

LARIMER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2020

Present: Sam Adams (liaison, via Zoom), Lynnet Bannion, Jennifer Bornhoft (liaison, via Zoom), Timothy Clouse, Beth Conrey (via Zoom), Jenn Cram (liaison), Karen Crumbaker (liaison, via Zoom), Franklyn Garry, Travis Horton, John Kefalas, Gail Meisner, Paula Petroff (Extension, via Zoom), Kristin Ramey, Travis Rollins (liaison, via Zoom), Greg Schreiner, Jon Slutsky (via Zoom), Zach Thode, George Wallace, and Natalie Yoder.

Absent: none

Guests: Bob Overbeck, Kathy Thornton, Lesli Ellis, Matt Lafferty, Matt Goebel, Austin Flanagan, Gabby Hart, and Elizabeth Garvin.

Meeting called to order and introduction of guests. Chairman Zach Thode called the meeting to order at 12:50 p.m. Guests introduced themselves to members.

II. Consideration of minutes from March 11, 2020. Zach asked that the following be added to Section 4.5 of the minutes. “Zach asked Commissioner Kefalas if he would support the AAB continuing conversations about water sharing with the City of Fort Collins and Commissioner Kefalas said yes he would”. The March 11, 2020 Meeting Minutes were approved and accepted with one addition as noted above.

III. Interaction with Commissioner Kefalas on Ag and Community related issues. Commissioner Kefalas shared the following:

- The Larimer County Planning Commission had its first public hearing on the Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP)/Glade Reservoir on June 24, 2020. It was an information meeting only. Tonight, July 8, 2020, the first public hearing will be held. The meeting will begin at 6:00 pm in the Hearing Room at the Larimer County Courthouse. The room partitions to all three of the hearing rooms will be removed, allowing 50 people to attend. The meeting will also be streamed via Zoom. This meeting begins the NISP process. The month of July is set aside for the Planning Commission to hear public testimony, deliberate, and make their recommendation on the project. There have been three or more meetings scheduled for the Commissioners to meet and discuss information provided by staff, the applicants, Northern Water, and the public. If all goes well the decision on the 1041 application will be made around Labor Day in September.
- At the Board of County Commissioners Work Session today, July 8, 2020, at 1:30 pm, there will be a discussion on the impacts of COVID-19. In March, the Federal Government allocated \$275 billion in stimulus funding (the CARES Act) to state and local governments to offset COVID-19 expenses. Larimer County is receiving \$30.6 million. \$15 million will go directly to the County to help with the cost of addressing the pandemic. Three categories have been identified within the county where the funds may be allocated: Reimbursable expenses for additional funds attributed to COVID-19,

supplanting funds to the general fund, and discretionary spending. An example of discretionary spending may be for things such as providing stronger internet connectivity for children where it has been unreliable as they return to school in the Fall. The remainder of the funds will be distributed to the county's eight municipalities based on population.

- The Ranch is being leased by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the state and has been converted to a 200 bed alternate care site (ACS) should the need arise for patients to have a location that are recovering from COVID-19 or other conditions that don't require acute or critical care. The County is being paid \$24,500 a day by the State and the lease runs until January 15, 2021. The lease can be terminated at any time if the facility is no longer needed.
- The Larimer County Fair will proceed, but with modifications due to the pandemic. There will not be a carnival or professional rodeo, but two of the outdoor arenas can be used for the various livestock projects. Centennial Livestock Auction will be assisting with the livestock sale from their facility.
- The updated Ranch Master Plan is moving forward. The funds for this project come from a sales tax extension approved by Larimer County voters in 2017.
- A discussion was held concerning the Gallagher Amendment and possibility of repealing it. Commissioner Kefalas also discussed the possibility of a ballot measure asking voters for a mill levy to address shortfalls to property taxes.

IV. How Agricultural Land in Larimer County is Taxed – Guest: Bob Overbeck, Larimer County Assessor. Bob Overbeck and Kathy Thornton shared the following and discussion was held:

- Kathy Thornton shared a PowerPoint presentation (At the end of the presentation AAB members asked for a copy, Jenn agreed to share it via email and attached to minutes for reference.)
- There are 155,000 parcels in Larimer County. 130,000 are residential, 7,000 are agricultural and 6,000 are commercial.
- What is the threshold for income for renting property for other uses (George).
- Expense calculations on surveys (organic vs. conventional, etc.) There can be thousands of dollars per acre difference and it's valuable to have conversations addressing these issues (Zach).
- Crop share and land leasing, the surveys are confusing and difficult to complete (Gail).
- Seeing an increase in cash leases on agricultural land and maybe there is a way to distinguish if farmers are the owners or are leasing land (Gail).
- Goal is to minimize loss of agriculture land with voluntary ag district. How can tax incentives be created (homestead exemptions, etc.) (George).
- Need to look at local food and intermediated sales and manufacturing. Noosa and Root Shoot Malting are good examples (Zach).

- Working with the City of Fort Collins to protect the Agricultural businesses and assure that taxing stays consistent with what currently exists in the County within the E. Mulberry Corridor when annexation occurs is vital (George).
- Would the Assessors Office be willing to have some of their staff work with the AAB on some of the Board’s goals, especially value-added agriculture (Zach)? (Bob and Kathy – answered yes, they are interested in continued conversations to improve process for the taxing of agricultural land.)

V. Larimer County Land Use Code Updates – Guest: Matt Lafferty, Principal Planner.

Matt Lafferty and the team from Clarion (consultants) shared a PowerPoint presentation on how the updates to the Larimer County Land Use Code are being approached. He noted that Phase One of the updates are scheduled to be adopted by end of year and Phase Two updates will be adopted in 2021. The Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners have reviewed and commented on two installments within Phase One. These installments are available on the website <https://www.larimer.org/planning/luc2020>. There is also a link for Public comment. Installment One addresses Administration and Procedures. Installment Two addresses Zoning Districts and Regulations. Installment Three will address Development Standards and will be presented to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in August. Matt noted that he will be working with staff to form stakeholder work groups to get additional input on different areas within Installments Two and Three in the coming weeks. There will be an Ag Work Group that looks at Zoning Districts, Uses within those Districts and Definitions. Matt noted that the meeting with the consultants in February was very productive and helped to guide updates. He concluded that the timeline is tight with much to do and he thanked the AAB for their time and input.

VI. 2020 Work Plan and Task Groups: Due to time constraints, there was no discussion on this topic.

VII. Announcements: None

VIII. The next AAB meeting will be held on September 9, 2020 at 12:30 pm. The location will be determined at a later date.

X. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.