

**Thurston County Agriculture Advisory Committee**

**June 16, 2022**

**Meeting Minutes**

<https://youtu.be/mbG8X1AlhZs>

**ATTENDEES:**

**Members Present:** Joe Hanna (Chair); Jake Yancey (Vice Chair); Robert McIntosh; Kevin Jensen; Pat Labine; Gigi McClure (scribe)

**Members Absent:**

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

**Guest Speaker:** Ashley Arai, Thurston County Community Planning

**Guests Present:** Loretta Seppanen; Maya Teeple; Nathaniel Jones; Glenn Schorno

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**Called to Order:**

Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:01pm

Approval of Current Agenda – Motion to approve (Robert/Jake) -passed

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes for May 2022 – (Robert/Kevin) – Passed

**Committee Items Discussed:**

1. **‘Agricultural Activities Critical Areas Update’ Briefing by Ashley Arai:** Exploring options to various approaches to the agricultural plan for new agricultural development within the county.
2. **Board of County Commissioner (BOCC) Draft Letter:** Sub-committee draft letter reviewed by Agricultural Committee in response to farming information requested on behalf of the BOCC. Motion: approve the letter in its current form, for signature by the chair and send to the staff and BOCC and followed by another letter with the issues raised by Ex Officios later with other suggestions. (Robert/Jake) – passed.
3. **Conservation Futures Update:** One application received, on the steamboat island, 228-acre undeveloped parcel with 1.65 miles of Puget Sound shoreline. Landowner agrees to wait for the Trust to raise the money to purchase the property. However, the owner would retain the right to retain sustainable timber rights.
4. **Project Notifications:** Letter sent to Agriculture Committee members for review and recommendation forward to TC Staff for review.

5. **Thurston Conservation District Update** (Sarah Moorhead): Links to June Newsletter in the chat for review with lots of updates and link to sign-up.
  - a. Livestock fencing workshop in partnership with WSU Extension.
  - b. Continuing feasibility studies about potential sites for the Conservation District. Link for more information provided below.
  - c. New state fiscal year starts July 1<sup>st</sup>. Hoping to get an increase in funding for short term easements and buffers. Pays farmers for the ground that the buffer is on. Link below
  - d. Still looking for a Veteran intern. There are several opportunities for placements.
  - e. WSDA scholarships: There are multiple resources with opportunities for scholarships through June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - f. Currently undergoing a mid-year budget review and hoping to hire additional staff member.
  
6. **WSU Extension Update** (Stephen Bramwell):
  - a. Farm walks:
    - i. July 18<sup>th</sup> – Tilth Alliance and Growers COOP organized visit to Kirsop Farm
    - ii. July 25<sup>th</sup> – Grazing Association scheduled a pasture walk Flying Cow Creamery
  - b. Western Coastal Restoration Resilience Initiative is hiring conservation interns from the Veteran Association, with WSU organizing 3-day training on grazing.
  - c. Food Hub is working with several schools with food aid distribution and raising funds. Hopefully the future will increase funding and pull in more support from farmers and buyers.
  - d. Working on a communication plan for Centennial Lands to build a comprehensive list for multiple programs.
  - e. Ag Labor Recovery Project. TC has set aside funding to assist with labor shortages.
  - f. Buckwheat shortages, there is an opportunity due to a worldwide shortage.
  
7. **Comp Plan Discussion:** Reviewed items in the draft on revising the agriculture section of the Comp Plan. Sarah Moorehead stated the Ag Committee can continue to submit comments at any time, and any previous items submitted are retained for record. According to Richard the recommendations may not have gone to County Staff.
  
8. **Public Comment:** Glenn Schorno – received a postcard from the County to put a committee together to appraise income farmland. Maybe we should request the County put out a post card to farmers that we are looking for people to fill these committee positions and hopefully this will assist in boosting candidates.
  
9. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn (Robert/Gigi) - passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.



New CREP funds likely in July 2022: <https://www.thurstoncd.com/working-lands/crep-conservation-reserve-enhancement-program/>

Hiring FarmLink Intern: <https://www.thurstoncd.com/get-involved/internship-opportunities/>

WSDA Meat Producers TA:

- Expand your knowledge of marketing, pricing, processing and production by attending the online, self-paced Western Meat School (register by June 30 to receive WSDA-sponsored scholarship), here: <https://agr.wa.gov/departments/business-and-marketing-support/regional/meat-and-poultry->

01:55:01 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston CD:I didn't mention that - but yes, there is a LOT of funding applications out to bring both TA and cost share \$ to TC producers. :)

02:01:40 Loretta Seppanen: Maya could best speak to Are we too late?