

Date: Wednesday, July 14, 2021
Time: 12:30 PM
Location: Virtual

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

The Larimer County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) met in person in the Hearing 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: George Wallace (Vice Chairperson), Beth Conrey (virtual), John Cravens (virtual), Karen Crumbaker (virtual), Franklyn Garry, Amber Graves, Travis Horton, Maureen McDonough (virtual), Greg Schreiner, Jon Slutsky

The following Board members were absent: Zach Thode (Chairperson), Kristin Ramey (Secretary), and Timothy Clouse

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

The following guests were present:
Sylvia Tatum-Burruss, City of Fort Collins (virtual)

AGENDA

A. Call to Order and Introduction of Guests

B. Consideration of Minutes - May 12, 2021

C. Interaction with Commissioner Kefalas on Agricultural and Community related issues

D. Work Plan and Task Groups

- Local Food Systems: How to increase Intermediated Sales
- Water Sharing
- Voluntary Agricultural District

E. Fort Collins presentation and Discussion regarding East Mulberry Corridor

F. AAB Terms, Reappointments, Thank You, and Vacancies

G. Water Plant Grant

H. Adjourn

- Next Scheduled Meeting: September 8, 2021

INTRODUCTIONS

Matt Lafferty noted that Sylvia Tatum-Burruss with the City of Fort Collins will log on and provide an update on the East Mulberry Corridor Annexation plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the May 12, 2021, meeting was Tabled to the September 8, 2021, meeting. It was also discussed that for that meeting perhaps the recording could stand for the record.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

George added a discussion on the Farm tour scheduled for July 16.

UPDATES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONER KEFALAS

County Commissioner Kefalas provided a brief explanation regarding:

- Update on Larimer County Farmers Market, 113 total vendors for 2021, ~ 75 vendors at each market, record sales (up 45%), customer attendance down, but spending more, Market Days are providing food for adults on limited income.
- Update from Sheriff's Office on wildfire danger, no need to issue restrictions or bans, but conditions may change unless we receive more rain.
- Oil and Gas hearings start next week, PC = July 21 and BoCC = July 26
- Climate Smart, provided copy of executive summary, the County is looking to hire a program manager by August, will hire a consultant to assist with public engagement.
- DNR came to Commissioner's and OLAB with a proposal to adjust fees at the Devil's Backbone and other areas that are not currently charging fees.
- KidsPAK, non-profit organization that provides food bags for kids, have an interesting program with CSU to make beef sticks.
- American Rescue Plan Act, 69 million to County, interactive website to provide input on where dollars should go at <https://www.larimer.org/budget/Build-Your-Own-Budget>

George Wallace brought up the current property tax assessments for residents. He noted that it doesn't make sense for homes on farms to be included as part of the market because this is where farmers live while working on agricultural operations. He noted that he believes that the assessment should be stabilized while there is an active agricultural operation.

Commissioner Kefalas asked that a note be made to follow up on this conversation so that some recommendations can be made.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Work Plan and Task Groups

Chairperson Thode discussed the Work Plan for the AAB indicating the need to agree to the Work Plan and forward a recommendation to the BoCC for approval of the Work Plan, which includes the following:

- Local Food Systems - How to create intermediated sales

- Water Sharing – Zach is the lead, will be key part of future Water Plan with regional water districts, currently at a standstill and need to regroup.
- Voluntary Agricultural District – George noted that they would like to engage a group of producers to help define incentives, looking into soil conservation districts.

All agreed that deadlines for presentations need to be set. Groups should schedule time outside of AAB meetings to get work done. A brief outline of intent and proposed outcomes should be presented at the September meeting with draft presentations completed for November meeting and presentations to BoCC in January/February 2022. The list of who is on each group is noted again below for reference.

Local Food Systems - Intermediate Sales

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

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
- Frankyn Garry

Fort Collins Presentation and Discussion on the East Mulberry Corridor

Sylvia Tatum-Burruss with the City of Fort Collins shared a PowerPoint presentation that covered the current plans for the future annexation of the East Mulberry Corridor, the plan looks at livability, community, and sustainability. Key questions were discussed along with considerations.

Sylvia also shared sales tax information with Matt. Livestock, farm equipment and parts are currently exempt in the County and will also be exempt if annexed into the city.

Existing businesses will be encouraged to stay, if non-conforming they can continue to operate, if expansion is proposed the city will work with them to come into reasonable compliance. Existing businesses should not be impacted by future residential development in the area, the city recognizes that this is a vital industrial area and wants to keep it intact.

Sylvia would like contact information of Ag community to engage in stakeholder meetings. Will also add AAB to newsletter list.

Water Plant Grant

No update was provided.

Additions

There was a discussion on whether the AAB should meet monthly. Perhaps every other month could be informational or allow Task Groups to get work done. Jenn is willing to help reserve space as needed. Alternating meeting in Loveland and Fort Collins was also discussed. Matt will investigate whether the Loveland campus is available. Will get a poll out and make a formal motion at a future meeting.

There is a tour scheduled on Friday July 16 at 9 am of Larimer County Agricultural Operations with the BoCC. Other tours may be scheduled in the future, Commissioner Kefalas would like to see the Agricultural Enterprise area on East Mulberry as well as some of the urban farms such as Raisin Roots. He will reach to his fellow Commissioners to get input as well.

Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 8, 2021, at 12.30 p.m.** (virtually via Zoom with invitation to follow).

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

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