

LARIMER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2014

Present: Jennifer Bornhoft, Jason Brothers, Karen Crumbaker (liaison), Brenda Gimeson (liaison), Charles Gindler (liaison), Nic Koontz, Val Manning, Gail Meisner, Greg Schreiner, Jon Slutsky, Ted Swanson, Zach Thode, and George Wallace. Guests: Terry Gilbert, Larimer County Community Development Director.

Absent: Debra Herston, Minerva Lee, and Richard Seaworth.

I. Gail Meisner called the meeting to order at 12:37 p.m. Introductions were made. The Board welcomed its newest member, Jason Brothers.

II. Prior to Commissioner Gaiter joining the meeting by conference call, George Wallace handed out a summary of the background and past works taken on by the Larimer County Agricultural Advisory Board. He stressed how the AAB has had a voice with the County Commissioners on many issues over the years.

III. Commissioner Gaiter joined the meeting via telephone. Commissioner Gaiter stated that the AAB can take the initiative issues they feel are important. Beginning in January, 2014, Gail Meisner and Commissioner Gaiter have monthly phone conversations on issues brought up by the Board or other concerns or issues that may be relevant to the Board.

Commissioner Gaiter requested the Board research and get back with the Commissioners either at Admin Matters or to request a special meeting with the Commissioners on the following:

(1) Animal care in the agricultural industry, especially in light of the recent development of dairy cow treatment by a dairy in New Mexico who supplied milk to Leprino Foods.

(2) The use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) in agriculture.

Commissioner Gaiter stressed the importance of receiving feedback from the AAB on any issue the Board feels is important and the Commissioners should be made aware of. The Board of County Commissioners has the utmost confidence in the members of the AAB; they do not want to micromanage this Board.

IV. The September 10, 2014, AAB Meeting Minutes were approved.

V. Based on concerns raised at the last meeting regarding the role of the AAB in Larimer County, the Board discussed issues they felt were important in Larimer County. The issues brought up by the Board were in addition to the two requests from Commissioner Gaiter above. See attached addendum for details of the discussion.

VI. George Wallace (and other Board members who were on the tour) updated the AAB on the Boulder County Farm tour that took place on September 24, 2014. The AAB and members of the Larimer County Parks and Open Lands tour three farms that were being leased back to farmers from the Boulder County Parks & Open Space. The highlights were: (1) all money earned by Boulder County goes back into the program; (2) the stress on the importance of rotational cropping systems; (3) Boulder County is not doing water sharing with water utilities; (4) There was discussion on what the criteria is to choose an applicant who is interested in leasing land to farm (i.e. Boulder County is encouraging applicants who are interested in farming organically.)

VII. Committee Reports.

- Water Resources Committee - George Wallace discussed "buy and supply". "Buy and dry" is when water is transferred out of agriculture. "Buy and supply" is a concept where a farm or ranch with water rights is purchased and a conservation easement is placed on the property. The farm is then either leased back or sold to an agricultural producer.
- Legislative Committee - Jon Slutsky stated the Waters of U.S. comment period would end of November 14, 2014. The State Ag. Commission is looking into the regulations by the Brand Board involving fees charged.

- Education Committee - Val Manning reported the purpose of the education committee was education and outreach. The committee will look into hosting an agricultural farm tour in Larimer County in 2015; the committee is there to support the other AAB's committees with outreach and education; involvement in the Colorado Farm Show through sponsorship; and be a platform for larger producers.
- Land Preservation Committee - No report.

VIII. Announcements/New Business:

- The Larimer County Natural Resources Department is currently seeking public comment on the draft update of the [Open Lands Master Plan](#) . The public comment period lasts through Friday, November 21. To view the draft plan and provide feedback, visit: <http://larimer.org/olmasterplan/>
- John Rankin and David Bee did not reapply to be on the AAB. Brad Rhoda resigned. The AAB is encouraged to reach out to other agricultural producers who they think may be interested in sitting on this Board.
- It was suggested that someone from the Colorado Conservation Exchange Committee speak at the next AAB meeting in January. The AAB indicated they wanted further information about what this group hoped to obtain from the AAB before their attendance at the meeting.

IX. The next AAB meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 14, 2015 , at 12:30 p.m. at the CSU Larimer County Extension Office, 1525 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins, CO.

X. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

ADDENDUM to November 12, 2014 AAB Meeting Minutes

Work items outlined for and by AAB in 2015

Priority 1

- **Open Lands Mater Plan language for ag Lands**
- **Careful review of new partnerships**
- **Leasing of Larimer County Open Lands to agricultural producers**
- **Explore programs for beginning farmers**

Items grouped together and to be included in the comments to Open Lands for Master Plan.

Comments due to Open Lands by November 21, 2014. Task Force to gather comments and get to Open Lands by deadline. Task force members include: Nic Koontz-Chair, George Wallace, Zach Thode.

Priority 2

- **Animal Cruelty Issue**

Commissioner Gaiter asked for information about this issue. Presentation to be made before the Board of County Commissioners at one of their Administrative Matters meetings or request a special meeting if presentation expected to be longer than 15 minutes. Assigned task force to outline issues and make presentation. Task force members include: Jon Slutsky, Val Manning and Ted Swanson.

Priority 3

- **GMO Education and Labeling**

Presentation to be made before the Board of County Commissioners at their Administrative Matters meeting or request a special meeting if presentation expected to be longer than 15 minutes. Task force to outline issues and make presentation to include: Gail Meisner, Greg Schreiner, and Richard Seaworth.

Priority 4

- **Immigration**

Assigned to Legislative Committee plus Greg Schriener

Other Issues not assigned priorities

- **Epidemics in Livestock.** Task force: Jon Slutsky, Val Manning, Ted Swanson, Zach Thode
- **Farm Tour for Larimer County** – Task Force: Education Committee. Put on January 2015 meeting agenda to discuss the goals for tour, targets and resources
- **Noxious Weed Program Enforcement**—Put on January 2015 Agenda to discuss with Lew Gaiter
- **Natural Disaster Response from County Involving Agriculture** —County response to issues outside of County Authority such as roads, crossings, etc.—To ask Lew Gaiter what his preference is on what and how to handle this issue.
- **Rural Home Occupations**—Terry Gilbert, Community Development Director, to brief AAB on existing regulations than plan next steps. Possibly add to Rural Area Outreach project in 2015.
- **Water Availability**—on-going priority for the Water Committee and AAB
- **Housing for Farm Workers**—on hold for now

Areas of concern from 2014 that still apply but not assigned priorities

- **Age of existing farmers**
- **Next generation engagement**
- **Continued development in the area**
- **Ag preservation with water rights**
- **Protecting agricultural for all**
- **Ag Tourism**