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## *Agriculture Advisory Board*

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### **Minutes**

Agriculture Advisory Board

September 13, 2016 7:00 PM Ag Building

**Called to order**, 7:10 pm

**Present:** Esta Cohen (Chair), Sam Groce (NCCES), Ronnie Vaughn, Tandy Jones, Sharon Day, Joe Wachs, Bobby Tucker, Thomas “Chip” Price, Dr. J. Dykers, Joe Wachs,

**Absent:** Larry Harris, Terrill Ellington, Cathy Jones, Walter Petty (BOC liason)

### **Approval of Minutes**

Changes:

- Add “Dr. J. Dykers” to absent.

Motion to approve by Sharon Day with aforementioned changes. Second by Joe Wachs. Unanimous approval.

### **Old Business**

**Review of County GIS Maps:** Esta requested that board members provide notification of known discrepancies.

**Farmer Hall of Fame:** Spring Banquet. Sam mentioned the need to set a firm date for the spring. Applications sent to the general community. County is adding a new online form for electronic submission. Members of Ag Advisory Board can also submit recommendations prior to voting to induct. Notice of applications to be sent within two weeks with closing deadline of January 1, 2017.

**Status of the Building.** Possible March date for ribbon cutting for the new building in conjunction with a Farm Bureau sponsored ag-education events. The new building is likely to be opened to the public for rental starting in January.

### **New Business**

1. **VAD Applications** – Two new applications to be sent via email by Sam for board approval, but he did not have them present for approval. They will be brought to the next meeting.
2. **County Comprehensive Plan:** Tandy reported on the sub-committee meeting with the County Planning Department and the consultants. The intent of the meeting was to get input from variety of people regarding what is important for protecting Chatham agriculture. Tandy mentioned the recent county-wide survey that indicated that the number one priority for survey participants was to preserve the

rural character of Chatham County. Map created by independent conservation/preservation non-profits that rank farmlands in Chatham for preservation. There was a strong suggestion by several ag advisory board members to include an ordinance revision focused on protecting water resources of existing farmers. It was also noted that only 25% of bona-fide farms in Chatham County participate in the VAD, and that the number and location of bona-fide farms is not publically available information.

3. **Ag-Board By-laws:** Current status of by-laws was reported by Esta and Ronnie, although discussion was postponed to next board meeting.
  
4. **Mountaire Farms:** Chip provided a report from the Mountaire Farms public meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm.