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Agricultural Advisory Board

FINAL Minutes

Agricultural Advisory Board

August 11, 2020 7:00 PM CCACC (Chatham County Agriculture Conference Center) & Zoom
remote video

Called to order, 7:04 pm

Present: Bobby Tucker (Chair), Cathy Jones (Vice Chair), Ginger Cunningham (NCCES County Director), Doug Burleson, Tenita Solanto, Sharon Day, Chris Hart, Ben Shields (Secretary), Susannah Goldston (CC Soil & Water Conservation District), Emily Moose (Planning Board liaison)

Absent: Andy Wilkie (BOC liaison)

1. Agenda Review and Approval

Bobby introduced the meeting and solicited input on the proposed agenda. No edits were suggested.

2. Review of July 14, 2020 Meeting minutes

Cathy motioned to approve, Sharon seconded the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

3. Review of New Board Applicants

The board discussed the new board applicants. Tenita had administered an online straw poll and the board decided to focus on the top 3 candidates, who were all several votes above the rest of the field. Cathy asked to clarify the terms to be filled and Susannah responded one seat is a full 3 year term and the other seat a partial 2 year term. Cathy then asked what county quadrants need to be represented on the AAB, per the by-laws. Susannah responded the SE and SW quadrants need representation.

Sharon motioned to invite the top 3 candidates for 5 to 10 minute interviews during the next board meeting at staggered time slots, Ben seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Volunteer Agricultural District Updates

Susannah shared how CC Soil & Water recently put out a new press release with information regarding the new VAD program. She also reminded the board that Ben gave the AAB's annual update to the CC Board of Commissioners on July 20, 2020. Susannah then shared the new GIS map on the county website showing all parcels currently in the VAD program and the associated half mile buffer surrounding those parcels. She then brought up the latest VAD applicants for board approval. One applicant was held back for a check on eligibility. Of the remaining applicants, Bobby motioned to approve and Sharon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The board discussed notifying the public about the new VAD program. The board decided to use direct mail to former participants as well as sharing a short video on social media, to be produced by the CES. Ginger will look into commingling a letter with a county-wide mailing such as the annual dump sticker distribution.

5. Water Usage Resolution review

The 2017 AAB resolution to the BOC on limiting water usage by large sub-divisions was discussed. Emily shared that the CC Planning Board is also considering this issue and has formed a sub-committee to study the issue and strategize around it. Bobby and Ben volunteered to participate in a joint board committee. This review was tabled for future discussion.

6. Potential Guest Speakers

The board discussed potential guest speakers and a previously generated list thereof. Board members generally agreed to bring in experts in the field of water management and law. Members were encouraged to research and pass on names and contact information to Bobby, who will then invite and coordinate those guest speakers.

7. New Business

The board briefly discussed the continued effects of COVID 19 on members operations.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th, 2020 at 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.