Meeting Minutes

Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board - Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District 49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28787 June 20, 2023, at 11:00 am

Ag Advisory Board Members Present: Chair Steve Duckett, Wayne Welch, Chase Hubbard, Terri Wells, Suzy Rankin, David Lee.

Others Present: Ariel Zijp, Avni Naik, Angelica Tyler (BC Staff).

Meeting was called to order at 11:01am by Chair Steve Duckett.

Approval of the June 20, 2023, Meeting Agenda

> Chase Hubbard made a motion to approve the June 20, 2023, meeting agenda, seconded by Terri Wells, and the motion passed on the vote.

Approval of the May 16, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Wayne Welch made a motion to approve the May 16, 2023, meeting minutes, seconded by Terri Wells, and the motion passed on the vote.

<u>Board Member Reports:</u> Mr. Welch stated that he spoke with Dr. Claxton about using their space for future events for the Board and they are open to hosting. Ms. Wells stated that she was glad that Staff had the opportunity to host and show the crew of the Good Road documentary around the County. Explore Asheville reached out to Staff interested in featuring the Farm Heritage Trail (FHT) in a mini episode. The Good Road highlights unique people and places around the world, and they were interested in the FHT. Staff took the crew to three farms on the trail including the SAHC community Farm, Jasperwood Farm, and Sandy Mush Herb Nursery. Ms. Wells hopes that this will be good publicity for the trail and linking Explore Asheville to our farmers. The show is tentatively scheduled to air during fall at the moment.

New Board Member Opening: Vice-Chair Bruce Snelson recently resigned – he served on the Board for a long time and is moving on to other endeavors. Ms. Wells reached out to Mark Diaz to take his position, and he recently submitted his application. The Board can vote in support of him if they choose. Ms. Wells spoked in favor of Mr. Diaz – he's an active farmer, is leasing to a young farmer that's growing vegetables using hoop houses on their property, and he has been through the donation easement process with BCSWCD. Ms. Wells stated he's thoughtful and a good farmer to work with – she thinks he'd be a good fit for this Board.

> David Lee made a motion to support the recommendation of Mark Diaz as a board member to the Commission, seconded by Mr. Hubbard, and the motion passed on the vote.

VAD and EVAD Applications (Ms. Naik): Four new VAD applications and one new EVAD application.

Township	Acres	Program	Determination	Appl. Date
Fairview	142.05	VAD	Eligible	5/19/2023
Alexdander	64.89	VAD	Eligible	6/7/2023
Leicester	188	VAD	Eligible	6/14/2023
Leicester	54.5	EVAD	Eligible	6/12/2023
Leicester	9.5	VAD	Eligible	1/27/2023
	458.94			
				,
				VAD/EVAD Combined Totals
				332
Total Acreage	22033.16	Total Acreage	2204.08	24237.24
Number of Farms	316	Number of Farms	21	337
	Fairview Alexdander Leicester Leicester Leicester VAD Tota Number of Farms Total Acreage	Fairview 142.05 Alexdander 64.89 Leicester 188 Leicester 54.5 Leicester 9.5 458.94 VAD Totals Number of Farms 312 Total Acreage 22033.16	Fairview 142.05 VAD Alexdander 64.89 VAD Leicester 188 VAD Leicester 54.5 EVAD Leicester 9.5 VAD 458.94 VAD Totals EVAD Number of Farms 312 Number of Farms Total Acreage 22033.16 Total Acreage	Fairview 142.05 VAD Eligible Alexdander 64.89 VAD Eligible Leicester 188 VAD Eligible Leicester 54.5 EVAD Eligible Leicester 9.5 VAD Eligible 458.94 VAD Totals EVAD Totals EVAD Totals Number of Farms 312 Number of Farms 20 Total Acreage 22033.16 Total Acreage 2204.08

Ms. Wells made a motion to approve the four VAD applications and one EVAD application, seconded by Mr. Lee, and the motion passed on the vote.

Farmland Preservation Report

- Successful Conservation Family Dinner May 11th
- The Good Road TV show– Helped coordinate locations & topics for filming the Farm Heritage Trail
- Coordinating new projects and proposals for board approval this summer
- Easement Project Updates
 - Larson Easement survey in review, deed work starting
 - Wesley Easement survey & forest management plan in progress
 - SAHC Garrett –starting survey in August
 - o SAHC Teague Property Easement closing postponed due to boundary dispute
 - Sluder Easement deed work in review and appraisal completed
 - o Ramsey Easement –resolving Phase II EA findings & Appraisal reviewed
 - Jasperwood Farm Easements starting deed work, environmental assessments and Appraisal completed and in review
 - o Splendor Valley LLC Easement –refinancing in order to get subordination agreement signed
 - o Clark Easement postponed banks reviewing subordination agreements
 - Worthen & Krekel Letter of Intent Signed and contracting with surveyor
 - o Soden Letter of Intent signing and contracting with surveyor

FY24 Project Proposal Presentation: Staff proposed projects and potential funding sources for each project for FY24. Ms. Zijp stated some of this may shift after Staff hears back from grant funding agencies of what FY23 projects have been approved vs. denied. The following projects were presented:

- Fairacres Farm, Fairview, +/- 155 acres
- Parham Farm, Leicester, +/- 30 acres
- Gillespie Farm, Leicester, +/- 22 acres
- Reed Farm, Fairview, +/- 16.5 acres
- Slocumb Farm, Leicester, +/- 122 acres
- Okoboji Farm, Fletcher, +/- 40 acres
- Shady Place Farm, Leicester, +/- 188 acres
- Clyde Denny Farm, Weaverville, +/- 26 acres

The Board discussed funding mechanisms for all projects. Ms. Wells stated the board visits will be helpful to see the properties in-person. Staff will coordinate site visits between now and July. Mr. Lee stated that he has some concerns over timber production and processing and the economics of forestry in Western North Carolina with the closing of the Canton mill and other mills.

With no other announcements, the meeting was adjourned at 12:22 am.