

Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB)
Minutes – January 21, 2004

Members in attendance:

Larry Jensen
Rose Merritt
Bob Hughes
Bob Finkbohner
Mike Hulbert
Dave Boon
Randy Good
Lyle Wesen
Murray Benjamin

Members not in attendance:

Beth Vander Veen
Roger Knutzen
Oscar Lagerlund

Others in attendance

Dyvon Havens
Gary Christensen
Allison Deets

1. Call to order & introductions:

Dave Boon, Chair, called the meeting to order shortly after 6pm and welcomed members to the January meeting, thanking them for their participation in the strategic planning meeting on January 15th.

2. Minutes:

Dave Boon called for a motion to review and approve the minutes and agenda. Randy Good recommended the amendment of the minutes to reflect November rather than October on the header; Dyvon Havens found a misspelling on page two to be corrected. Randy Good moved, and Mike Hulbert seconded, approval of the agenda and approval of the minutes as revised. Motion carried.

3. Discussion Items:

a. Elections – Mike Hulbert

Vice Chair Mike Hulbert led the elections proceedings, calling for nominations from the floor for 2004 Ag Advisory Board Chair. Dave Boon and Oscar Lagerlund were nominated for the position. After some discussion, the Board agreed to have the high-vote take the Chairmanship and the runner-up Vice-Chair. Votes were cast by secret ballot, and Dave Boon was elected Chair, Oscar Lagerlund Vice-Chair.

b. Upcoming Ag Summit – Mike Hulbert

Vice Chair Mike Hulbert went over the proposed agenda for the Ag Summit, hosted by the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board, and asked for recommendations on alterations or improvements. Members recommended moving the “Legislative Successes and Challenges for Agriculture in 2004” ahead of the Ag Business Panel so if the latter went overtime it would cut into lunch rather than another session. Members also recommended adding Janet McRae to the Ag Business Panel. Board approved agenda by consensus.

c. Planning question regarding events in the ag zone

Planning has posed the question to the AAB as to whether the Board is supportive of current code related to ag events at this time, based on recent questions coming from landowners with regard to events they plan on hosting in the ag zone.

After some discussion, Bob Finkbohner suggested that “Agriculturally related activities are those which enhance and promote agriculture in Skagit County.” Lyle Wesen echoed

approval of that position coming from the AAB. Lyle Wesen moved, and Larry Jensen seconded, that the Agricultural Advisory Board take the following position on events in the ag zone:

“The Agricultural Advisory Board of Skagit County is supportive of current code related to agricultural events at this time, but is committed to reviewing the current code related to agricultural events and activities. Agriculturally related activities, from the Board’s perspective, are those which enhance and promote agriculture in Skagit County.”

Dave Boon called for a vote by consensus; motion carried unanimously on the Agricultural Advisory Board’s position on ag events and related current code.

d. Lot Aggregation – Gary Christensen

Assistant Planning Director Gary Christensen debriefed the AAB on on-going discussions about the lot aggregation issue and the proposed new ordinance related to lot certification which deals with lot aggregation. The proposed ordinance had not yet been released, so Gary offered a brief history of lot aggregation and the process by which the County was working towards a new ordinance to handle the issue. A copy of the proposed language will be sent out with the minutes for the next meeting, and Gary will lead further discussion on the issue.

e. Critical Areas Ordinance

Randy Good reported that he attended a Farm Bureau meeting where the Critical Areas Ordinance was a topic of discussion and came back to the AAB to ask if the Board would like to propose establishing a committee to help the farmer and County deal with CAO complaints. Dave Boon suggested that a couple of AAB members come up with a recommendation for the next meeting to develop an independent advisory committee to assess CAO cases. Gary Christensen agreed that it might be a good idea to explore the possibility. Randy Good and Larry Jensen volunteered to work with staff on developing a recommendation to that end.

Adjourn regular session.