

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



TEL (864) 638-4218 FAX (864) 638-4168

AGENDA

6:00 PM, MONDAY, December 11th, 2017
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Approval of Minutes**
October 9th, 2017
November 13th, 2017
3. **Election of a Chairman and Vice Chair**
4. **FARM Center Report**
5. **Continued Discussion on Creating an AAB Mission Statement, AAB Proclamation, and potential AAB Partnerships (including creation of an event survey)**
6. **Discussion on AAB Signage, Logo and Website**
7. **AAB Publicity and Value of Oconee County Agriculture**
8. **Board Correspondence with Outside Agencies**
[to include Vote and/or Action on matters brought up for discussion, if required]
9. **Old Business** *[to include Vote and/or Action on matters brought up for discussion, if required]*
10. **New Business** *[to include Vote and/or Action on matters brought up for discussion, if required]*
11. **Adjourn**

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MINUTES SPECIAL HEARING

6:00 PM, MONDAY, July 10, 2017

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present: Mr. Land
Mr. Blanton
Mr. Hollifield
Ms. Sewell
Ms. Willoughby
Ms. Kim

Staff Present: Adam Chapman, Planner – Community Development

Media Present: none.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Land called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes from 5/22

Motion made by Mr. Land, seconded by Mr. Hollifield. Voted and unanimously approved the minutes.

3. Discussion of Creating a Letter of Support to FARM Center

Mr. Land and Mrs. Sewell were wanting to know if the letter, created to support the FARM Center had been read at the last County Council meeting. Staff was instructed to find out this information as soon as possible. Mrs. Sewell noted that the reading of the ordinance to lease the property for the FARM center had passed and they were waiting on a site plan. Staff informed the Board that a meeting was set for July 25th with the FARM Center's property developer to do a pre-application review. Funds for creating a main entrance off of US HWY 123 had been secured for the FARM Center site. A conversation ensued about the chance of the Heritage Fair being held at the new site and it appears, through conversation, that the Heritage Fair would be held at the same site it had been held in 2016.

4. Continued Discussion on Creating an AAB Mission Statement, AAB Proclamation, and potential AAB Partnerships (including creation of an event survey)

Mr. Rex presented an updated version of the Boards draft Mission Statement (see attached). This mission statement came directly from the County Council's bullet points. Mr. Lands pointed out that as the Board sends ideas, notices and plans to County Council, that County Council, in return should send ideas, notices and plans to the Board. Mr. Howard suggested that whatever document is created that it be flexible to encompass new ideas in the future and be able to change without undue burden. Motion was made to send the Draft Mission Statement to Council by Mr. Howard, seconded by Mrs. Willaby and unanimously approved.

A further discussion on possible slogans for agriculture in the county vacillated between "Grow Oconee" or "Oconee Grown". No vote was taken at adopting either slogan as an official representation of Oconee County agriculture.

A discussion regarding the importance of knowing the current status of agriculture in the county was brought up by Mr. Land. What data is being collected at the Farmers market? Mrs. Sewell stated that several attempts to collect patronage numbers have been tried with varying degree of success. An estimated attendance of 400-500 attendees and 10-15 vendors is the estimate attendance at the farmer's market. Mrs. Sewell noted that the "Likes" on the farmer's market Facebook page had grown by 600 in July from 1,400 in June. It was agreed upon by the Board that the major benefit for the farmer's market was the marketing aspects and that everyone had to encourage as many farmers' to attend the market, as vendors, as possible. It was asked if the county had any hardware for doing vehicle counts and Staff offered to find out by next weekend. Mrs. Kim noted that she had numbers for the Heritage Fair attendance but had to analyze before distributing them. Mrs. Willoughby noted that on the July 4th market, which was held later in the day to catch the firework attendees, allowed for new people to attend the market.

Mr. Land noted the importance of filling out the yearly agricultural census and the importance of encouraging all farmers in the county to fill out the census as well. He noted that Oconee County peach crops are ineligible for insurance as there is not enough historical data for the insurers to create a policy for the peach crop.

Mr. Rex provided a list of partnership opportunities (see attached) and it was discussed that once a solid partnership letter had been drafted and approved the various AAB members would sign up to reach out to the various groups. Mr. Land noted that the AAB would provide as much networking and backup support as the potential partnership groups needed but they, the partnership groups, would have to take the lead.

4. New Business

Mr. Hollifield noted that a letter from the farm bureau expressing the ramifications of the new sewer line running from Seneca to the new industrial park may have on agriculture in the county.

6. Adjourn

Mr. Land motioned to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.



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MINUTES

6:00 PM, MONDAY, November 13, 2017

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present: Mr. Blanton
Mr. Hollifield
Ms. Alexander
Ms. Sewell
Mr. Howard
Ms. Willoughby

Staff Present: Adam Chapman, Planner 1 – Community Development
Sherrie Williams, Planner – Community Development

1. Call to Order

Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

July 10, 2017
Tabled until Chairman is present

3. Election of Vice Chair

Tabled until Chairman is present

4. Continued Discussion on Creating a Letter of Support to FARM Center

No public comment, Ms. Alexander requested that the letter be made more compact so the letter would be easier to read or use bullets. Ms. Sewell requested that we should get with the Heritage Fair Committee (HFC) to partner with about the AAB. Ms. Sewell stated that the C-Funds were secured for the entrance for the new FARM Center on Hwy 123 at the Zaxby's.

5. Continued Discussion on Creating an AAB Mission Statement, AAB Proclamation, and potential AAB Partnerships (including creation of an event survey)

The mission statement:

Educate our community on the importance, significance, benefits, economic and cultural impact agriculture has on our region, through communication and cooperation with the various public, agricultural and industrial concerns, in order to ensure agriculture's vital role in the economy, and that the charter of the County are both maintained and improved.

The Oconee Grown slogan was also included in the motion.

Motion was made by Ms. Willoughby and seconded by Mr. Hollifield to accept the mission statement as presented along with the slogan. The vote was unanimous.

Ms. Sewell would like to partner with Heritage Foothills and the Farmers Market would like a letter drafted to present to them.

6. Discussion on AAB Signage and Website

Staff stated that a website can be created, asked for some input from the AAB on what they would like to see on the web page, asked for any information (i.e. pictures)

Ms. Sewell stated that the SC Certified Signage is very helpful in letting the public know that the products are locally grown.

Mr. Howard stated that the website SC Certified shows all the members in alphabetical order.

7. Discussion of Calendar

Mr. Hollifield stated that during the busy season he has to shut down his produce stand in order to get to the meeting on time, suggested changing the meeting time to 6:30 PM.

8. Old Business

No Old Business

9. New Business

A discussion on the possibly of providing food and/or drinks, for the AAB members at the meetings. Mr. Hollifield asked about the Work Shop between County Council and the Planning Commission about the Control Free District (CFD). Staff explained the

situation about having to have 200 acres to do a development, and once to are rezoned you cannot go back to the CFD.

10. Board Correspondence with Outside Agencies

- a. Agri-tourism
- b. Certified Organic farming
- c. Poultry farming
- d. Cattle farming
- e. Fruits and/or Vegetable farming
- f. Bee Keeping
- g. Silviculture & Forestry operations
- h. Aquaculture
- i. Agri-business
- j. Or another agricultural pursuit, as that term is commonly understood

11. Adjourn

A motion was made by Ms. Alexander with a second by Ms. Willoughby.
7:48 PM