

Date: Wednesday, November 10, 2021

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: Virtual: Zoom Link - https://larimer-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_18mTQF9_Q52pGSdekfkTtw

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

The Larimer County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) met in person in the Hearing Room at 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, virtual), Jennifer Bornhoft, Beth Conrey, Timothy Clouse (virtual), John Cravens, Karen Crumbaker, Franklyn Garry (virtual), Amber Graves (virtual), Travis Horton, Maureen McDonough (virtual), Travis Rollins (virtual), Greg Schreiner (virtual), and Jon Slutsky.

The following Board members were absent: none

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:

Tanja Andreas and Heidi Pruess, Climate Smart Program Manager, and Andy Pineda (both virtual)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The September 8, 2021, minutes were approved with minor corrections as noted by Jon Slutsky.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Updates from County Commissioner John Kefalas

- There was a work session on Monday November 8 with the City of Fort Collins Town Council on the East Mulberry Corridor annexation. The importance of the preservation of the existing agricultural businesses was reinforced. George asked if there could be a workshop with the AAB and business owners to discuss the issues for ag related to annexation and the County commercial agricultural zoning. Commissioner Kefalas noted that there will be a follow up meeting with the Fort Collins Town Council.
- The Amendments to the 1041 Regulations will be heard by the BoCC on Monday, November 15 along with updates to the Electric Vehicle Charging Station standards. The effective date will be December 15.
- Attended the Colorado Wildfire Conference where issues with the WUI, wildfire hazard mitigation and forest health were addressed. George noted that the AAB has provided resources related to Ag and wildfire. Jenn noted that those resources are saved by the Planning Department.

- On December 15 the BoCC will adopt the 2022 budget. The process has been more user friendly with interactive options. Zach asked if the AAB could apply for grants related to local food.
- Phase I of the Water Master Plan Foundational Work is underway which includes data gathering. Phase II will include stake holder and community engagement.
- Planning Commission interviews will be forthcoming.

Work Plan and Task Groups

- Local Food System: How to Increase Intermediated Sales

There is a Local Foods workshop on November 17 at 5:30 pm focused on demand. The group would like Commissioner Kefalas to do an introduction. Kristin noted that 20 people have RSVP'd. This will be the first of two workshops. The next workshop is scheduled for December 9th. This workshop will focus on supply. After the workshops the group will prepare a written presentation with recommendations.

- Water Sharing

Zach noted that the plan has stalled as they are waiting to see what happens with the grant. The Fort Collins and Big Thompson Conservation Districts will merge. There is a mill levy proposed in 2022 to support water conservation. This could help to create tools for water banking. A pilot program is proposed that could utilize carbon credits and water quality banking as well.

- Voluntary Agricultural District

George shared the latest draft. He noted that they need to engage a group of Ag producers and determine the level of interest and if so, identify potential incentives for membership in a voluntary ag district. One possible incentive would be water rental security, which would require involving the City of Fort Collins and others who rent water. The group would like to have a space and a staff member or facilitator for future meetings. Will look at long term picture. One possible outcome is a discussion on water renting and equitability.

Updates

- Travis Horton noted that there have been issues with drones flying close over agricultural operations including his feedlot. They were seen over a mortality pit. It was noted that the AAB did a presentation on drones to the BoCC last year.
- Jenn noted it would be her last meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is January 12, 2022.

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