

**CALIFORNIA CITRUS PEST AND DISEASE PREVENTION PROGRAM  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 21, 2018

**Opening:**

The regular meeting of the California Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on May 21, 2018 in Visalia, California by Committee Chairman Jim Gorden.

**CPDPC Members Present:**

Craig Armstrong*	Jim Gorden	George McEwen	Brian Specht*
Ed Civerolo	Ted Grether*	James McFarlane	Keith Watkins
Aaron Dillon*	Nick Hill*	Etienne Rabe*	
Bob Felts, Jr.	Link Leavens*	Kevin Severns*	
John Gless*	Mark McBroom*	Roger Smith	

**CPDPC Members Absent:**

None

**CDFA Staff:**

Stephen Brown*	Tina Galindo*	Keith Okasaki*	Bob Wynn*
Jonathan Babineau*	Victoria Hornbaker	Maegan Salinas*	
Nick Condos	Sara Khalid*	Scosha Wright*	

**Guests:**

Price Adams*	Sara Garcia-Figuera	Neil McRoberts	Judy Zaninovich*
Bob Atkins	Beth Grafton-Cardwell*	Joel Medina-Reyes	Sandra Zwaal*
Jill Barnier*	Alyssa Houtby	Joel Nelsen	
Casey Creamer	Melinda Klein*	Gary Schulz	
Rick Dunn*	Jason Leathers*	Rayne Thompson	

**\* Participated via Webinar**

**OPENING COMMENTS**

Jim Gorden welcomed the Committee, staff, and members of the public participating in person and online and stated that there is a quorum for the meeting. He acknowledged that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Keith Watkins delivered a public comment objecting to the financial data on behalf of Etienne Rabe, objecting that 400 new employees would be unsustainable and it would be more prudent to build the program organically over time. Keith submitted that the committee was ill-equipped to make decisions on this topic due to insufficient time to digest or discuss at the subcommittee level.

## **DISCUSS PROPOSAL FOR DEDICATED PROGRAM RESOURCES**

Nick Condos explained that there is an opportunity available for the Committee to build the program while the legislature is building the fiscal budget and a program-supportive Secretary is in office.

Nick reviewed the long-term needs and resources for the program with the Committee. At the last CPDPC, the Committee set a \$32.5 million budget. The Senate submitted a one-time allocation of \$10 million which the assembly will vote on the last week of May 2018. In the event that Senate and Assembly do not agree on the amount, a conference committee will be convened to resolve the two budgets. Nick informed the Committee that the final decision for the budget should be decided on by June 15, 2018. If that date is not met, it will have to go into the next budget on July 1, 2019.

Nick estimated that building a core team for the citrus program would require anywhere from 3 to 12 months, beginning with dedicated management positions and building outwards. He suggested that if the program was to include more than 20-30 people, the transition process could require up to two years. Nick stated that there are currently 300 full time equivalent (FTE's) working on the citrus program who are borrowed from other programs to complete CPDPC program activities. This will continue even if additional positions and funding are not allocated, but this staff will not be 100 percent dedicated to the citrus program. Nick declared that the target staff projection is 415 FTEs, a 30% staff increase.

Nick specified that it is possible to devolve the program, reallocating workers to other programs, as well as increase it. It was suggested that seasonal workers could be used. Nick agreed that this was possible but advised against it, as this would require training and experience which is then lost when the seasonal employee is furloughed. In response to a question regarding the allocated budget, Nick explained that the budget currently allocates \$5 million for treating HLB-positive trees. He recommended, based on estimated future costs, to increase allocation to \$12.8 million for HLB-positive treatment. It was suggested that adding workers prior to additional management would see more immediate use. Nick cautioned the Committee that the labs can only process 130,000 samples a year, therefore some survey work is deferred due to lab capacity issues. He reminded the Committee that additional lab staff totaling \$399,000 will be hired in September, allowing 38,000 more plant samples to be processed per year. Nick agreed that with a full-capacity lab we will need more surveyors.

Concerns were cited about overages and the program growing out of hand, and being unable to downsize if necessary. Nick agreed that the citrus program has the potential to grow much larger than similar programs or boards, but that state employees can be laid off in approximately six months as necessary.

Joel Nelson stated that two weeks is insufficient to introduce figures to the Senate beyond the initially-discussed \$10 million.

Bob Atkins suggested that the issue is two-pronged: the budgetary amount of \$10 million and hiring authority to use the existing budget for hiring dedicated staff. In response to questions,

Nick Condos explained that legislature must be the one to authorize new positions despite being funded by grower contributions among others.

Several members asked for partial estimates on the new citrus division. Nick estimated fulfilling the full proposed organizational chart for the citrus program would cost \$70 million. He specified that hiring only the highest strategic priority personnel would cost \$40 million. This includes surveyors under EPM I South, HLB diagnostics, tree removal, quarantine, core administrators and personnel for the ACP detection program.

Victoria Hornbaker explained that the citrus program currently has only three dedicated employees. It was recommended that the program accommodate 20 core staff for the current year. It was suggested that there be a final budget change proposal by end of August 2018 for the 2019/2020 state fiscal year to consider further citrus division personnel.

**Motion:** To request that the Legislature establish up to 20 core positions dedicated to the Citrus Program within the 2018/2019 fiscal year budget resources to provide Committee Legislature and CDFA time to work on a budget change proposal for the 2018/2019 fiscal year and into the future. First: Keith Watkins

Second: Roger Smith

Motion Passes: The motion passed with 16 yays; Ed Civerolo, Aaron Dillon, Bob Felts, Jr., John Gless, Jim Gorden, Ted Grether, Nick Hill, Link Leavens, Mark McBroom, George McEwen, James McFarlane, Etienne Rabe, Kevin Severns, Roger Smith, Brian Specht, Keith Watkins and 1 nay; Craig Armstrong.

The committee was reminded that the National Academy of Sciences will need to testify that there is no cure for HLB yet, to justify the program being formed to protect the California citrus industry.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS & ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. The next Committee meeting will be held in Visalia, California on July 11, 2018 at 8:00 a.m.