

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES  
June 28, 2023**

A meeting of the California Avocado Commission (CAC) Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, June 28, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. with the following people present:

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jason Cole  
Rob Grether  
Jessica Hunter  
Rachael Laenen

**STAFF PRESENT**

April Aymami  
Ken Melban  
Jeff Oberman  
Terry Splane

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Kurt Bantle  
Rick Carey  
John Cornell  
Dan Coxe  
Ohannes Karaoghlanian  
Joanne Robles-Swanson  
Jamie Shafer

**OFFICIALLY PRESENT**

Katie Cook, *USDA*  
Dennis Manderfield, *CDFA*  
George Soares, *Kahn, Soares & Conway*  
Tim Spann, *Spann Ag Research & Consulting*

**ITEM #1 CALL TO ORDER**

**Roll Call/Quorum – Item 1.a.**

Rob Grether, CAC Executive Committee chairman, called the meeting to order 9:03 a.m. and established a quorum.

**Introductions – Item 1.b.**

April Aymami, CAC industry affairs director, announced the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) representatives, CAC staff, legal counsel and known guests participating in the meeting.

**ITEM # 2 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Rick Carey stated that he had emailed a written public comment and requested that CAC staff display his comments on the screen for attendees to read and incorporate them into the official meeting minutes.

Public Comments Submitted by Rick Carey are attached to the permanent copy of these Minutes and identified as EXHIBIT A.

Joanne Robles-Swanson commented thanked Terry Splane and the marketing team for providing handouts to the Avocado Growers of California's booth at the San Diego County fair. She noted that during her time working the booth she surveyed consumers about their knowledge of California avocados, which indicated that they were not checking for country of origin, were not aware it was California avocado season, did not know where to go to purchase California avocados and that Generation Z preferred ripe avocados for immediate consumption. In addition, Ms. Robles-Swanson commended CAC leadership on the development of the Government Affairs Task Force and looked forward to the work being done to identify what pathways exist or could be developed to support the viability of the California avocado industry.

Dan Coxe echoed Ms. Robles-Swanson's comments regarding the consumer comments at the AGC booth. With regard to Mr. Carey's public comments, Mr. Coxe stated that the AGC had not had an opportunity to review and therefore neither supported, nor condoned, Mr. Carey's position.

**ITEM # 3 CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Consider approval of Executive Committee meeting minutes of May 31, 2023 – Item 3.a**

Mr. Grether stated the May 31, 2023 meeting minutes had not yet been finalized and reviewed by the Committee, therefore approval of this item would be tabled for the next Executive Committee meeting.

#### **ITEM # 4 PINE TREE RANCH LEASE RENEWAL TERMS**

Ken Melban, CAC vice president of industry affairs and operations, reported that at the June Board meeting, the Board had given authority to management to work with the Executive Committee to finalize lease renewal terms for Pine Tree Ranch, should the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation not accept the revised terms approved by the CAC Board, which included language specific to completing the installation of the variable frequency drive well pump. He noted that due to Cal Poly's Board schedule, they would be unable to present the modified language prior to the existing lease termination date of June 30, 2023, therefore CAC management and Cal Poly agreed that an amendment of the current lease, extending the term by 90-days, should allow for Cal Poly to complete the installation of the VFD prior to September 30, 2023, at which point, CAC could execute the lease extension under the new approved terms at that time.

#### **MOTION:**

***The Executive Committee approves management's recommendation to execute an amendment on the Pine Tree Ranch lease, extending current terms through September 30, 2023 to allow for Cal Poly to complete installation of the VFD.***

***(Cole/Laenen) MSC Unanimous***

**MOTION 23-6-28-1**

#### **ITEM # 5 UPDATE ON THE OVERALL ADMINISTRATION OF THE COMMISSION**

Jeff Oberman, CAC president, provided an update on the Commission activities since the last Executive Committee meeting. He stated that CAC was currently in the management phase of planning, with internal meetings being conducted within the marketing and industry affairs departments. The results of these planning sessions would be presented at the August CAC Board meeting.

In addition, Mr. Oberman reported that earlier in the year, in consultation with the Executive Committee, it was determined that while there was a need for CAC to conduct a formal strategic planning session among the Board, that it was important to bring the new Vice President of Marketing on staff to allow for their involvement in the process, therefore formal strategic planning would not take place this fiscal year. Mr. Oberman stated that instead, direction was given to explore executive coaching options and that at this point he had received four proposals, which were currently under review with guidance from Chairman Grether. He commented that a decision on an executive coaching proposal would be made very soon and would utilize monies in the CAC budget previously earmarked for strategic planning.

#### **ITEM #5 CLOSED SESSION REGARDING APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF AN EMPLOYEE PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 11126(a)**

***The Committee may go into closed session to discuss and make recommendations regarding appointment, employment or dismissal of an employee. – Item 6.a***

Mr. Grether convened a Closed Session of the CAC executive committee members, CAC staff present (Aymami, Melban, Oberman and Splane), legal counsel and CDFA representative at 9:20 a.m.

***Return to open session and announce action taken in closed session, if any. – Item 6.b***

Mr. Grether returned to open session at 9:38 a.m. and announced that the committee had taken no action in Closed Session.

#### **ADJOURN MEETING**

Mr. Grether adjourned the meeting at 9:39 a.m..

Respectfully submitted,

California Avocado Commission  
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
June 28, 2023

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April Aymami, CAC Industry Affairs Director

I certify that the above is a true statement of the minutes of the June 28, 2023, CAC Executive Committee, approved by the CAC Executive Committee on August 9, 2023.

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Jessica Hunter, CAC Board Secretary

**EXHIBITS ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COPY OF THESE MINUTES**

Exhibit A      Public Comments Submitted by Rick Carey

Exhibit B      June 28, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary

**CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION**  
**AB 2720 Roll Call Vote Tally Summary**  
*To be attached to the Meeting Minutes*

<b>Meeting Name:</b> <i>Executive Committee Meeting</i>	<b>Meeting Location:</b> <i>Online (Zoom)</i>	<b>Meeting Date:</b> <i>June 28, 2023</i>
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<b><i>Attendees Who Voted</i></b>	<b><i><u>MOTION</u></i></b> <b><i><u>23-6-28-1</u></i></b>
Jessica Hunter	Yea
Rob Grether	Did Not Vote
Jason Cole	Yea
Rachael Laenen	Yea
<b><i>Outcome</i></b>	<b>Unanimous</b>