



AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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MINUTES

6:30 PM, Monday, July 9th, 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

Members Present:

Ms. Sewell District 1
Mr. Hollifield District 2
Dr. Gray District 3
Ms. Alexander At-Large
Mr. Blanton At-Large

Staff Present: Adam Chapman, Zoning Administrator

Media Present: None

1. Call to Order

Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order at 6:30

2. Approval of Minutes

June 11th minutes: Mr. Blanton and other members of the AAB noted some misspellings of guest speakers names and titles. The minutes were approved with those changes made.

3. Public Comment

Mr. Blanton made a motion to amend the agenda and it was seconded by Mr. Hollifield to allow Mr. Phil Shirley, of Oconee County Parks, Recreation and Tourism to brief the Board on the upcoming "Arts & Agricultural". Mrs. Alexander seconded the motion vote to amend the agenda was unanimous. Mr. Shirley briefed the Board on the Ag and Art tour which is happening 09-22/23 2018. The tour which combines local artists and farms will happen at Chattooga Belle and Sam DuBose Century Farm in partnerships with Visit Oconee, Clemson University, Lake Hartwell Country and Oconee County.

Ms. Casey Certain came and spoke on behalf of the Oconee Cultivation Project. The OCP exposes youth to agriculture. They have existed for three years and partner with Clemson University. Currently they have 12 youths involved in the program and they strive to get their students connected with mentors. They follow a "seed-to-plate model" and are

currently not sponsored by anyone. Mr. Blanton offered any assistance the Board could give.

Amanda Callahan of Callywood came and spoke to Board. She briefed the AAB on her breed of heritage breed pigs and her practice of animal welfare makes a better product. Her farm has been in existence for 7 years and she has also been doing small-scale poultry for 5 years, in addition to her pigs. She is planning on extending her business into agritourism by incorporating a brewery on site. She had attempted to sell her heritage pork at the Heritage Farmer's markets and others but could not cultivate a local, Oconee market. She sells at the Clemson market where she can get the prices she needs to meet her goals. She feels the dilution of the Heritage Farmer's Markets by the other local markets hurts everyone.

4. Possible Recommendation to Council for an Ex-Officio member

Mr. Chapman explained that Danny Howard was not an official member of the Board. In order to have an Ex-Officio member the AAB would have to vote to send to Council a recommendation to change the current language in the Code of Ordinances related to the AAB. Mr. Hollifield made the motion, Mr. Land seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous to recommend to Council the addition of a non-voting ex-officio member to the AAB.

5. Board member discussion on the June 11th Farmer and Rancher Listening Session

Mr. Blanton brought up that the ag-teachers in the County should be on longer, 12 month contracts in order to get compensated for their year-long commitments and recommended we do research to see what could be done. Mr. Hollifield and Mrs. Sewell agreed and offered to do some research as to possibility of this happening. Mr. Blanton brought up that the speakers at the Listening Session consistently brought up a lack of communication around the agricultural community. Mrs. Sewell noted a lack of coordination in the agricultural community as well. Mr. Hollifield noted that there is an increase in small-farms and those should be brought into the AAB meetings and Dr. Gray noted that there are more Oconee Farmers in the Clemson Markets than in the Oconee Markets. Mrs. Callahan mentioned that there was a diversity of goods and services available at the Clemson markets that the Oconee Markets lack.

6. Discussion on protection of agricultural lands

A brief discussion was held regarding the previously voted upon motion that the AAB is recommending that buffers be put in place between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. Mr. Blanton passed around the letter going to Planning and Economic Development Commission he had signed.

7. Discussion on Marketing and Advertising of the AAB

Agricultural Directory - Mrs. Alexander provided the Board with an excellent, draft document of what the Directory could look like. The discussion by the Board was in favor of the direction of the Directory. Mrs. Alexander asked Mr. Chapman to look into creation of a disclaimer as well as the inclusion of private businesses

Market-to-Table Contest - Mrs. Sewell walked the Board through the literature she had created. The Board noted that what she had created is incredible. She noted she had not received many entries as of yet but had handed out many applications.

Logo - Some discussion. No decisions.

150th Anniversary - Mr. Blanton brought up an idea about radio spots, an agricultural hour or minute. Staff will look into this. Mr. Land brought up a tractor parade and asked staff to look into the possibility of this occurring, again.

8. Apiary Directory

Mrs. Sewell did some research in to the state directory of apiaries. The function of this directory is to notify pesticide sprayers that are working near apiaries to prevent the kill-off of bees. Mrs. Sewell asked staff to do some research on how the AAB can help promote the apiary.

9. New Business

None

10. Old Business

None

11. Adjourn

Douglas Hollifield made the motion to adjourn, Kim alexander seconded it. 6-0 in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:16PM