

Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board

Meeting Summary – January 10, 2024

Commissioners Hearing Room/MS Teams

Members in Attendance

Michael Hughes Terry Sapp Nels Lagerlund
Steve Omdal Kraig Knutzen Justin Hayton

Proxy Designations

Terry Sapp for Murray Benjamin

Members Absent

John Morrison Steve Skrinde Steve Wright

Others in Attendance

Jack Moore, Director Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)
Don McMoran, WSU Extension

Call to Order, Introductions

Michael Hughes called the meeting to order at 6:08.

Approval of Meeting Summary

Terry Sapp moved to accept the December 2023 Meeting Minutes, Kraig Knutzen seconded, Motion carried.

Planning Director Update

County Commissioners have not put the Agritourism update from the Planning Commission on their schedule. Unsure if they have a timetable for doing so.

Old Business

- Chair Hughes presented a rough draft letter to Board of a letter to the County Commissioners in support and giving background of the Agritourism proposal.
- Kraig Knutzen made a motion to send the letter presented to the County Commissioners, Seconded by Nels Lagerlund
- Terry Sapp spoke in support of presenting the letter
- Discussion of edits to letter
- Unanimous support of the edits, to be made by Chair Hughes and resent to Board for verification with a submittal date to County Commissioners by Jan 31, 2024.
- Motion to present letter as edited passed unanimously by board.

- Discussion of Statewide Agricultural protections:
 - GMA states non-ag accessory use are limited to existing facilities and 1 acre total.

- Discussion of AAB members providing letters to the editor:
 - Cannot imply speaking for the Board including stating being on the board. May speak only for oneself.

Committee Reports

Land Use – *Terry Sapp (Chair), Kraig Knutzen, Murray Benjamin, Michael Trafton, Steve Omdal*

Nothing at this time

Economic Development- *Don McMoran*

- Ag land on Whitmarsh road conversion to Car parking lot complete
- Skagit Valley Malting working to resume small scale operations
- Island Grown Cooperative kill plant finished
- Ag Park at port potential completion Sept 2025

Critical Areas – *Nels Lagerlund*

SB 1692 Corporations responsible for carbon emissions, will trickle down to suppliers to share with them.

Flood, Drainage & Irrigation – *Kraig Knutzen (Chair), Nels Lagerlund, Steve Wright*

Samish River breached dikes, unknown how long or severity at this time

New Business

Don McMoran WSU Update

- 10% County budget cut
- Looking to create an endowed chair for forestry in Skagit County
 - Will be part of a proposal made Jan 29
- WSU funds still tied up related to the athletics reorganizations
- Facilities- making do with facilities and vehicles currently in possession
- Workshops: Jan 12 Seed Workshop, Feb 9 Ag Summit, Feb 23 Potato Workshop, March (I missed the date) Berry workshop
- Looking to add 2 Spanish translators

Next Meeting: February 21, 2024

Adjourn

Nels Lagerlund moved to adjourn; Justin Hayton seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm.