

Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board

Minutes August 12, 2009

Members in Attendance

Randy Good, Lyle Wesen, Nels Lagerlund, Kim Mower, Mike Hulbert (proxy for Bob),
Bill McMoran (proxy for Murray). Missing members; Kraig Knutzen, Murray Benjamin, Bob Hughes, Greg Lee.

Others in Attendance

Kendra Smith – Natural Resource Lands Policy Coordinator

Carly Ruacho – Planning and Development Services

Mike Shelby – Western Washington Ag Association

Ken Dahlsted – Skagit County Commissioner

Call to Order and Consent Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Accepting the Minutes from the July meeting was tabled until a quorum of members arrived

Guest Speaker

Mike Shelby updated the board on the Ruckleshous process. He voiced disappointment at the progress. He commented on how slow the facilitating technical work was in the ongoing meetings. He felt meeting members were a bit timid to approach the issue. His ag caucus initiated and crafted a straw dog proposal in May. Finally progress was made, groups came together to support a proposal environmental and tribes both said they could move forward with to the state legislature. The July meeting was stalled with a setback. The plan was totally voluntary, but other groups still insisting on a regulatory back door. The plan was to work together through existing conservation districts in six areas of the state. They asked to extend to the end of September. Still negotiating for a solution.

Status of Ecology and Water rights. Mike talked about Indian claims of illegal irrigation in Skagit County. Swinomish Tribe sent a second letter this year to D.O.E. A year ago started seeing challenges to checkdams, a practice used for many years. Ecology had been meeting with WWAA. Studies showed farmers had rights to use this system. 2009 saw more complaints about questionable uses, Ecology had to respond. Parties complaining will not share the GPS points Ecology asked for. WWAA working on getting water rights in order

At Lyle's request, Bill McMoran spoke about the theft of irrigation guns and Honda motors

At this time enough Board members present to vote on July's Minutes. Kim motioned and Lyle seconded to approve July Minutes. Motion passed.

Committee Reports

- a. Land Use – Mike spoke about the Code Amendment Proposal meeting held at Planning. The meeting developed the agreement to shelve parts of the Proposal until further review could be held. Ultimately there were 19 parts set aside for further examination. Carly talked about a strategy for moving forward for examination of the 19 items with a meeting on Wednesday August 19th, 1:30PM at P&D Services.
- b. D & I – Nels talked about the Thomas Creek cleaning project. The Fed permit approval is still in draft form. U.S. Fish and Wildlife allows 1/5 total length of the Thomas drainage a year. Will be a continuous process.
- c. Flood Policy – A draft memo from LUTC was distributed to AAB. Randy made a motion for Flood Committee to send a letter to Flood Control Zone Advisory Committee. Motion was withdrawn. Commissioner Dahlsted spoke of coming together with a plan that solves several issues and wants to work with all groups. He wants us onboard in Flood Control Initiatives. Flood committee formed a plan to respond to LUTC memo Mike will check with Bob Hughes and report.
- d. CAO – no report
- e. Open Spaces – Randy spoke of Planning Commission meeting on Open Spaces. The draft will be going to BoCC.

Old Business

Bill spoke of the opening of Highway 20 and Roger's comments about the damage to agriculture land.

Discussion around the table of the Affidavit of Ag Accessory Use and Title Notification. Mike motioned and Lyle seconded to approve affidavit and send it back to County. Motion passed. Mike motioned and Randy seconded to approve Title Notification. Motion passed

New Business

Nate Younquist has submitted an application for acceptance as a Board member. Lyle motioned and Bill seconded a motion to accept Mr. Younquist's application and submit it to BoCC for approval. Motion passed.

Extra Discussion

Nels commented that Samish Water Quality is going to meet again in September.

Next Meeting

The next meeting for the AAB will be September 9th, 2009, at the Valley Business Center, 7:00PM to 9:00PM

Adjourn

A motion was made by Nels and seconded by Mike to adjourn. Passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:59PM