



**SKAGIT COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD**  
**1800 Continental Place**  
**Mount Vernon, WA 98273**  
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**Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB) Meeting Minutes**  
**March 12, 2014**  
**Skagit County Administration Building**

**Members in Attendance**

Jim Carstens	Barbara Cleave	Brian Duquaine
Kraig Knutzen	Greg Lee	Dan Lefeber
Nels Lagerlund		

**Others in Attendance**

Sharon Dillon, Skagit County Commissioner  
Steve Omdal, Port of Skagit County  
Don McMoran, WSU Extension  
Linda Christensen, Skagit County Planning  
Dan Berentson, Skagit County Public Works

**Call to Order**

Chair Nels Lagerlund called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Minutes, January 13, 2014**

Kraig Knutzen moved to accept the January 13, 2014 meeting minutes and Brian Duquaine seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Commissioner Sharon Dillon**

Commissioner Sharon Dillon was present to discuss current agriculture related issues.

Nels spoke about the pickle plant and Sharon supports moving forward with this project. Nels said its important work towards agriculture development.

There was a discussion regarding Bayview Ridge and where the project is headed. Sharon said that industry will continue to grow in this area and residential growth has scaled back. Steve Omdal mentioned that this area is basically industrial and the residential lots should be larger than previously proposed. Steve also said that the port is moving forward with heavy industrial and U.S. Mowers is the first tenant for heavy industrial. There was some discussion on building leases for industries that will bring in jobs versus leases for storage only. Sharon's goal is to be able to have land available to businesses who want to locate in the valley and to provide jobs for local residents.

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Sharon talked about population projections and the density level the county chooses for the next zoning update in 2016. The county needs to be mindful on choosing the right level. She wants citizens to become involved to help vision what the county will look like in the future and communicate this with the elected officials so they know how to move forward with the best possible plan. There was a Growth Management Steering Committee meeting today and there was discussion on population density and the planning process. Sharon said that the water situation will have an impact on growth on whether building permits will be issued.

Nels asked Sharon if she felt the Transfer of Development Right project could work in the Skagit Valley. She responded by saying she is unsure if this project will help the county in conjunction with the Farmland Legacy Program. She is still collecting information.

The AAB asked for a status on the GI Study and Dan Berentson said there was a recent meeting with the Corp of Engineers recommending a selected alternative. The one selection that is closer to the top of the choices is the Urban Protection Plan, but that decision has not been made. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be performed first. The AAB will have time to make comments during the 45-day EIS review period.

Dan Berentson spoke about the Nookachamps flood prone area. The county is looking to spend money to address this situation. Dan also mentioned that the Utility Drainage assessment rates have been reduced as previously mentioned in an earlier AAB meeting. Nels addressed Sharon regarding the open space tax increase. Nels said it's difficult to stay in business when taxes continue to rise.

The AAB asked Sharon to comment on trails and open space. A concern is there are going to be trails through farmland used as a connector. Sharon said the only trail she is aware of is the Centennial Trail near Sedro-Woolley.

There was a discussion on bridge improvements, especially noted was the Hwy 99 Bridge railroad trestle. Dan Berentson said there is federal funding available; however, the county must come up with a few more million dollars. He also mentioned that the North Fork Bridge on Fir Island is on the radar to investigate repair work. There may be restoration opportunities with other agencies when it's time to move forward. The cost is estimated between 30 and 40 million dollars.

### **New AAB Member, Barbara Cleave**

Barbara Cleave was introduced as the new AAB member for District 1. Her term goes through December 31, 2016.

### **Committee Reports**

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### Shorelines

The Planning Commission continues to review the Shoreline Master Program Update. Betsy will give an update to the AAB in April.

It was noted that there was one closure on the Samish due to rain. Dan Berentson reported that the Health Department will be hiring another septic person to help keep up on the health of the county septic systems. Dan will also provide a laminated map of all the drainage ditches.

### **Other Business**

### **Adjourn and Next Meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. and the next meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2014 at 6 p.m.