

**Skagit County Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board
(CFAC)**

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 10, 2014

Members in Attendance

Scott DeGraw, Chair

Owen Peth, Vice-Chair

Carolyn Kelly

Andrea Xaver

Keith Wiggers

Steve Sakuma

Staff in Attendance

Kara Symonds, Skagit County Public Works

Linda Christensen, Skagit County Planning Department

Dan Berentson, Skagit County Public Works

Cori Russell, Skagit County Records Department

Others in Attendance

Chris Elder, PDR Outreach Coordinator, Whatcom County Planning Department

Open

Meeting opened at 7:00 a.m.

Member Update

Andrea Xaver mentioned the Skagit Valley Herald article that was published on Sunday, June 8th regarding the Swinomish Fish Company.

Meeting Minutes

Keith Wiggers moved to approve the May 19, 2014 meeting minutes as corrected and Carolyn Kelly seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Financials

Kara Symonds asked the CFAC what kind of information they need to see at each meeting. Scott DeGraw responded by asking for a report showing easement cash flow. Scott doesn't think the group needs to receive the County generated budget report, but the other CFAC members still want to receive the report.

Guest Attendee

Chris Elder is present at the meeting to observe how the Farmland Legacy Program operates. He is the PDR Outreach Coordinator for Whatcom County.

Old Business

Scott discussed the expectations for all future CFAC meetings. Carolyn Kelly said that the 2014 properties need ranking. It was determined that county staff will do the preliminary ranking and then this information will be provided to the CFAC.

New Business

Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program Records

Cori Russell gave an overview of the current task to Laserfiche all the Farmland Legacy Program (FLP) easement hard files. Work continues. Scott suggested a file check off list should be included with each easement. There was a discussion regarding file security.

Other Completed Easement Tasks

Staff will conduct an internal audit of all completed easements making sure the Assessor database and Permits Plus is labeled as a conservation easement. It was suggested that the property information, i.e., address or road nearest the location on the monitoring letters. This will assist the property owners to determine which property(s) the letter references. Some property owners have more than one easement.

Process

Scott requested staff to develop a clear process for interested parties to submit new applications. Currently, the previously set bi-annual schedule application submittal announcement has not been executed consistently. Additionally, a clear process will be developed for application review, prioritizing applications that have outside funding sources, and prioritizing applications that will go forward without outside funding sources. The challenge for setting particular dates is that outside funding sources can be different each year, depending on legislative process.

Andrea said that the program needs to stay flexible due to circumstances that are constantly changing. She also said the applicant needs to know the entire process up front so they are aware of what is being offered. Scott is requesting staff to ask the county legal department if it is legal to offer a price for property by points alone without an appraisal.

Scott would like a monthly report from Kara regarding the status of all pending applications.

Kara talked about her recent field trip with USDA representative, Monica Hoover.

Next Meeting

The CFAC is requesting that the 2014 properties be ranked and look at the 2013 properties too. They need to receive proximity to roads, sewer lines, etc. to its location and the preliminary scores.

Other Business

Dan Berentson and Kara will start work on the FLP report. Dan also suggested that staff should present an update to the Board of County Commissioners at least twice per year and introduce new CFAC members.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 8, 2014.