

Thurston County Agriculture Advisory Committee

January 19, 2023

Meeting Minutes

https://youtu.be/OxDIE_he9DE

ATTENDEES:

Members Present: Joe Hanna (Chair); Chris Doelman; Gigi McClure (scribe); Glenn Schorno; Pat Labine; Gary Kline; Celeste Winther

Members Absent: Robert McIntosh; Jake Yancey (Vice Chair)

Ex Officio Present: Sarah Moorehead (Executive Director, TCD Staff); Stephen Bramwell (WSU Extension Director, Ex Officio)

Guest Speakers: Ashley Arai (Thurston County Agriculture Community Program Manager)

Guests Present: Loretta Seppanen; Greg Schoenbachler; Marcie Cleaver; Kayla McCarthy; Muhammad Ayub

Called to Order:

Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

Introductions of members and guests

Approval of Current Agenda – Motion to the agenda to include meet & greet of new applicant introduction (Pat/Chris) - passed

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes December 2022 (Chris/Pat) – passed

Committee Items Discussed:

1. **Applicant Meet & Greet:** Muhammad Ayub
2. **Executive Session:** Members departed the meeting at 7:16pm to 7:31pm to discuss personnel matters. Additional discussion was tabled, no decisions were made. No motion was present following the session.
3. **Public Comment:** Loretta Seppanen discussed the County work plan which is updated every 2 years. The BOCC had a meeting for mid-year additions, which the BOCC chose to consider for public comments. Items related to Agriculture are Beaver Creek Dairy rezoning to rural resource or industrial, Upcassel open space which is land that could return to Agriculture but own want to rezone to rural resource or industrial, and Black Lake quarry restoration to also turn into rural resource or industrial. Once the link is available there will only be 20 days to add comments.

Marcie Cleaver discussed the Farmland Trust was a recipient of a portion of a million-dollar donation from the Nisqually Tribe. They have various resources for farmers and looking to incorporate farmland preservation.

4. **Airport Letter** – possibly sent to the BOCC already. Updates requested.
5. **Comp Letter & Minority Report on By-Laws:** Letter sent to BOCC with no response.
6. **Discussion of New Issues:**
 - a. Consideration of applicants for a diverse committee not solely based on Farmer or Non-Farmer applications. Should the Ag committee retain current by-law of committee make-up or allow farmer members to apply for non-farmer availability which would require a change to the current by-laws. Gigi and Celeste will research and present finding to Ag. Committee at February meeting.
 - b. Is there any movement by the BOCC for the current open position? Information was requested and the county is working on identifying and selecting once additional information is received.
7. **Thurston County Ag Updates (Ashley Arai):**
 - a. January 11th there was a board meeting for Ag Critical Areas for co-changes
 - b. Updates to the Open Space Program to expand critical area for farm and Ag conservation lands. There is a board briefing scheduled for February 11th.
 - c. The application fee will not be taken forward at this time bring the proposed updates following a broader collection of information.
 - d. Long-Term Ag Stakeholder workgroup had the final meeting on January 31st, with a larger workshop in February.
 - e. VSP work group is extending VSP Monitoring report due in 2024 and looking for individuals interested in viewing Ag related data.
8. **Thurston Conservation District Update (Sarah Moorehead):**
 - a. The latest newsletter (January) added to the chat.
 - b. Election season for the Conservation Districts. March is election month. Election information is in the chat.
 - c. Second season of conservation starters podcast.
 - d. Annual Native Plant sell, and festival is coming up. Pre-Orders are good through January 31st.
 - e. Feedback appreciated on the no-till drill. Funded by the Conservation District and plan to purchase.
 - f. Legislative session has started, much of the Conservation District funding is looking good in the Governor's budget.
 - g. Pierce County has started their meat processing analysis has started. High need for several counties.

9. **WSU Update** (Stephen Bramwell):

- a. Meat processing is a need across several counties, and updates will continue to be provided to the Ag Committee as they are received.
- b. American Rescue Plan Act funded Ag labor to help cost share and reimbursement for training and attract people into the workforce.
- c. Southwest Washington Food Hub put together winter boxes and help to support the business side of farming.
- d. New farmer training call “Whole Farming Training” Thurston County.
- e. Grazing Association and ECO Studies are doing another workshop.

10. **Good of the Order:**

- a. Gary discussed a need for getting publicity out or finding a way to get information out on agriculture for public support and recognition for the committee. Is the Ag Committee still interested in reaching out to the schools to increase interest in farming?
- b. Review of by-law and relook the make-up of the committee beyond what the current membership
- c. Gary requested to send out a 2-page article for the future of farming which included the use of Biochar. Stephen Bramwell included in an email later in response to the question, the development of a biochar industry in the PNW to the Ag committee? There was discussion about the potential to better utilize biochar on a large scale to advance soil health, and this publication by WSU CSANR has some nice information in it. It is titled: Biomass to Biochar: Maximizing the Carbon Value <https://csanr.wsu.edu/biomass2biochar/>

11. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn (Gigi/Gary) - passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

Next meeting: February 16, 2023 @ 7pm

To

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83683927768?pwd=QXkyUVF3c3ZkRW9wbXdtNIRIQ1NTUT09>

Meeting ID: 836 8392 7768 Passcode: 187681

Local Call in Number 1-253-215-8782 US (Tacoma)

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Ag Advisory Committee Chat Log for January 19, 2023.

00:57:40 Farmer Muhammad Ayub: There seems to be a Hissong sound in the background

00:58:39 Stephen Bramwell: Gary maybe you can mute yourself, background noise, thx

01:09:28 Kayla McCarthy: Hi Farmer Ayub, what was the permaculture organization you mentioned?

01:39:35 Farmer Muhammad Ayub: Thank you so much. Really appreciate it!

01:41:10 Greg Schoenbachler: Good evening all, I've been having connectivity issues so I am called in and listening even though my zoom keeps falling off.

Thanks, Greg Schoenbachler

01:57:22 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston CD:TCD Newsletter: [Thurston Conservation District January Newsletter \(campaign-archive.com\)](#)

Elections Info: [Page not found – Thurston Conservation District \(thurstoncd.com\)](#)

Starters: <https://www.conservationstarters.com/>

Plant Sale & Festival: <https://store.thurstoncd.com/> Pre-orders end Jan 31st! ([thurstoncd.com](#))

02:03:14 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston CD:I have one more thing to add, only a few seconds of an update. :)

02:03:29 Farmer Muhammad Ayub: Reacted to "I have one more thin..." with ☺☺☺

02:03:44 Farmer Muhammad Ayub: Reacted to "TCD Newsletter: http..." with ☺☺☺

02:08:56 Loretta Seppanen: The bill on buffers for salmon is HB 1215 or SB 5266

02:25:01 Stephen Bramwell: MSU estimates \$60 to \$80 per ton, \$9 to \$43 per yard based on scale of purchase. I'm this varies a lot by location

02:25:26 Stephen Bramwell: "I'm sure this varies..."

02:26:32 Greg Schoenbachler: 1" over 1 acre is 135cy