

Date: Wednesday January 14th, 2026
Time: 1:00 PM

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Advisory Committee Members Attending: Dennis Lacerte , Martha Sullins , Brad Justice , chad Onthank , Emily McMurtrey , Chris Steadman, Amber Graves, Eric Umbreit, Emily McMurtrey , Ryan Peterson

Commissioners' Office: Not Present

Staff attending: Cary Weiner, Andy Weakland, Jessica Callen, Matt Lafferty, Mike Murphree, Jenna Brager , Danielle Reimanis

Other Members of the Community: Meredith Halweg

1:00-1:20

Call to Order and Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 1:02pm

Amendments to the Agenda

- No amendments to the agenda.

Approval of the Minutes

- November 12th, 2025
 - Date of February 5th, 2026 Farm to Local Biz
 - Minutes approved with addition of date of Farm to Local Biz event.

Staff Updates (Jess Callen, Cary Weiner)

- Jess Callen
 - January is a great time for farmer education because of the availability of producers after the end of their season.
 - Grant, Loan and Grow will be happening tomorrow, January 15th, 2026.
 - We have added on education about loans this year due to uncertainty around federal grant access.
 - 18 speakers at the event, 70 people registered and about 95 people in total in attendance.
 - Farm to Local Biz event
 - February 5th, connecting producers with local food businesses. This will be held in Fort Collins at Top One Events.
 - Over 20 producers will have a booth at the event.
 - Working on the Farmstand document. Other documents under consideration for being worked with Community development on are a meat processing facility, a value-added document and an agritourism document as well. The agritourism document would be close to a "how to" guide.
- Cary Weiner
 - Commissioner Kefalas will not be able to attend this meeting today.
 - Some Ag Board member updates:
 - Cheri Kraft will not be able to attend as well.
 - John Forrest submitted his resignation letter yesterday and will not be on the board moving forward.
 - Martha and Cary worked with CSU to submit another intern proposal. This is to build off of the internship program that we had last summer
 - Jenna Brager is our new Natural Resources Coordinator. One of the many things that she will be working on is the Larimer County Master Plan that will focus on Ag water.

- Larimer Conservation District is doing some work to understand a role that they might have within the Ag space. They have brought on some colleagues of ours from CSU in order to garner input from the Ag community. They are currently hosting focus groups. Andy will send out an email about input sessions coming up, as a follow up to the meeting today.
- Board members were encouraged to participate in upcoming Larimer Conservation District focus groups
- A while back there was a conversation around ARDEC and possibly organizing an AAB field trip this summer. What are the realistic expectations of wanting to do this? We could possibly pair this with our July meeting if we wanted to.
 - Ryan: Might be good for someone to come out from ARDEC to speak with us and then we can visit the facility.
 - Cary will inquire about joining them for the annual ARDEC Field Day

1:20-1:30

Commissioner Kefalas Updates

- Not present

1:30-3:25

Discussion Items and Action Items

1:30-1:50

- Board Member Orientation (Cary Weiner)
 - Please refer to the Powerpoint slide presentation
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1:50-2:10

- Process Improvement Team - Farmstand Update (Michael Murphree and Jess Callen)
 - Working on a simple “how-to” guide on how to set up a farm stand.
 - Working on a chaperone/concierge model. Currently Jess is our first contact with Extension.
 - These adjustments were intended to reduce barriers for smaller producers.
 - We will try and keep the document to a one page document.
 - Keep in mind there are certain codes that are national standards that we cannot have any variations on (electricity, space between studs, etc...).
 - This resource is not only going to be used with farmers but also planners themselves.
 - The biggest key here is trying to not make this a manual but keeping it to a one pager with specifics and specific people to contact.
 - The group emphasized keeping resources practical, simple, and user-friendly.
 - Brad spoke about the progress of this issue and how it got to this point and how the ROI on the costs associated with running a farm stand. He spoke to make sure not to forget about the costs so that it makes it more equitable for producers.
 - Jess spoke to this concern letting everyone know that they did focus on some cost measurements during this process, one was frost depth and the other was no bathroom if the farmstand is less than 600 square feet or if it is just a one stop shop with less than 30 minutes shopping. These code adjustments should reduce the cost of entry for producers.

2:10-2:55

- Transfer of Development Rights (Matt Lafferty)
 - Please refer to the Powerpoint slide presentation.
 - The project was kicked off on September 25, 2025.
 - Have already spoken to 30 stakeholders to gather information on how to move forward.
 - Brad spoke to greenhouse gas concerns as well as concerns around transformation of managed lands to managed neighborhoods.
 - Conversations around irrigated farms and water rights issues around TDRs.
 - Some clarifications around Agricultural zoning and how that affects TDU owners as well as discussion around conservation easements.
 - A recurring theme this discussion was the importance of agricultural water and practical, accessible tools for local producers

2:55-3:15

- 2026 AAB Work Plan - Vote (Cary Weiner)
 - What will the board's priorities be for next year?
 - Please refer to Cary Weiner's 2026 Work Plan document
 - Three current priorities were developed during the last meeting as a focus on the board's work for 2026. These priorities needed to be put to a vote on moving forward with.
 - Support the scoping and execution of a study in order to make policy recommendations that could enhance the local food economy
 - Continue reviewing Larimer County's land use code, building code, zoning regulations, and associated communications materials in order to make recommendations to support agriculture (e.g. on issues such as agritourism, meat processing, value-added agriculture, and wash-pack facilities).
 - Provide input on water issues being addressed through county and regional initiatives such as Climate Smart Future Ready, a local groundwater study, and the Larimer County Water Master Plan.
 - The work plan was voted on and approved.

3:15-3:25

- Legislative Update (Brad Justice)
 - No bills in session currently
 - Conversation about a want/need for updates around the cattle industry since this was not touched on as much in 2025.
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 - Went through the different bills that were approved and signed by the Governor in 2025.

3:25-3:30

Future Agenda Items

Adjourn

- Meeting was adjourned at 3:35pm

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