

LARIMER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD  
Meeting Minutes  
September 9, 2020

Present: Lynnet Bannion (via Zoom), Jennifer Bornhoft (liaison, via Zoom), Timothy Clouse, Beth Conrey (via Zoom), Jenn Cram (liaison), Karen Crumbaker (liaison), Franklyn Garry, Travis Horton, John Kefalas (Commissioner liaison), Gail Meisner, Kristin Ramey (via Zoom), Travis Rollins, Greg Schreiner, Jon Slutsky, Zach Thode, and George Wallace

Absent: Sam Adams (liaison), Paula Petroff (Extension Staff), Natalie Yoder

Guests: Don Threewitt, Alyssa Martin (via Zoom), Lesli Ellis (via Zoom), Rob Graves (via Zoom)

Meeting called to order and introduction of guests. Chairman Zach Thode called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. Guests introduced themselves to members.

II. Consideration of minutes from July 8, 2020. George requested a change to item IV. bullet point number 9 to note that protect vs preserve and to add a statement about avoiding annexation and potential tax increases. George provided Jenn with proposed language. Gail moved to accept the July 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes with proposed changes. All were in favor.

III. Interaction with Commissioner Kefalas on Ag and Community related issues. Commissioner Kefalas shared the following:

- The Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP)/Glade Reservoir was approved by the BCC with a passing vote of 2-1. Commissioner Kefalas noted that he was the no vote and happy to answer questions. Gail noted that she was disappointed, and Jon noted that he understood and was supportive as the Commissioners must consider many things beyond agriculture in making a decision. Greg asked how Thornton ties into NISP and the pipeline proposed on Douglas Road. Commissioner Kefalas noted that the Thornton case is currently in litigation. The easements for NISP have not been secured north of Douglas Road.
- The Cameron Peak has burned 102,000 acres currently. The recent snow was helpful. Evacuations continue in the Glacier View Meadows, Red Feather Lakes and Crystal Lakes areas.
- George asked for an update on the proposed IGA with the Town of Timnath. It was noted that there was an upcoming worksession with The Planning Commission and BCC. George also noted that there are valuable agricultural properties that should be preserved to support a Community Separator. Lesli noted that the dynamic with Timnath has changed and the boundary proposed has been scaled back to County Road 52. The area where the agricultural properties are located have been included in a Cooperative Planning Area. George also noted that TDU's should be put out as an option to help to set up of the Voluntary Ag District.

#### IV. 2020 Work Plan and Task Groups:

- Zach noted that he hoped that AAB could work on a few other presentations for the BCC. He thought that work could be completed, and presentations scheduled by March 2021.
- The topics suggested were Local Food Systems/Local Supply Chain with a focus on Intermediated Sales, Water/Water Sharing with City of Fort Collins and County, and continued work on the Voluntary Agricultural Overlay District.
- Greg asked what the Local Food Systems topic entailed, is it Residential, Commercial, Organic, etc. All agreed that Value Added Agriculture should be considered as part of the discussion. What are the barriers for Value Added Agriculture? How can the regional dots be connected?
- George noted that an additional Task Group should be created to start talking with the businesses within the East Mulberry Corridor and how they may fit into the future ACE zone district. Zach noted that it is important to educate the Commissioners on how important those existing agricultural businesses are to Agriculture in Larimer County. He also asked the question of how the future ACE district will work.
- The details of additional Work Plan topics and Task Groups will be discussed at the November meeting.

#### V. Larimer County Land Use Code Updates – Ag Work Group Update.

- Jenn noted that since the July meeting that an Ag Work Group was created that included 5 members from the AAB, 3 members from other agricultural operations in Larimer County and 1 Planning Commissioner. The composition of the Work Group brought diverse experience with agriculture.
- The areas within the Land Use Code that were covered in Work Group meetings included Zoning Districts, Uses and Definitions.
- Zach requested that notes from the Work Group be shared.
- Greg noted that he had heard that the Work Group was unorganized.
- Jon noted that the process was incredibly organized, and items were covered point by point with diverse input.
- George noted that having homework for the AAB is important. The Code has many details to consider that impact Ag.
- Karen noted that her takeaway was that the goal of LUC Updates was to make the code more clear and user friendly.
- Don Threewitt, Planning Manager noted that this would not be the only swing at the pinata for AAB. Phase I of updates will be adopted by end of year. Many Ag issues will be addressed in Phase II.
- Jenn noted that she would email the AAB with additional opportunities to comment on LUC Updates and reminded everyone of the website where comments can be submitted. <https://www.larimer.org/planning/luc2020>.

#### VI. Ecosystem Service and Ag in Larimer County related to Carbon Trading

Greg shared a presentation on Carbon Trading developed in support of Climate Change. He noted that this creates new markets for Agriculture.

- Ag is one of the leading contributors to releasing carbon and climate change. With organic farming being a major contributor.
- Minimal till is required to minimize carbon release.
- Regenerative Farming has minimal till with cover crops widely used and accepted
- Cover crops such as radishes create nitrogen, grow through the fall, can be rolled, and crimped and planted into afterwards. Also help to hold back weeds.
- The nitrogen levels within different types of manure were discussed, cows vs chickens and the carbon footprint related to hauling and dispersing manure.
- The Nori pilot program looks at carbon tons and issues credit based on 20-year increments/data?
- Tokens are released with 40-years minimum of no till.
- Net Carbon Tons or NTR's = \$15 and can be sold in the Carbon Market. (Silver Reef has 2,700 NTR's)
- This program results in a way for farmers to create more revenue and help with climate change. Ranchers can participate by putting acres into cover crops.
- George asked about composting manure. Greg noted that it takes time, over a year to get compost, but yes it does reduce carbon.
- Tim asked how big the market was. Greg noted that it was currently small, hoping to see market increase over the next 40 years.
- Zach noted that there is value in regenerative certification.
- Travis Rollins noted that the County currently has a few tenants on leased property that are conventional but could go to no till. Greg noted that a strip till cultivation tool is needed. Lots of potential on City/County owned land. There are benefits for cows and land.

#### VII. Review of Current Board Members and Liaisons

- Jenn noted that there were several Board members whose terms will expire on November 30, 2020. All were encouraged to reapply.
- Zach noted that since Jason Brothers was no longer on the AAB that there was not dual representation on AAB and OLAB. Jon noted that he would be interested in serving on both boards.
- Zach also noted that he was encouraging Rob or Amber Graves to apply.

#### VIII. Announcements: George noted that Adams and Brighton Counties are talking about Agricultural Districts.

IX. The next AAB meeting will be held on November 18, 2020 at 12:30 pm. The location will be determined at a later date.

X. The meeting was adjourned at 2:17 pm.