

Date: Wednesday, July 9th, 2025
Time: 1:00 PM

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Advisory Committee Members Attending: Eric Umbreit, [John Forrest](#), Amber Graves, Forrest Carlson, Dylan Alsbach, Ryan Peterson, Martha Sullins, Brad Justice, Dennis Lacerte, Audrey Welsh

Commissioners' Office: Commissioner John Kefalas

Staff attending: Cary Weiner, Andy Weakland, Jessica Callen, Lesli Ellis , Matt Lafferty, Eric Fried

Other Members of the Community: Nissa Steinh, Owen Unext, Rebecca Wasserman-Olin, Rebecca Hill, James Thompson

1:00-1:20

Call to Order and Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 1:04pm

Amendments to the Agenda

- No Amendments to agenda requested

Approval of the Minutes

- May 14th, 2025
 - Minutes approved as is

Staff Updates

- Jess Callen
 - Two Demo Days occurred in June:
 - Solar Grazing and Grow Event
 - This was an Agrivoltaics Demo Day in coordination with Agrisolar Consulting
 - 45 attendees. The first half was at Jack's Solar Garden.
 - Soil Health Demo Day
 - 75 people at Olander Farms. Showcasing the difference in soil with water retention. Good learning opportunity for growers and all who attended.
 - Working with Eric Fried to create a one page document on the difference between Farm Stands and Farm Stores and possible new amendments around Farms Stands. Looking to support changes to building code and land use around Farm Stands. Matt Lafferty is also helping support the creation of this document as well.
 - Two upcoming events that are happening:
 - Soil Health Day at the Farmers Market coming up
 - Taste the Difference Event on July 26th at the Farmers Market
 - NoCo Farm Hop Event coming up on August 23rd.
- Cary Weiner

- Next AAB meeting we will start talking about the 2026 workplan. Please come prepared to discuss. Only two meetings left this calendar year to get this workplan finalized.
- This fall we will have an open recruitment period for AAB members. Three of the current members will have to re-apply. Forrest, Brad and Martha will need to reapply. Look for communication from the County Commissioners staff. We should also have one open member space as well in case any one else is interested in applying.

1:20-1:30

Commissioner Kefalas Updates

- The Larimer County Fair and Rodeo is coming up. August 1st through August 5th.
- Larimer Transportation Master plan is moving forward.
 - Tonight we have a joint work session with the Planning Commission and they will be presenting an update on the Transportation Master Plan.
 - The Planning Commission will most likely be adopting the master plan next Wednesday, July 16th during their hearings.
 - The master plan is looking at what our needs are in Larimer County over the next 25 years.
 - Polling survey coming out from our consultants that the Commissioners have been working with. This is in conjunction with the months of education outreach that has occurred about the transportation funding mechanism, a .15% tax increase that failed on last year's ballot.
 - Results of the survey will be in August and then we will make a decision on whether to try and put that tax increase back on the ballot for this November.
- Solid Waste is moving forward, hopes to open the new landfill north of Wellington by July 1st of next year as well as the transfer station.
 - This will be located on the west end of Trilby road.
 - Transfer Station will allow citizens to bring their stuff and provide their own trash service and then specialized trucks would compact everything and transfer across Trilby and Carpenter and up to the Landfill..
- The Water Master Plan has been submitted for an achievement award which is worthy for recognition.
- A Grant for Ground Water Study has been submitted.
- Poudre River trail easements are in place so that the last remaining section will begin construction and hopefully be completed this year.
- Introduction of James Thompson is the District Rep. Senator Michael Bennets regional director for North Eastern Colorado who is present at the meeting today.
- Commissioner Kefalas will be doing Story Time at the Farmers Market next Saturday, July 19th at 11:00am.
- Question around the intent of the ground water study:
 - Matt: Intent of the ground water study is to take a look at ground water supply around the county. Looking at the surface water and how it works and who owns the rights. Answering those kinds of questions.
 - Commissioner Kefalas: Ground water study is also an Important provision of the Water Master Plan.

1:30-3:25

Discussion Items and Action Items

1:30-1:50

- Larimer County Agricultural Economic Impact Study Update (Rebecca Wasserman-Olin)
 - Highlights of discussion
 - Would meat processors be included in the analysis of the survey?
 - No, unless they sold their own product directly to the consumer and reported that transaction.
 - Only going to account for what the vendors report their sales to the consumer on the census questionnaire.
 - Commissioner Kefalas: Are you able to calculate any kind of an economic multiplier with the information from this study?
 - Yes, we will be able to provide that information. That will also be available in the general summary.

- Commissioner Kefalas: How do the results for Larimer County compare to other regions or counties?
 - I was able to replicate the original counties in the original study presentation. There were 3 counties originally in the survey: Boulder County, Yolo County in California and the County in Oregon where Oregon State University is located (Benton County). The upward trend in the results for Larimer County was also part of a broader trend for the Colorado counties compared to the two out of state counties.
- What is the maximum number you are using for the Larimer County study:
 - 89% would be the max for this survey specific to Larimer County. It includes all of the agricultural sectors. IMPLAN, which is used to determine the high and low, can show specific data for Larimer County.
- Will we be able to see the changes in the individual food production sectors?
 - The Ag census data does not give a breakdown to each individual sector. But when we use IMPLAN we will be able to see those individual sectors.
- What is the root cause for the increase between the 1% food produced and consumed in Larimer County to over 5%.
 - Theory to what is driving that is state/federal funds that were coming in to support the local food industry. But this is also a question for the farmers that can explain more thoroughly.
- Commissioner Kefalas: Looking at any potential dips. There was some federal funding that encouraged schools to buy local but those funds are no longer available so we may not see those benefits continue forward in future studies.
 - School funding was something we looked into. At first glance we are not sure if any of the Larimer County Schools participated in the study. .

1:50-2:15

- Agricultural Land Use and Building Code Updates and Feedback (Eric Fried, Cary Weiner)
 - Highlights of discussion
 - There are two proposed changes that are highlighted in the memo that was provided
 - Jess: A farm stand that is 600 square feet doesn't have to go down to freezing depth. It does not need a concrete foundation. This type of information is what I believe the one pager that we are working on will help educate local farmers who are interested in having Farm Stands.
 - Can a Farm Stand have a door?
 - If the public is not going in then it can have a door. The key is if the public is allowed in and out of the door.
 - If the structure is under 200 square feet then it does not need any permit. If over then it does.
 - Conversation around looking forward to the one pager that Jess will be producing and making sure it includes specifics for producers to follow in order to be in compliance.
 - Audrey: Have there been any conversations around the parking requirements
 - This would be a land use code conversation.
 - Eric: I believe this is why Laura Walker started this in order to coordinate all of the codes and regulations from each department.
 - Cary: Please take a look at the Process Improvement document that is available in order to make sure this reflects what the board agrees with.
 - Scope of this document is really focused on the experience from the current process and the obstacles that individuals have while going through the process.

- Conversations around changing some of the language to reflect more of an Ag community (using the term “farmer” and “produce”) in the document.

2:15-2:35

- Legislative Updates and Input (Brad Justice)
 - Highlights of discussion
 - Please refer to powerpoint slides for further detail
 - Request to send any other bills that we may need to address during the meeting to Brad
 - James Thompson: Conversation around cuts that are happening with the passage of the new bill (BBB) in congress that are affecting producers. There are lots of issues that are happening in the Ag world with the new administration's directives.
 - Highlights on bills that may affect Forestry were briefly discussed as well.

2:35-2:55

- Water Master Plan and Palmer Land Conservancy Updates (Lesli Ellis)
 - Highlights of discussion
 - Thoughts from the board on the event in question and what may or may not work.
 - Is the main idea of this event education driven or is it more goal oriented?
 - Yes, the main idea would be to provide education to those who attend the event. In order to pull in those who typically might not engage.
 - Are you looking at just having a singular meeting or do you have future plans?
 - We would like to network and engage with participants in the future would be ideal.

2:55-3:00

Future Communication Items

Adjourn - Adjourned at 3:02pm

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