

Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB) Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2014, 6 p.m.
Skagit County Administration Building

Members in Attendance

Nels Lagerlund	Kraig Knutzen	Dan Lefebber
Mike Hulbert	Ty Clark	Michael Hughes
Murray Benjamin	Jim Carstens	Barbara Cleave

Proxy Designation

Mike Hulbert for Greg Lee

Others in Attendance

Jack Moore, Skagit County Planning and Development Services
Sandy Perkins, Skagit County Planning and Development Services

Call to Order

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

Consent Agenda

Skagit County Public Works Noxious Weed Update was removed from the agenda. No update will be presented.

Minutes, September 10, 2014

Michael Hughes moved to accept the September 10, 2014 meeting minutes. Murray Benjamin seconded. Motion carried.

Code Compliance for Non-Ag Activities in the Ag Zone

Jack Moore, building official for the Skagit County Planning and Development Services, provided a background regarding the responsibilities of his department. Staffing has varied for code compliance, with 1 to 2 ½ total staff members available prior to 2012. For the last two years, no one staff member has been responsible for code compliance as their primary duty, until the hiring of Sandy Perkins.

Around 90% of complaints received are from the general public mostly related to neighborhood disputes. The remaining complaints are from county-identified violations.

Sandy Perkins, Code Compliance Officer for Skagit County Planning and Development Services, is currently in the process of catching up old cases and dealing with the 100+ new cases. Maps were provided identifying violations. An updated map will be available in early 2015 identifying the 250+ active code compliance cases. Information regarding most prevalent violations, code compliance process, and most recent non-ag activities in ag zone cases was presented to the board.

The Planning Department functions channels complaints to the appropriate department for evaluation. Zoning code is interpreted by four staff members in the planning division, which evaluates usage, allowance, application of special use permit (staying within the permit limitations), and issuance of special use permits.

Most violators comply. For those who do not, they either feel they cannot comply or they don't respond to the notices. As violations progress, they become more serious. If no progress toward compliance is demonstrated within 1 to 2 years of notification, the violations are moved to the legal process.

A statute of limitations has been written into the county code. Violations that have occurred before July 1, 1989 are "grandfathered" and no actions will be taken for lack of compliance.

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Watershed Group Application Deadline

The application deadline for the VSP Watershed Group is October 13, 2014. Application requests were released on September 23, 2014, so this is not the 60 day application allowance that was indicated to the AAB last meeting. Nels Lagerlund will call Dan Berentson to see if allowances will be made for applications received after this date.

The AAB will be strongly encouraging members of Western Washington Ag Board, drainage districts, Cattlemen's Association, Dairy Association, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, and other groups to provide at least one member who will submit an application to be on the VSP Watershed Group. A detailed list will be sent to AAB members reminding them of who they are to contact.

Other Business

Bill McMoran's term is up on the AAB. He has indicated to one AAB member that he does not wish to renew his term. AAB members were asked to reach out and solicit interest in individuals who could fill this position. Notification of the open position will occur soon.

For the next meeting, Linda Christensen has been asked to provide a list of positions on the board with terms expiring at the end of this year.

Next Meeting

Next Meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2014 at 6:00 p.m., Skagit County Administration Building.

Adjourn

Jim Carstens moved to adjourn; Mike Hulbert seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.