning Liaison, Robby Miller.

SPEAKERS:
Chair, Natalie Sare, asks if there is an end time for the Supervisor's Office.
Presenter, Robby Miller, responds that there is an agreement between the mall property management and the Supervisors Office to keep a door open for public access since they normally lock all the doors between 8:30 and 9:30.
Committee Member, Ryan Casey, says that moving the meeting location just for more time is a bad idea and the increase distance makes coming to meetings much more difficult. Strongly recommends the library location for its convenience and adds that the Committee can do things to fit within the two hours.
Public Speaker, Bridget Jett, agrees that the library location is more centrally located; Wants members to be able to go over time if needed to be fair to applicants; Encourages members to show up in person instead of remote.
Chair, Natalie Sare, says that either space is OK with her and appreciates the ability to see all the members and public at the Supervisor's Office.
Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, says that the meeting has gone for 2:20 minutes tonight and thinks that it was efficient and wants the Supervisors Office because of no time restraint.

COMMITTEE ACTION:
Committee Member, Crystal Chaix, motions to hold meetings at District 3 Supervisors Office with a start time between 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Committee Member, Marilyn Johnson, seconds motion. **Motion fails, 3-4**. (Nays: Vars, Casey, Oku, Marchi)

Committee Member, Ryan Casey, motions to hold meetings at the Half Moon Bay Library with a start time of 6:00 p.m. Committee Member, John Vars, seconds motion. **Motion passes, 4-3**. (Nays: Chaix, Sare, and Johnson)

6. COMMITTEE MEMBERS UPDATES & QUESTIONS

SPEAKERS:
Vice Chair, Peter Marchi, states that POST project on the beach removed farm labor housing with support from the State and it's ironic because the State is coming after the City of Half Moon Bay for not building enough housing.

7. PLANNING LIAISON REPORT

SPEAKERS:
None

8. ADJOURNMENT Chair, Natalie Sare, adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.
