

**THURSTON COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**McLane Building Conference Room
5033 Harrison Avenue
Olympia, WA 98502**

OCTOBER 24, 2013

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pat Labine, Chair
Chery Sullivan
E.J. Zita
Dave Nygard
Doug Wiseman
Erik Hagan

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Lentz, Eric Johnson, Robert McIntosh

STAFF: Lucas Patzek, WSU Thurston County Extension
Polly Stoker, WSU Thurston County Extension

GUESTS:

CALL TO ORDER – 7:05pm, Pat Labine, Chair

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – Minutes from September were approved.

REVIEW AGENDA –add STEDI, South Thurston Economic Development Initiative- Lucas

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS – The next meeting will be on December 5th, and will be the only meeting for November-December due to holidays.

DIRECTOR REPORT: n/a

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Invite committee-member applicants (Bill Wyman and Cam Thompson) to December meeting for an informal Q&A.

Bylaws Finalized – Lucas Patzek

We need to add a sentence to the current bylaw draft delineating the methods for modifying bylaws in future years. It was requested by committee-members that a minimum advance notice of one month must be made to the whole committee in order that everyone be made aware that considerations to modify the bylaws will be on a future meeting agenda. This gives each committee-member an opportunity to properly consider the bylaw modifications being considered and to submit a response, even if they cannot attend the future meeting during which a final decision will be voted upon

Sustainable Thurston Task Force – E.J. Zita

The Sustainable Thurston Task Force has forwarded their draft Plan to the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), which then concluded their draft process with input from the community to produce a series of policy recommendations in the Plan entitled: “Creating Places - Preserving Spaces - A Sustainable Development Plan for the Thurston Region.” E.J. Zita brought up the idea of the Committee drafting a letter to the Thurston Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) stating that the Committee would be delighted to help the BoCC navigate the Sustainable Thurston recommendations pertaining to agriculture as needs arise in the future. Lucas will work with E.J. Zita to draft an initial version of this letter.

Applicants for Membership – Lucas Patzek

The committee discussed helping the BoCC fill current committee vacancies by meeting with top applicants, ranking them, and providing recommendations to the BoCC following this process. The current applicant-pool is all non-farmers. Two applicants from this pool were chosen for an informal interview at the December committee meeting. They will be invited to attend this meeting and engage in a Q&A with the committee. Lucas passed out a draft applicant ranking form to the committee for approval. It was approved, and it will be used to provide recommendations to the BoCC. It was brought up that the committee is having a tough time getting farmers to apply to the committee, and that new approaches must be taken to attract farmer applicants. Doug Wiseman suggested everyone go out and contact farmers and explain what we do on this committee to try and get them to apply for membership.

STEDI – Lucas Patzek

Lucas introduced the committee to the South Thurston Economic Development Initiative (STEDI), which is a consortium of communities, agencies, organizations, and individuals that are focused on long-range economic and community development in the rural areas of Thurston County in Washington State. The current STEDI communities include the cities of Yelm, Rainier, Tenino, Bucoda, and the unincorporated communities of Grand Mound and Rochester. The STEDI organizing community partners include the Thurston Regional Planning Council, Thurston Economic Development Council, Washington State University Extension, and the Olympia-Lacey-Tumwater Visitor and Convention Bureau. STEDI is currently in the process of submitting a grant proposal to the USDA Rural Development’s Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) program to bring business technical services, including those pertaining to farm and food businesses, to rural Thurston County. A strong emphasis of the proposed work will be to help develop agriculture-related infrastructure by assessing needs and creating the appropriate private-public partnerships.

ADJOURN – 8:40pm, Pat Labine, Chair