

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

Minutes

6:30 PM, Monday, June 8, 2020

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

LIMITED IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE PERMITTED

Due to the Novel Coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing state of emergency, in-person attendance at this Commission meeting by members of the general public will be limited. Attendance will be limited to twenty percent of the stated maximum occupancy, which equates to thirty-four (34) persons (including Council members, other elected officials, and staff). Attendees will be required to sit in designated seats, appropriately spaced. In-person attendance will be allowed on a “first-come” basis.

*Additionally, to ensure the meeting otherwise remains open to the public, we will continue to broadcast it live on the County’s YouTube channel, which can be found via the County’s website at Oconeesc.com. Further, the public may call in and listen by dialing **888-475-4499 OR 877-853-5257** and entering meeting ID # **828 4377 0168**. And, individuals parked in close proximity to Council Chambers may listen to the meeting on FM 92.3.*

PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY PROHIBITED

During this election season, please remain aware that engaging in partisan political activity during a County Commission meeting is prohibited. Oconee Code of Ordinances Section 2-61. “Partisan political activities” are those activities that are directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for political office, or political group.

Members Present

Edward Land
Rex Blanton
Sandra Gray

Vickie Willoughby
Debbie Sewell

Staff Present

Adam Chapman
Vivian Kompier

Media Present

Caitlin Herrington

1. Call to Order – Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.
2. Approval of minutes from 03/09/2020 – Sandra Gray was not in attendance at the March meeting and Ms. Gray motioned to approve the minutes with the amendment, seconded by Mr. Land.
3. Citizen comment – None

4. Board member comment – Mr. Blanton mentioned that it’s good to be back, good to be back doing Ag business.
Ms. Sewell has been meeting with the Farmers market managers and discussing marketing and possibly doing surveys with vendors and customers to see if their needs are being met. Foothill market has been going since May and is going well. The market building was open and a great place to have the market. There is not a lot of produce yet, but they do have a new coffee vendor.
5. Discussion on “New and Old business” – The County Attorney would like to remove Old and New business off of the agenda. Mr. Land made a motion to remove those items and was seconded by Ms. Gray and approved 5/0.
6. Agricultural Disclosure Act
8.1.1.8: Work with the state Real Estate Licensing commission to add an “Agricultural Disclosure Act” to ensure that potential home/land/business purchasers are made aware that agricultural activity is occurring on land adjacent to the purchaser’s property of interest.
 1. AAB Board members
 - a. Mr. Land
 - b. Mr. Blanton
 - c. Mr. Hollifield
 2. Research other states agricultural disclosure acts
 3. Meet with our local State Real Estate Commission member
 4. Draft a resolution to recommend, bring to AAB, bring to Planning Commission and send to Council.
7. County Right-to-Farm act
Strategy 8.1.2.6.: Support South Carolina right-to-farm laws and consider adopting a county right-to-farm policy.
 1. AAB Board members – **No volunteers**
 2. Research our right-to-farm act and any other states as well as local right-to-farm acts.
 3. Define “why we are doing this”
 5. Draft a resolution to recommend, bring to AAB, send to Council.
8. Non-traditional and specialty agriculture assistance
Strategy 8.1.2.2.: Provide appropriate assistance to expand non- traditional and specialty agribusiness opportunities.
 1. AAB Board members
 - a. Ms. Sewel
 - b. Ms. Gray
 2. Research other states transfer of farmland from older to younger generations plans
 3. Define “why we are doing this”
 4. Meet with Oconee Food Summit and come up with a plan.
 5. MAYBE Draft a resolution to recommend, bring to AAB, bring to Planning Commission and send to Council.

9. “Victory gardens”

Strategy 8.3.1.2.: Encourage residents to supplement personal food sources with gardening and fresh food preservation.

1. AAB Board members – Kim Alexander has done a lot of research on this topic as per Ms. Sewel
 - a. Mr. Land
 - b. Mr. Blanton
 - c. Ms. Gray

2. Establish a communication/advertisement plan

3. Link providers with end-users

4. Establish the “why”

10. Old Business – Food policy group got together and fed the tornado victims for 3 or 4 days, as well as many other groups.

The Beginner Farmer Guide we need to get moving on this.

Advertising in the newspaper calendar for farmers’ markets.

USDA grants for small farmers.

FSA has money if you’ve lost money.

We need to educate everyone on the programs that are available.

11. New Business - None

12. Adjourn – 7:11pm

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.