

**Thurston County Agriculture Advisory Committee**

**January 20, 2022**

**Meeting Minutes**

[https://youtu.be/\\_FP3SWFzMhQ](https://youtu.be/_FP3SWFzMhQ)

**ATTENDEES:**

**Members Present:** Joe Hanna (Acting Chair); Pat Labine; Robert McIntosh; Kevin Jensen; Jedidiah Haney; Jake Yancey; Jesse Honiker; Gigi McClure (scribe); Mercy Kariuki-McGee

**Members Excused Absent:** Tom Watson

**Members Absent:**

**Ex Officio Present:** Sarah Moorehead (Executive Director, TCD Staff)

**Guest Speaker:** Andrew Deffobis (Thurston County Planning & Economic Development Dept.)

**Guests Present:** Commissioner Carolina Mejia (Dist. 1); Glen Schorno; Loretta Seppanen; Peggy Smith; Marcie Cleaver

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**Called to Order:**

Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

Attendee Introductions

Approval of Current Agenda – motion to approve (Jake/Pat) -passed

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes for October - motion to approve (Robert/Jake) – passed

**Committee Items Discussed:**

**1. Nominations and election:**

- a) Chair: Joe Hanna (Kevin Jensen withdrew and Mercy Kariuki-McGee declined).
- b) Vice Chair: Motion to postpone another vote until February to clarify who resigned and who did not, as well to clear up the tie vote. (Pat/Kevin) – passed.
- c) Bylaws Compliance Officer: Richard McIntosh
- d) Scribe: To be held during the February meeting to determine rotation.

**2. Open Space Tax Program** (Andrew Deffobis): Finalize issues and options suggested for the “Proposed Changed to Eligibility Criteria for the Thurston County Open Space Tax Program, Public Benefit Rating System for Farm and Agriculture Conservation Land: Results of Ag Advisory Subcommittee Work, July – November 2021”.

**3. Senate Bill 1838 & 5727:** Members request review for future meeting as they relate to the Shoreline Master Plan (SMP)

4. **WSU Extension & Thurston Conservation District Shared Work Update** (Sarah Moorehead, TCD Staff):
  - a. Proposal for American Rescue Plan Act Funding to the BOCC to create future workforce development for processing infrastructure.
  - b. Feasibility study to create new processing facilities to identify barriers.
  - c. Thurston Conservation District is assessing flood impact utilizing a questionnaire for farmers who may have been impacted by flooding to match for resources for assistance and recover funds. Link in chat below.
  - d. Link provided in the chat for the WDFW map for site potential tree height map in the area. Used to identify buffer width for stream within Senate Bill.
  - e. Proposed hearing for preserving stock watering.

**Public Comment:** Glen Schorno – Commented on farmers selling land for other use. Believes farmers should have the right to sell development right or it would be like double taxing the farmer. Believe Bill 1838 will be a disaster for Western Washington farmers as it will take valuable crop land with no touch buffers. Recommend more time to review the SMP.

Marcie Cleaver– Would like to see BOCC increase funding to conservation futures. With land prices increasing, this would allow the county to maintain larger farms.

**Other Business:**

Project Notifications: None discussed

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn (Robert/Pat). Meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm.

**Next meeting:** February 17, 2022 @ 7pm

To

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83683927768?pwd=QXkyUVF3c3ZkRW9wbXdtNIRIQ1NTUT09>

Meeting ID: 836 8392 7768 Passcode: 187681

Local Call in Number 1-253-215-8782 US (Tacoma)

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**Ag Advisory Committee Chat Log – January 20, 2022**

00:27:20 Jesse Honiker (she/her): I really encourage members of this committee to pause - reflect upon the directly racist behavior that has taken place, the lack of ability to have any cross political dialogue, and the inability to effectively prevent farmland loss in Thurston county.

00:28:30 Mercy Kariuki-McGee (Shirros Plate/Haki Farmers Collective): Please read our latest equity report to learn how best to serve our community. <https://hakifarmers.org/equity-report/>

00:29:36 Jesse Honiker (she/her): Commissioner Mejia I recommend:

00:29:40 Jesse Honiker (she/her): We are requesting that the Board of Thurston County Commissioners vote to approve the following action steps to address these issues:1) Provide funding to hire a mediator from the Thurston County's Conflict Resolution Center to assist our committee in reviewing the Thurston County Agricultural Advisory Committee by-laws, develop specific operating guidelines, and develop our first ever equity statement. Doing so would strengthen our mission, provide accountability, foster trust between committee members, and develop a clear direction moving forward so that all voices may be heard and represented. 2) Mandate and provide funding for all existing and newly elected Thurston County Agricultural Advisory Committee members to attend an anti-racism and cultural competency training. The BIPOC members of the committee should not be responsible for educating members on anti-racism, and we need a baseline commitment from all committee members around creating safer spaces for all constituents.

01:26:19 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston Conservation District: Definitions of 'ag' in the Open Space WAC: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=458-30-200>

01:26:27 Jake Yancey: Pierce County

01:29:01 Jake Yancey: <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/686/Open-Space>

01:44:12 Loretta Seppanen: The 20 day period may end before next meeting

01:47:28 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston Conservation District: This is a hefty topic that the committee may want to discuss and provide some good recommendations on.

01:47:45 Glenn Schorno: If a farmer hasn't sold their development rights, they shouldn't have to go buy rights. They were taken unfairly through zoning already

01:50:25 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston Conservation District: I have a few minutes on that in my update for you all.

01:51:50 Jake Yancey: Tracking Y Ranch, Jake Yancey

01:51:59 Jake Yancey: (360)561-XXXX

02:00:00 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston Conservation District: <https://www.thurstoncd.com/education/resources/emergency-preparedness-resources/?fbclid=IwAR37pwTZhN9RTzxsg55lg5BORqibtU9uC10Sj4fXC-2I8-cl0eIJPTN4Lq8>

02:00:51 Sarah Moorehead, Thurston Conservation District: Riparian HB1838 Next Public hearing: Jan 21 @ 8:00am