



Date: Wednesday, September 08, 2021
Time: 12:30 PM
Location: Virtual: Zoom Link - https://larimer-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5hutsuynTRCpmvMvmIJ5BA

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

The Larimer County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) met in person in the Lake Estes Conference Room in the County Courthouse at 200 W Oak Street, Fort Collins, CO and virtually via Zoom. The meeting started at 12:30 p.m.

The following Board members were present: Zach Thode (Chairperson), George Wallace (Vice Chairperson), Kristin Ramey (Secretary), Timothy Clouse (virtual), John Cravens (virtual), Karen Crumbaker (virtual), Franklyn Garry, Amber Graves (virtual), Travis Horton (virtual), Maureen McDonough, Greg Schreiner (virtual), Jon Slutsky, and Jennifer Bornhoft (virtual)

The following Board members were absent: Beth Conrey and Travis Rollins

The following officials and staff were present: John Kefalas, County Commissioner; Matt Lafferty, Principal Planner, and Jenn Cram, Planner II (virtual)

The following guests were present:
Heidi Pruess, Daylan Figgs, Meegan Flenniken, Justin Cove (all virtual)

AGENDA

Call to Order and Introduction of Guests

Consideration of Minutes

- July 14, 2021

Interaction with Commissioner Kefalas on Agricultural and Community related issues

Phase II Land Use Code Updates - Urban Agriculture and the Keeping of Livestock

- Review and Discuss Draft Regulations

Work Plan and Task Groups

- Local Food System: How to Increase Intermediated Sales
- Water Sharing
- Voluntary Agricultural District

Water Plant Grant

Adjourn:

- Next Scheduled Meeting: November 10, 2021

INTRODUCTIONS

Matt Lafferty noted that Heidi Pruess was joining us to stay informed on what the AAB does related to her role with the Climate Smart program, and Daylan Figgs, Meegan Flenniken and Justin Cove will be joining the AAB virtually to provide an update on taxing on Open Space properties.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the September 8, 2021, meeting was approved as submitted.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Members from the Department of Natural Resources will provide an update on tax information on Open Space properties.

UPDATES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONER KEFALAS

County Commissioner Kefalas provided a brief explanation regarding:

- Noted that Heidi Pruess is the new Climate Smart Manager. She will be reaching out to the AAB in the future for input on the Climate Smart program related to agriculture.
- There is an opening on the Planning Commission.
- The CSU Extension President has emailed their Service Survey, the AAB can help to provide input.
- Zach asked if there will be a liaison appointed to the AAB from the Assessor's Office. Commissioner Kefalas asked what the purpose would be and for the next meeting to be effective to have potential questions for the Assessor's Office noted. Zach will email the AAB by October 1 to have questions ready for the November meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Tax Incentives for Conserving Open Space

Meegan Flenniken with the Department of Natural Resources provided an overview of how Larimer County approaches land conservation based on the adopted Open Space Master Plan. The land conservation program has been in existence since 1995. 40% of all conserved land is held in conservation easements. Conservation easements help to preserve environmental resources, wildlife habitat, viewsheds as well as agricultural lands. Justin Cove, Senior Land Agent provided updates on the Conservation Easement Tax Credit Modification in HB-1233. The bill accomplishes several things including an increase in tax credits that equal 40% of the donated value.

Phase II Land Use Code Updates – Urban Agriculture and the Keeping of Livestock

Matt Lafferty provided an update on Phase II Land Use Code Amendments. The focus for Urban Agriculture and the Keeping of Livestock is the gap between urban areas and larger rural acreages with a goal of encouraging agricultural operations while minimizing negative impacts to adjacent uses. Proposed amendments include updates to standards for farm stands and the keeping and processing of poultry. Matt walked through the proposed changes to poultry keeping related to backyard poultry, poultry keeping urban and rural as well as poultry processing. Generally, staff is recommending up to 50 birds per acre with more restrictions on backyard poultry and poultry keeping in urban areas and within GMA's.

Kristin noted that she would like to see the limit be raised to up to 100 birds per acre in rural areas.

Jon had questions on coop design standards. He also noted that there needs to be some indication of the maximum number of animals allowed per acre on smaller acreages (less than 10 acres).

Karen noted that smaller acreage landowners need to understand rain in CO, 2 animals per acre is not good enough in some cases.

Frank noted that the left table was not accurate for Larimer County based on what Karen noted. Numbers depend on irrigated land vs non-irrigated land. Need to look at the nature of land related to water quality as well.

Matt asked if there is a tool that the County could easily adopt?

Tim noted that he was concerned about the number of swine allowed, 4 is better than 5 per acre based on smell.

George noted that this is a complex issue. We need to qualify numbers. Some complaints require mediation.

Travis H. noted CO Revised Statute 35-3.5-102 that is Ag related. Need to make sure amendments are consistent.

Matt thanked all for their input and will email draft amendments for final comments.

Work Plan and Task Groups

Local Food Systems - Intermediate Sales

- Kristin Ramey = Lead
- Beth Conrey
- Amber Graves
- John Craven
- Maureen McDonough

This task force is at a place where outside help is needed. The team plans to host 2 workshops to gather information from community food leaders regarding ideas on how to increase demand and increase supply of local foods. Team plans to host two brainstorming workshops to gather information.

Ideas generated from these workshops will be gathered and filtered. It may require funding/grant applications to move further. This team is at a point where trying to resolve this issue is going to require outside expertise that you can't get from a volunteer group.

Team needs to work with Matt to schedule workshops, county location required to avoid complicated insurance issues.

Water Sharing

- Zach Thode = Lead
- George Wallace
- Amber Graves
- Travis Horton
- Greg Schreiner

Voluntary AG District

- George Wallace = Lead
- Timothy Clouse
- Travis Horton
- Jon Slutsky
- Zach Thode
- Franklyn Garry

Additions

George noted that follow up was needed with the Assessor's Office on tax assessments.

Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 12.30 p.m.** (in person and virtually via Zoom with invitation to follow).

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

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