

# King County Agriculture Commission

## DRAFT Minutes from

### Thursday, May 14, 2015

### Watershed Science Center, Issaquah

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Commissioners	P	A	Commissioners	P	A
Nancy Hutto, Chair	X		Bob Tidball	X	
George Irwin		X	Bob Vos	X	
Eldon Murray		X	Siri Erickson-Brown	X	
Larry Pickering	X				

*P=Present; A=Absent*

Staff Present	
Kathy Creahan	Patrice Barrentine
Joan Lee	Alan Painter
John Taylor	
Guests Present	
Meredith Molli	Micheale Blakely
Pat Mc Glothlin	Jarvis Keller
Leann Krainick	Shelby Jors
Steve Van Ess	Roger Calhoon
Josh Monaghan	Alan Painter
Councilmember Kathy Lambert	Jeff McMorris, Council Member Lambert's Office
Hannah Cavendish-Palmer	Bobbi Lindemulder
Cynthia Krass	

### Meeting Action Summary

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April Meeting Minutes were approved</li> <li>Thorough Discussion of Commission's Recommendations to Farm Fish Flood Ag Caucus; no action taken</li> <li>Comp Plan, Ag Regulatory Survey, New Ag Commissioner Selection Process</li> <li>Committees will meet in June, Next full Meeting July 9<sup>th</sup></li> </ul> |
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### Meeting Highlights with Action Items in Text Boxes

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**Called to Order 4:15 pm**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Bob Vos made a motion to approve the minutes. Bob Tidball seconded.

## **Public Comment**

Hannah Cavendish-Palmer, Vice President Sno-Valley Tilth (SVT): I am the only board member of SVT who is not a farmer and am seeking to represent the farmer members who are unable to come to meetings right now. So, on behalf of SVT, we have written about the Farm Fish Flood (FFF) Process in which we urge the County, FFF, and Councilmember Lambert to pause the FFF meetings until farmers have finished the farming season and can participate in the FFF meetings again. Members were concerned that these important processes would happen when they are busiest; SVT can be good ally for the county; we represent a lot of Snoqualmie Valley farmers, we have monthly meetings; invite extended to monthly Monday potlucks for all County Staff so that you can meet with farmers on their turf on their terms. I encourage any and all of you to do that. We are trying to work on our policy engagement – how we show up and where we show up - so that we can be better allies.

Nancy: The commission drafted a letter a year ago about the Farm Fish Flood process and Bob Tidball, you have a copy of that (Bob T: I just gave it to Hannah)]. As it turns out, a lot of what it said is still relevant today.

## **Discussion of FFF needs for Recommendations from Ag Commission**

Kathy Creahan: Last meeting the commission worked very diligently to make recommendations to the FFF caucus. We have a draft of that and we can go through that draft and see how you would like to proceed and have that letter sent. With the FFF hiatus, the timing is not so rushed for this communication, so you may want to decide differently. So, it is up to you.

Starting with the table in the packet that we worked on in March and April's meetings, we drafted the letter following the table in the packet.

Nancy: So, I just want to say that this letter in a little way put the cart before the horse. Usually the commissioners vote to send a letter and then make suggestions what should be in the letter. And we did not do that kind of action at the last meeting. Partly it was because Siri wasn't there and it didn't seem right to be sending something forward when our representative to FFF wasn't at the meeting. But my name is at the bottom of this letter but it was written by staff, I think, taken from the discussion we had but without giving a clear directive that we wanted to write a letter. So, I just want that in a proviso in there because it was a little bit backwards and during the time after the commission, when this letter came out, I said I'm not going to sign any letter that wasn't voted in by the commission. So, that isn't to say that this isn't the right letter or that it may have good points, it's just not the process we've normally done.

Bob Vos: I think it is a good summary of the concepts. My recommendation is that we do not send it as a letter, but is valuable as an internal working document. But I don't think we're ready to say that these are our concerns, these are our needs, and these are our priorities and issues. I think that this is a starting point, but I don't see it as a productive letter to be sent at this time.

Nancy: Is the table going to be attached to the letter.

Kathy: No, the recommendations replace the table, but it was taken directly from the table and discussion.

Bob Tidball: I think the table is more comprehensive and informative than the letter. Buffers were left out of the letter but are in the table. I'd rather be more comprehensive and ensure it has all of the relevant information.

Kathy: If you think so, we can move forward with the table.

Nancy: Is a letter necessary at this point? Given that we're having a break in the FFF process. Jeffrey, Kathy [Lambert], John [Taylor] is it necessary at this time? How important is a letter to the council?

John Taylor: I don't think you need to send a letter at this point. There is going to be this hiatus and policy work is going to occur this fall, but the time for you to take a position will be sometime in November/December before the task force reconvenes in January. Then, one would hope, there would be a unified position.

Jeff (Lambert's office): Maybe use it to inform the Memorandum of Mutual Understanding.

Siri Erickson-Brown: Are we going to ask for a cap?

Bob T: I'm not ready to talk about a cap... We haven't had our assessment of the potential productivity of the valley in the first place, so how can I set a cap?

Siri: It is in the table, but not in the list (was not agreed to by commissioners last meeting). If not a cap, then is there a limit to the amount of farmland that can be used for other purposes? I would like to think that when we drew the lines of the APD that that was the case. However, it looks like that ship has sailed.

Bob T: That's certainly one position and that's a starting point. From there we may need to talk about backing off a little. We have not only developers to deal with this time around in losing our farmland, but also environmental concerns, the Endangered Species Act as well as Tribal Treaties. It's a different set of problems than when we were fighting developers. So, we won our battles and got our APDs, but I'm not sure where we're going from here.

Siri: That's why I think the concept of a limit to farmland loss has come up. So, you're saying you don't think we should take a position.

Bob T: I'm not ready to. We have to understand the whole problem better first.

Nancy: I support the idea of a cap on valley land.

Meredith (commission applicant): I think some of the fish and farm folks have made it clear that they wouldn't support a cap. At the last meeting, Darryl said he does not support a cap, but he wants to see

fish habitat improve and agriculture production increase in value. I don't know how that can happen without a cap.

Jeff (Lambert's office): Have internal conversations, don't put out a policy step that sets limits.

Bobbi (FFF AG Caucus): Tribes are very clear that a cap is not okay. Other fish folks were okay with a cap. What if the APD is the cap? I think going to the cap is a scary deal for me. There may be some give and take within the APD area.

Nancy: Do you want to take a vote on doing a letter? [No.]

Bob T: Should the table be updated by staff with the discussion from this meeting?

Bob T: I'm not sure that we have appropriately documented what is needed and would like more time to do that.

Bob V: A formal document is hard to change, and I agree with Bob that more work needs to be done on the table and concepts.

## **KCD's New Grant Program -Josh Monaghan**

The Conservation District Board voted last night to approve the **Regional Food System Grant Program**.

This has been a two year process and one of the big initiatives was to make some big investments in the local food program.

Roll out: at White Center, SVT on June 10<sup>th</sup>, King-Pierce Farm Bureau

Early Action Items of \$250,000:

- Infrastructure Support
  - Featherman Poultry Processing Equipment
  - No till Drill
- One Stop Shop for Farm Services
- Institutional Purchasing
- Farmers Market Support

Bobbi Lindemulder: NABC might be able to manage the poultry processing unit for you. Contact Sera Hartman.

Josh: We are asking for a 2 page letter of intent and we are going to ask applicants to get 4 peer reviewers to say yes this proposal is needed, and this is the person to do it. Then we are going to ask the proposers to come and present on the topic one day.

\$650,000 in the grant program. Expect \$2M in requests.

We need reviewers (recruiting them now). Review up to 10 apps + one meeting – time commitment.

A project must take place in the KCD.

### **Ag Drainage Improvement Grant Program**

Funds from the Flood Control District will cover the construction costs of ag drainage work for farmers; funding for 6-10 drainage projects; applicants will need to go through ADAP first, at least in queue by June 1<sup>st</sup>. We have 2 projects so far. 4-5 in the maybe phase. A postcard will go out in the next couple of days to folks in the county. Contact Josh for more information.

Bob Vos: Are you highlighting easy or pilot projects?

Steve Van Ess: What kind of drainage?

Josh: Mainly ditch drainage; we haven't worked on tiles, yet, but could; ADAP will do engineering and KCD will do project management

Josh: \$80,000 plus \$50,000 for hand projects = \$130,000 total

John T: This year We doubled the funding in ADAP (we have about \$250,000 now) to do this work. We are in the process of hiring one more ADAP staff; measuring linear feet of ditch cleared has become a performance measure for the ADAP Program Manager.

Bobbi: Appreciate ADAP, but I'm also gonna check on the WDFW process first because they have different requirements.

Josh: WDFW wants a group like a watershed improvement district (WID); so they can talk to one group for a region instead of each individual landowner.

Michael Blakely: So, we need to contact ADAP first.

Bob V: Since the WID isn't formed yet, can the SVPA apply for one of these grants, instead of individuals?

Cynthia K, SVPA: Applying for an early action grant in two weeks to do just that. I was going to come and talk with you Bob to get help in this draft.

### **Updates:**

**Comp Plan:** Kathy Creahan

Topical Areas List. I'll just introduce it today and alert you to this process going on and where we are right now. The Comp Plan gets updated every 4 years. The council just adopted a scoping motion; see Chapter Three – Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands. Also, Area Zoning and Land Use Proposals is an area to look at, specifically "Carnation" which is land closest to an APD, which is proposed to become land into the City of Carnation.

Bobbi: Farm in Carnation got incorporated into the urban growth boundary, went to put a greenhouse in, and got stopped by DPER; we need to look at these lands as very valuable for meeting the Local Food Initiative. Patrice has been great looking into it for us.

John Taylor: We put language in there as a placeholder for FFF that we could update in March/May.

Siri: One of the questions I've had about any sort of agreement we come up with in Farm Flood Fish, is if we are going to come up with any sort of limit on losing ag acreage to put into habitat, there isn't anything on managing buffers yet. What would be the process for treating habitat plantings as a land use.

John: Comp Plan is a pretty high level document that would reference whatever document in which agreement is struck. What the commission would wrestle with and what FFF will wrestle with are policy recommendations.

Siri: Is it the nature of government to mandate buffer plantings and width?

Kathy: That would have to be studied to see if there were a policy proposal and agreement on the issue. It would not be likely to happen until further down the road (not this comp plan). There are ways that it could be regulated if there's consensus on the issue.

Councilmember Kathy Lambert: Most of the red and amendments were from me. I need to know if you disagree with something and I have to get four other people to agree, but I'm willing to work on it.

- Beavers are protected but are a real menace, some councilmembers think they're really cute.
- SWIF - very concerned; one of less than 10 places in the country doing SWIF. We are pioneering with SWIF on the Green River and environmental groups are very active in this process. I may need your help.
- Matching rural densities with water resources and climate change (no formula) p. 10 "Consider policies" ....

John Taylor: The benefits of Fish, Farm, Flood having an outcome is that these policies, that are agreed to by a group like the task force representing so many diverse interests, will sail through the council because the heavy lifting has been done.

Bob Vos: Habitat creation is an activity, but not a land use. Where does it come from? Janne told us that a month or two ago.

Kathy Creahan: It is not codified like that. It does not say one way or another if habitat projects are allowed or not; because they are not identified at all. In the Comp Plan 650, it says there's a conflict here and we need to come up with a solution.

Bob Tidball: Weren't you working on a piece about farming? Is buffers an allowed ag use?

Larry: How much would they have to add to a hunting license or fishing license to pay for the taxes for land farmers can't use?

### **Next Meeting: July**

- Committees need to meet in June – Lower Green/South County & FPP
- Ag Regulatory Report from UW students coming in June to direct Regulatory Committee Actions

### **New Ag Commissioners Selection Process – Patrice Barrentine**

The selection committee has conducted 8 interviews since the last commission meeting for a total of 13 interviews. We will be meeting on Tuesday to narrow down the 13 to eight. It has been a tremendous process, in one of our last meetings and actually in each of them so far, the commissioners on the selection committee have been impressed with the caliber and skills of the applicants and it's been great to have such a strong slate of farmers and food system advocates for the commission.

Nancy: Yes, we could have easily accepted everybody. And there will be openings coming up in the next year as well. We are looking at the candidate's skills and the area represented to meet the commission's needs.

### **Final Questions:**

Bob Tidball: Question for the council, we sent some information for the supplemental budget for staffing to do some analysis for soil and crop science.

Kathy Lambert: Small contract with WSU for soil scientist? Let me talk with John about that specifically.

Adjourned 7:04 pm

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### **Next Meeting**

Thursday July 9, 2015

Issaquah Fish Hatchery, Watershed Science Center, Issaquah