

**THURSTON COUNTY AGRICULTURE ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE**

**June 15, 2023**

<https://youtu.be/YTMU91xLGoU>

**Meeting Minutes**

**ATTENDEES:**

**Members present:** Joe Hanna (Chair); Jake Yancey (Vice Chair); Marguerite Afledtt (TCD Ex/Officio ("Ex/O")); Stephen Bramwell (WSU Extension Ex/O); Nathan Heay (youth Ex/O); Kevin Jensen; Gary Kline; Pat Labine, Greg Schoenbachler, Stella Waxwing, Celeste Winther.

**Members absent:** Chris Doelman (excused for both June and July meetings).

**Guests present:** Ashley Arai, Thurston County Agriculture Community Program Manager), Marcie Cleaver (Community Farmland Trust Co-Chair); Sam Payne

**PRELIMINARY:**

1. Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m.
2. Introductions.

3. Agenda for this meeting moved, seconded, and passed (“M-S-P”) with the addition of Conservation Futures update as item 1 and Livestock Forum Update as item 2.

4. May meeting minutes M-S-P with the addition of the following corrections: (1) Kevin Jensen’s May absence is excused; and (2) the proposed new By-Law definition of “farmer Member” is revised to coincide with the definition furnished by Glenn to Joe.

### **COMMITTEE ITEMS DISCUSSED.**

**1. Conservations Futures Update (Gary).** Gary reported that the Conservation Futures Committee recommended to the BoCC a proposal to use Conservation Futures funds to preserve a salmon stream tributary of the Nisqually River. The BoCC will review this recommendation on May 21.

**2. Livestock Forum Update (Joe).** Joe explained what you have to do, and when, to qualify.

**3. Discussion of Motions from May Meeting.** Robert proposed the following motion: that our Committee “rescind the motion adopted in May on ‘qualifications for farmer members’ and instead ask the BoCC if a timber grower or tree farmer can be a farmer member, with Committee members submitting majority and minority statements for and against this issue if they wish to do so. If the BoCC says yes, we accept their decision. If they say no, we create a non-farmer position for a timber grower/tree farmer.”

This motion was seconded and, after extensive discussion, passed 7 to 2 with one abstention.

Robert also moved that our Committee “rescind the motion adopted in May on ‘By-Law Recommendation change to add a forestry position.’” This motion was seconded and also passed 7 to 2 with one abstention.

**4. WSU Extension Update (Stephen).** Stephen described and explained the following programs: (a) the Ag. Labor Program, adopted under the American Rescue Plan Act, which has opened up and is posted on the webpage. (b) the Food Hub and Workplace Bonus Program. (c) a Soil Health Workshop scheduled for August 11 in Randle.

**5. Thurston Conservation District Update (Marguerite).** Marguerite reported that the TCD is (a) sponsoring a Farmwalk Saturday June 17 in Curtis, WA, (b) will be present at Rochester Swede Day, (c) has three open positions on its staff, and (d) is working to wrap up its cost share programs by the end of this biennium.

**6. Thurston County Update (Ashley).** Ashley reported that she has conveyed our recommendation that water rights not be considered in long term ag. zoning.

**6. Public Comment.** Marcie Cleaver expressed her wish that our Committee focus on substantive agricultural issues such as access to farmland. Sam Payne described and expressed his support for the Right to Garden initiative.

**7. Good of the Order.** Nathan, our new youth member introduced himself to the Committee and explained the agriculture issues that are important to him. Jake described the TCD demonstration of its new no till drill at the Nelson Ranch.

**ADJOURNMENT.** Motion to adjourn M-S-P at 8:33 p.m.