

Snohomish County Agricultural Advisory Board

Jackson Board Room

August 11, 2015

12:30 p.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

12:32 p.m.

1. Call to Order, Introductions, Announcements – Chair

A Call to Order was postponed until a 6th Board member arrived at approximately 12:45 p.m. to establish a quorum.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marv Thomas, Chair (Position 11 – Snohomish River Basin)

Mike Harnden (Position 2 – Nursery)

Jeff Ellingsen (Position 7 – Diking Drainage & Flood Control District in Stillaguamish River Basin)

Gerald Labish (Position 3 – Livestock)

John Misich (Position 9 – Snohomish County Farm Bureau)

Dave Remlinger (Position 6 - Diking, Drainage & Flood Control District in Snohomish River Basin)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jesse Allen (Position 10 - Stillaguamish River Basin)

Jackie Macomber (Position 8 – Equine)

Mark Craven (Position 5 – Agricultural Direct Marketing)

Brian Bookey (Position 4 – Commodity Crops)

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Josh Dugan, PDS

Troy Holbrook, PDS

Mike McCrary, PDS

Tom Rowe, PDS

Clay White, PDS

Randy Sleight, PDS

Michael Zelinski, PDS

Linda Neunzig

Sara DiVitorio, Prosecutor's Office

Bobbi Lindemulder, Snohomish Conservation District

Jim Schmidtgall, Public Works

Marv Thomas welcomed Josh Dugan, PDS's new Long Range Planning Manager.

12:36 p.m.

2. Approval of April and May, 2015 Meeting Summaries – All

Call for approval of the April and May Meeting Summaries was postponed until a sixth Board member arrived at approximately 12:45 p.m. to establish a quorum. At that time, the April and May, 2015, Regular Meeting Summaries were approved as written/presented to the Board.

12:38 p.m.

3. Public Comment:

None.

12:38 p.m.

4. Public Records Act Refresher/Open Public Meetings Act Refresher – Sara Di Vittorio

Sara Di Vittorio, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, provided the Board with a refresher on public disclosure procedures. She reminded the Board to be sure that all communication regarding Ag Board business is going through the county email system. In addition, the use of mobile devices is also considered public record if there are texts. As a general rule, do not engage in texting county business. If you receive an email regarding county business on your personal account, you should immediately forward them to your county email account or directly to Katy, and then delete them from your personal email account. Always err on the side of caution and provide a copy to the county.

Ms. Di Vittorio then reviewed the OPMA (Open Public Meetings Act). If someone were to discuss Ag Board issues either through personal email or by text, it is considered to be a public meeting. If it is not done in public and the public does not have the ability to comment, this is a violation of the OPMA. A violation of the OPMA negates any action that was taken and opens the county up to individual liability, i.e., when financial penalties are issued under the OPMA for violations, they are issued to individuals.

1:05 p.m.

5. County Reports

a. Update on SAEDAT Strategies/Ag Issues - Linda Neunzig

Linda Neunzig covered the following topics:

County Fair: Ms. Neunzig has been working to encourage the participation of the Snohomish County agricultural community to become involved with the County fair. This year there will be a very large agricultural display and manpower is at a shortage. Volunteers will work in 4 hour shifts and will be given tickets and parking passes. The focus this year is on agritourism. There will also be a straw hay bale maze.

Focus on Farming: This year Focus on Farming is being combined with the new Focus on Forestry conference. There will be a lot of new vendors at the trade show this year, including one vendor who builds custom equipment for small farms.

b. Code Development/Permit Activities – Troy Holbrook, PDS

Troy Holbrook went over three months of permit activity reports. There were questions raised regarding a particular permit that was for installation of a power pole. Tom Rowe clarified that wood power poles for power into farms has been exempted from fees. He will review the permit and, if it qualifies, it will be amended to be exempt. More questions were raised about permitting the installation of a power pole in a flood hazard zone. Mr. Rowe clarified that as long as there are no seams or connections, and it is underground, and all connections are above ground, it would be permitted. Another permit discussed was for a preliminary subdivision short plat for four lots on 41.08 acres.

Jerry Labish stated that he would like to see the critter pad issue reviewed again to make sure that people would be allowed to put them in a flood plain, or raise them if needed. Tom Rowe stated that the rules haven't changed in the flood hazard areas, if you are in a density fringe you are limited to the 2% coverage and 15% blockage. If you are in a flood hazard zone, you are allowed to do fill. What is usually an issue is if

you need to do a biological assessment that reflects a habitat management plan to show you are meeting a certain standard regarding endangered species before a permit is issued. Animal sanctuaries would require the same standard.

c. Conservation District Update

Bobbi Lindemulder provided this update. She has been working on the Conservation District's involvement with Focus on Farming, which will include focusing on drought conditions with livestock. She has been in contact with the State Farm Service Agency on drought programs for livestock feed. The Conservation District has applied for a NOAA coastal resiliency grant which is an agriculture strategy to compliment the salmon habitat plan.

d. Farm Bureau Update

There were no updates to convey from the Farm Bureau.

e. SLS Update

There were no updates to convey from the SLS.

f. Rural Craft Breweries, Distilleries, and Wineries Update

Michael Zelinski spoke on this topic at last month's meeting, and today provided a follow-up. The staff proposal was presented to the Planning Commission last month and a hearing was held. The Commission voted to recommend approval, with some modifications in the proposal. The proposal was to allow the craft breweries, distilleries, and wineries in three rural zones and one in the A10 zone (the RB, the RI, and the R5 zones). There was a distinction between the smaller ones under 1500 square feet, and the larger ones between 1500 and 4000 square feet. The staff proposal was to permit the smaller ones in all four of the zones, and have the larger ones be administrative conditional use in the RB and the RI, and conditional uses in the R5 and A10. The Planning Commission recommended taking the R5 case and have the smaller ones be an administrative conditional use. For the larger ones in the RB and the RI zones, they would be permitted outright, and in the A10 zone they would also be permitted. There was also discussion about signage. The original proposal was that the home occupation standards be followed. The Commission recommended in the A10 zone going with the underlying regulation sign code as it applies in the A10. The hours of operation of the tasting room were discussed. The recommendation was that instead of 20 hours per week, which was in the original proposal, to allow 30 hours per week in the zones, other than the R5. The Commission recommended not changing the local contact element to the regulations. This package will now be sent to the County Council with the Planning Commission recommendation letter. This will likely be discussed at the September Planning Commission meeting and a hearing is typically held after that.

2:00 p.m.

6. Board Discussion and Possible Action

a. NPDES Update

Michael Zelinski showed a Power Point presentation as a follow up briefing that was given to the Ag Board in March, 2014. The Department of Ecology periodically issues NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permits to operators of municipal storm water systems. This permit was originally issued in 2012, and was modified and reissued in 2014 which caused some delays in the project. Snohomish County is a Phase I permit recipient. Mr. Zelinski covered changes being made to the NPDES, and any impacts that may result from them.

b. Planning Session for 2015 Yearly Joint Meetings with Executive and Council

Dates were discussed for these upcoming meetings, however, no date was decided on.

c. Board Member Positions and Elections

Marv Thomas stated that the Board needs to elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair, and that Mike Bueler has elected to not request renomination for position 1 on the Board representing dairy. John Misich nominated Jesse Allen for Chair. Dave Remlinger stated that he and Brian Bookey have both served as Chair. John Misich stated he would rather not serve as chair. It was decided to wait for the September Ag Board meeting and add nominations to the agenda. A short discussion ensued regarding possible dairy farmers to fill position 1.

2:20 p.m.

6. Round Table Discussion of Topics of Interest – All

a. None.

2:22 p.m.

7. Future Agenda Topics

Chair and Vice-Chair nominations.

2:25 p.m.

8. Adjourn