

# AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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

## Minutes

6:30 PM, Monday, November 9, 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](http://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**

Douglas Hollifield

Amanda Moon Callahan

Debbie Sewell

Rex Blanton

### **Staff Present**

Adam Chapman

Laura Zimmerman

### **Media Present**

None

1. Call to Order – Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
2. Approval of minutes from 7/13/2020 – Ms. Callahan made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Hollifield and approved 4/0.
3. Approval of minutes from 10/12/2020 – Ms. Callahan made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Sewell and approved 4/0.

4. Citizen comment – Written comments submitted by four citizens were read by Mr. Blanton. All spoke to the need for a USDA Certified animal processing plant in Oconee County, or at minimum a SCDA Certified plant. This need was exacerbated by COVID-19 as farmers are facing extreme process scheduling delays. Comments also highlighted the economic value to adding a certified processing plant to the county.
5. Animal Processing – There was a discussion on how AAB could help mitigate the absence of a certified animal processing plant. Mr. Hollifield made a motion that Ms. Callahan and Ms. Sewell craft and present a letter to the County Council wherein they will outline the need for a USDA OR SCDA Certified animal processing plant in Oconee County, what resources are required to meet the need (building size, utilities, machinery, etc.) and request that Council approach the State Legislature to temporarily relax restrictions on meat certifications to allow sale of meats to markets and other retail outlets. Motion was seconded by Ms. Sewell and approved 4/0.

Ms. Callahan made a motion that a sub-committee shall be formed to research solutions and inform and monitor the County Council and others on any proposed resolutions for issues regarding animal processing in Oconee County. Ms. Sewell seconded the motion and it was approved 4/0. Ms. Callahan and Ms. Sewell will serve as members of the sub-committee.

6. Farmer's resource guide – The updated document was reviewed. Several missing resources were noted. Staff will update the document and email to board members for final review. Document will then be aesthetically improved and posted on Oconee County website
7. Agriculture month proclamation – Ms. Callahan made a motion to approve the Oconee County Council Proclamation supporting the South Carolina's Right to Farm Act as submitted. Mr. Hollifield seconded the motion and it was approved 4/0. Staff will aesthetically improve the document. Document will be presented to County Council by Ms. Callahan and Ms. Sewell when they address Council regarding animal processing.
8. Adjourn – Discussion regarding the Comprehensive Plan with regards to agriculture will be on next month's agenda. Mr. Hollifield made a motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Mr. Blanton and approved unanimously at 7:35 PM.

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](mailto:achapman@oconeesc.com).