

# Pierce County Agriculture Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2020, 6:30pm-8pm

Zoom conference call

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6:30pm - Call meeting to order

- Roll Call – Quorum

### Meeting

Carrie Little, Committee Chair, welcomed all to the meeting.

Chair Little called for a moment of silence to recognize all those who have died due to the COVID-19 virus.

### Attendance

Carrie Little – Little Eorthe Farm, Becky Weed – Harlow Cattle Company, Tim Curtis – Sterino Farms, Micha Ide – Bright Ide Acres, Jim Kropf – WSU-Pierce County Extension Director, Paul Mosby – Mosby Brothers Farm, Jerome O’Leary (alternate for Ken Scholz) – Snowshoe Evergreen, Dan Picha – Picha Farms, Councilwoman Pam Roach – Pierce County Council

Dan Muir – Coordinator, Pierce County Agriculture Advisory Committee

Hugh Taylor - Office of the Pierce County Council

Members of the public:

Amy Cruver – Assistant to Councilmember Jim McCune and Drainage District 13 Commissioner, Judy Hurley – Assistant to Councilmember Dave Morell, Jamison Grzyb – County Environmental Biologist, Jordan Jobe – Washington State University, Charlie Kirry – Assistant to Councilmember Pam Roach, Alison Nichols – Pierce Conservation District, Mike Poteet – Pierce County Agriculture Planner, David Hill, Maxine Hill – SR162 Community Group, Anitra Sudderth - SR162 Community Group,

### Speakers

Matthew Blankenship – WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Michelle Tirhi – WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

**Motion:** Mr. Mosby made a motion to approve the November 2020 agenda. Ms. Weed seconded. All voted yes, none opposed. Motion passes to approve November 2020 agenda.

**Motion:** Mr. Mosby made a motion to approve the October 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Curtis seconded. All voted yes, none opposed. Motion passes to approve October 2020 meeting minutes.

### Public Comment

Anitra Sudderth – The SR162 Community Group has started a petition to get the attention of legislators with the intent of having them ask WA Dept. of Transportation to revisit the plan for SR162 and the addition of new roundabouts.

Mr. O’Leary and Mr. Mosby requested that the topic of SR162 be an agenda item at a future Ag Advisory Committee meeting with a speaker from WDOT attending.

### **Chair’s Report**

Ms. Little attended the November 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the County Council and presented a plaque to Council and Staff. The plaque is from the Agriculture Advisory Committee and recognizes the good work of the Council and Staff in supporting the efforts of the Ag Advisory Committee. Councilwoman Roach was also recognized for her good service to the Ag Advisory Committee.

### **Coordinators Report**

At the October 2020 Ag Advisory Committee meeting a motion passed that the Ag Advisory Committee send a letter to the County Council stating that the Committee recommends the Council consider directing Pierce County staff to perform a pilot project with the farms in the Canyon Road Regional Connection Project area to determine the effectiveness of implementing Agricultural Corridors in Pierce County. Mr. Muir reported that the letter has been submitted and it appears that there is Council support. A resolution will need to be drafted for this issue to be moved forward.

Mr. Muir confirmed with Committee members that the Committee will not meet in December.

Mr. Muir reviewed the process that will occur in January with the appointment by the new County Council Chair of the new Ex-Officio member of the Ag Advisory Committee.

**Department of Fish and Wildlife** - Matthew Blankenship, Michelle Tirhi – WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife  
Mr. Blankenship stated that he and Ms. Tirhi are here to have a Q&A with members of the committee about the subject of Elk herds and the impact on agriculture in Pierce County. A general discussion occurred with several members of the Committee asking questions. Elk damage to crops and property is a major concern and compensation methods need to be considered. There is also interest in more funding for Elk fencing.

Ms. Tirhi report that there is an update to the North Rainier Elk Herd Management Plan (2020):  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/02092>

### **Pierce County Agriculture Program Report – Mike Poteet**

The County is continuing to purchase Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for distribution to farms. The Drainage Task Force continues to meet and has the County has created a webpage to report drainage issues and to help people navigate which agency or person they should contact. There will be a farmers call on November 30<sup>th</sup> with speakers from the SW Washington Food Hub, Tacoma Farmers Market Mobile Market project, Pacific Harvest, WSDA Farm to School program and The Evergreen United Food Hub. The call is to help inform farmers on how to access some of these markets.

RCW.84.34.145 calls for the County legislative authority to appoint a five-member committee representing the farming community to serve in an advisory capacity to the assessor in implementing assessing guidelines for open space, agriculture, and timberland. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please let Mr. Poteet know.

If the Agriculture Advisory Committee is interested in certain code changes, they can request a code amendment through the County's Comp Plan process.

### **New Business**

Chair Little stated that she will step aside as the Chair of the Agriculture Advisory Committee. Ms. Little will remain an active member of the Committee.

Mr. Muir thanked Ms. Little for her service to the Committee as Chair. The sentiment was echoed by the rest of the Committee.

### **Adjournment**