

LARIMER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

July 9, 2014

Present: David Bee, Karen Crumbaker (liaison), Brenda Gimeson (liaison), Charles Gindler (liaison), Debra Herston, Minerva Lee, Nic Koontz, Gail Meisner, John Rankin, Greg Schreiner, Richard Seaworth, Jon Slutsky, Ted Swanson, Zach Thode, and George Wallace. Guests: Terry Gilbert, LC Planning Department, Rusty McDaniel and Kyle Arend, LC Engineering Department, Blake Stewart and Clarissa Trapp, CSU Public Lands History Center, and James Thompson, Senator Bennet's office.

Absent: Brad Rhoda, Val Manning.

- I. Gail Meisner called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m. Introductions were made.

- II. Blake Stewart and Clarissa Trapp presented information on the new CSU Public Lands History Center's website on the history of agricultural and urban water use from the Cache la Poudre River in Fort Collins over the past 150 years. The website address for the CSU Public Lands History Center is: www.plhc.libarts.colostate.edu . Comments about the new website can be made to Maren Bzdek at maren.bzdek@colostate.edu or 970-491-6130.

- III. Open discussion of ag and community topics:
 - Larimer County Fair Booth - Should the AAB have a booth at the Larimer County fair this year? The Board agreed that if we are able to get booth space, we would have a presence at the fair. Karen will contact Ruben Flores at CSU College of Ag. Sciences to ask if we can join the agricultural booth area in the First National Bank Building. If we are able to have a booth, Greg will coordinate the material for the booth and a sign-up sheet for booth coverage and ask committee members to identify 3-4 topics of importance to share with visitors during the fair. Minerva will check to see if the large "magic faucet" is available to borrow from Northern Colorado Water.

- Roundabouts on County Roads - Rusty McDaniel and Kyle Arend discussed the potential for roundabouts on Owl Canyon Road west of I-25. Richard expressed a concern that the lanes in the roundabout be large enough to handle farm equipment. Kyle said he would meet with any farmer/rancher who may be affected by a roundabout to be sure the roundabout was wide enough to handle specific farm equipment. One roundabout is being constructed at the intersection of CR 19 and 70; two others are being considered at the intersections of CR 15 and 70 and CR 9 and 70.
- Boulder County Open Space Ag Tour - Members of the AAB were invited to attend a facilitated dialogue on May 27, 2014, to provide input on the Larimer County Open Lands Master Planning effort. George, Gail, Zach, Jon, Brenda and Karen attended the meeting. The notes from the meeting were sent out to everyone attending the meeting. Jon felt the notes did not accurately reflect the meeting. The notes did not go into detail about the discussion on conservation easements vs. simple fee acquisition, and how difficult it is for new/young farmers to find and lease land. Copies of the notes from the meeting were shared with the AAB and discussion followed. One suggestion that came out of that meeting was to visit Boulder County, where their Open Lands Department leases land with water, back to beginning farmers. There was a consensus that a tour of some of these farms should be arranged. Charlie said he would contact someone in Boulder County to see if a tour can be arranged on either September 17 or 24. Jon will collect comments from the AAB members on the notes and schedule a meeting with Kerri Rollins prior to the Open Lands Board meeting on July 24, 2014. It was stressed that if anyone knew ag landowners selling their property, Kerri should be notified.
- Interaction with Terry Gilbert, Community Development Director regarding County Code Regulations - Jon mentioned that there should not be a charge to agricultural producers for building permits. Richard did receive a building permit to move a bin on his property and found the County to be extremely helpful in the permit process but mentioned that moving something old should have a different standard than for something new—that it is more appropriate to recycle buildings than take to the landfill. George felt Waverly should stay with the code that reduces agricultural loss by clustering building and that the minimum size should be 10 acres with no exceptions granted for 5-acre lots. Richard mentioned that 35 acre properties will pose a fire hazard later this summer due to the amount and height of grasses on the property drying out. He asked why a person needs more than 3-4 acres—lots should cluster down to something people can manage—they have no livestock or equipment to manage the larger parcels. For someone to subdivide into 35-acre parcels, no County permit/process is required. If someone wants to subdivide into 3-4 acre lots, they have to go to County and do a complicated subdivision process. The County needs to make the subdivision processes so friendly that the 35-acre subdivision process isn't any easier than any other subdivision process.

IV. The May 14, 2014, AAB Meeting Minutes were approved.

V. Committee Reports.

- Water Resources Committee - George asked to report at the next meeting.
- Legislative Committee - Zach mentioned that the Public Trust Doctrine Initiative that was discussed at the last meeting will not be on the ballot. He also mentioned the WATER Act (federal legislation giving additional flexibility to 501(c)(12) irrigation, ditch, reservoir, and water companies). The legislation has been introduced in the Senate as S. 1441 and in the House as H.R. 3023. Zach asked members of the Board to contact members of congress today, asking them to include the WATER Act in the highway Trust Fund bill when it passes out of committee.
- Education Committee - Discussion of a display at the Larimer County Fair was discussed above.
- Land Preservation Committee - No updates.

VI. Future Presentation - Follow up on suggestions made at the May 14, 2014 meeting.

VII. Announcements:

- James Thompson, Ag. Policy Advisor from Senator Bennet's office, mentioned that he will try to attend as many board meetings as he can to be a resource for the agricultural community. His goal is to stay connected. James reported that the EPA and Army Corps have proposed rules defining the scope of waters covered under the Clean Water Act. Most people refer to it as the EPA WOTUS (Waters of the US) rule. After urging from Senator Bennet, other lawmakers, and several organizations, EPA extended the comment period to October 20. James is asking Colorado organizations who submit comments to share them with his office so that they can be aware of what stakeholders are saying and be sure to flag those comments for EPA. More information, including how to submit comments, is at this link: <http://www2.epa.gov/uswaters> .
- James also mentioned the interim rules for risk management, some of them pertinent to beginning farmers. The link to the rule is: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-07-01/pdf/2014-15074.pdf> and a press release that summarizes the provisions and providing a link for comments is: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2014/06/0136.xml> .
- Richard mentioned that outdoor venues like the new farmers market in Wellington must get a permit by the Wellington Fire Department. He feels the fee for the permit may keep venues like the farmers market from taking place and would like to have these fees waived. Brenda suggested Richard attend an Admin Matters meeting that takes place

each Tuesday morning to bring it up to the Commissioners. Gail speaks with Commissioner Gaiter on the Monday following the AAB meeting and agreed to mention it.

VIII. The next AAB meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 10, 2014 , at 12:30 p.m. at the CSU Larimer County Extension Office, 1525 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins, CO.

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.