

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

AGENDA

6:30 PM, MONDAY, October 8th, 2018
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
September 10th, 2018
3. Public Comment
4. UpState Forever
5. Discussion on the Farmer & Rancher Listening Session II
6. Protection of Agricultural Lands
7. Heritage Fair & Farm-to-Table summary
8. Radio minute
9. Rural infrastructure
10. Ex-officio member
11. New Business
12. Old Business
13. Adjourn

Anyone wishing to submit written comments to the Agricultural Advisory Board can send their comments to the Planning Department by mail or by emailing them to the email address below. Please Note: If you would like to receive a copy of the agenda via email please contact our office, or email us at achapman@oconeesc.com.

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MINUTES

6:30 PM, MONDAY, September 10th, 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

1. **Call to Order - 6:30**
2. **Approval of Minutes**
August 13th, 2018 - Motion to approve by Mrs. Sewell, Second by Mr. Land, approved with grammatical corrections, 6-0 approved
3. **Public Comment** - None
4. **November meeting date** - Mrs. Alexander made the motion to move November's meeting date from 11/12 to 11/15, Dr. Gray seconded the motion, 6-0 approved
5. **FFA**- Erica Wearing, FFA president for South Carolina, from Seneca High School and an agricultural education major at Clemson University. Mr. Blanton introduced her and congratulated her on her success. Ms. Wearing noted that the future of agriculture lies in educating the youth and engaging the youth to become farmers. Agricultural education is key to the goal of growing the numbers of farmers and securing the nation's food supply. Monetary donations to the FFA is always appreciated and a way to support youth in agriculture. Attending and engaging the FFA with current farmer's knowledge.
6. **Agricultural month proclamation** - Mr. Blanton introduced a proclamation for Council to decree November would be Agricultural Month. The proclamation was handed to the Board members. Mr. Land made a motion to approve November as agriculture appreciation month and advise Council to accept this recommendation, Mrs. Willoughby seconded the motion, 6-0 approved.
7. **Heritage fair staffing and meetings**- Mr. Chapman asked for volunteers to staff the AAB's table at the Heritage Fair. Dr. Gray, Mrs. Alexander, Mrs. Sewell, Mrs. Willoughby, Mr. Land and Mr. Blanton volunteered to sit a shift.
8. **Discussion on Marketing and Advertising of the AAB**
 - a) Agricultural Directory - Mrs. Alexander and Dr. Gray are still working on creating a contact list.
 - b) Market-to-Table Contest - Mrs. Sewell has received 8 entries and is continuing to promote it.
 - c) Agricultural Display - Mr. Chapman updated the AAB on the status of the coming agricultural display at the County building.
 - d) 150th Celebration Activities - The Gala, which will also be a fund raiser for the Heritage Center, will be held at Chattooga Belle Farms on November 12th.

- e) Radio Minute - A decision was made by the Board to advertise the Farmer and Rancher Listening session and allow a working group of the board to create the content and get it to Mr. Chapman by October 1st.
 - f) Website / Brochures - A brief update was provided to the Board regarding and AAB website and additional handouts or brochures
 - g) Other
- 9. Invasive species and Pesticide Alert System - Mrs. Sewell is working with the County's grants administrator is locating grants for increasing the efficacy of the invasive species and pesticide alert systems.
 - 10. New Business
 - 11. Old Business
 - 12. Adjourn

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OCONEE COUNTY

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

RE: AGRICULTURAL AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION

September 10th, 2018

Council members,

The Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) appreciates everything the County Council does for agriculture including , but not limited to, the creation of the AAB, the work on the FARM center, the various projects Council has permitted the AAB to work on as well as the commitment to agriculture that this Council has. To further the County's commitment to agriculture the AAB recommends proclaiming that November is Agricultural Awareness Month. Attached is language for a proclamation that Council could choose to use. The AAB looks forward to working with Council on this matter.

Regards,

Rex Blanton, Chairman

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Proclamation of Agricultural Awareness Month

Whereas agriculture is the oldest and physically largest industry in Oconee County,

Whereas the latest census available reported Oconee's agriculture ranking tenth in South Carolina in total value of agricultural products sold,

Whereas through the marketing of farm products, equipment, and services, agriculture generates approximately \$302.5 million annually in total economic output for Oconee County,

Whereas from 1995 to 2014, agriculture brought \$1,221,000 dollars to local farmers in the form of farming subsidies,

Whereas agriculture encompasses approximately 68,000 acres, or 106 square miles composed of 884 farms in Oconee County, which ensures the care, conservation, and preservation of vast areas of green and open space,

Whereas the care of this pasture, wood, and cropland is a major contributing factor to Oconee's natural beauty and attractiveness, hence our popularity as a tourist destination, as evidenced by a 41% (\$17.9 million) increase in visitor spending since 2006,

Whereas agriculture and agricultural-related entities involve and/or employ approximately 1728 farm families, plus numerous supporting agribusinesses,

Whereas agriculture effects, either directly or indirectly, all citizens of and visitors to Oconee County,

We, the Oconee County Council, hereby formally recognizes the significance, importance, and impact of Oconee's agricultural industry, and her contributions to the health, welfare, and economy of Oconee County, and the state of South Carolina, and the United States of America. In recognition of such, we declare November agriculture awareness month in Oconee County.