

Thurston County Agriculture Advisory Committee

March 17, 2022

Meeting Minutes

https://youtu.be/h--v_L0C0ow

ATTENDEES:

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

Members Absent: Tom Watson; Pat Labine

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

Guest Speaker: Andrew Deffobis (Thurston County Planning & Economic Development Dept.)

Guests Present: Loretta Seppanen; Celeste Winther

Called to Order:

Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

Attendee Introductions

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

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes for February – Motion to approve (Jake/Robert) – Passed with proposed changes to 5. Bylaws Proposed Update to read - Robert discussed proposed procedural change within the bylaws to guide meeting procedures. By laws will be sent out for review again to the Ag Committee prior to the next meeting.

Committee Items Discussed:

- 1. Farmer Member Candidate Meet and Greet:** Committee met with applicant, Celeste Winther's. Discussed her background, interest in the committee, and willingness to support the TCAAC efforts.
- 2. Executive Session:** Ag Committee met separately for 10 minutes to discuss personnel issues no decisions were made at that time. Committee will forward a letter for committee review and submission to the BOCC. Joe, Robert Kevin, and Loretta. Motion: To recommend Celeste Winther as a farmer member on the committee (Jake/Kevin) - passed
- 3. Conservation Futures Program (Andrew Deffobis, CPED):** Discussed conservation futures and was also seeking volunteers to serve on the annual ranking committee. Purpose for the ranking committee to review applications and makes recommendations to the BOCC. Volunteers: Robert McIntosh to serve as primary, and Joe Hanna to serve as alternate.

4. **YouTube Meeting Videos:** Does the Committee want the YouTube videos to be available to the public? As the video link is included in the meeting minutes, the committee felt there was no reason to change what we are currently doing.
5. **By Laws Proposed Changes:** Robert discussed proposed procedural change to assist with a procedure to follow in conducting our meeting when there was a disagreement or conflict. Robert proposed language that described how that disagreement or conflict would be resolved. This would include following a modified process of ‘Robert’s Rules of Order’ or vote by majority to do something else. Motion: Accept Robert’s proposal on ‘Roberts Rules of Order’ as it pertains to this committee (Jake/Joe) – passed with one non-vote.
6. **Agricultural Land Conservation Assessment Draft (Robert McIntosh):** Develop some sort of procedure for people with farmland who convert land to non-farmland uses could be assessed a finance contribution (tax or penalty) which would be paid into the Counties purchase of development rights fund. Believes it could start focusing on bond issues that could accomplish funding to purchase conservation rights on land within the County. Including the purchaser of the land would be responsible for paying the 7 years back tax. But ultimately the focus should be on the conversion from Ag to non-Ag land. Propose a committee to draft a proposal with all the ideas address during the meeting.
7. **Thurston Conservation District Update (Sarah Moorhead):**
 - a. Most current newsletter featuring POD cast. Link below.
 - b. Riparian Restoration – Project Highlights. Viewed the ‘River Bend Ranch’ video.
 - c. Viewed the ‘Frogs on the Farms’ program video.
8. **WSU Extension Update (Stephen Bramwell):** additional information in chat log
 - a. WSU project updates
 - i. Agricultural grants are open. PDF notice attached. Looking for contact information for farmers.
 - ii. Grazing Association meeting on March 31st. Planned as a 2022 educational event to discuss cooperatives and more.
 - b. Southwest Washington Food HUB, Growers’ COOP is starting up the food boxes for producers in the area.
 - c. Agriculture and Meat Processing Industry Impact briefing for Statewide and Thurston County COVID-19 impacts on agriculture, labor analysis, and proposed use of Thurston County ARPA Ag Labor set-aside funding.
 - d. March 29th, zoom meeting to focus on meat processing (Regional efforts & needs)
9. **Public Comment:** None

Other Business:

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn (Robert/Tom) - passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

Next meeting: April 21, 2022 @ 7pm

