

# LARIMER COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

## Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2014

Present: Jennifer Bornhoft (liaison), Karen Crumbaker (liaison), Lew Gaiter, Brenda Gimeson (liaison), Charles Gindler (liaison), Debra Herston, Nic Koontz, Val Manning, Gail Meisner, Brad Rhoda, Greg Schreiner, Richard Seaworth, Jon Slutsky, Ted Swanson, Zach Thode, and George Wallace. Guests: Tom Donnelly, Larimer County Commissioner, Steve Johnson, Larimer County Commissioner, Laura Tyler, Fort Collins Conservation District, George Reed, Jeffrey Boring, Mara Brosy-Wiwchar, Congressman Jared Polis' office.

Absent: David Bee, Minerva Lee, and John Rankin.

- I. Gail Meisner called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.
- II. Introductions were made by new board members, Nic Koontz and Greg Schreiner.
- III. Commissioners Gaiter, Donnelly and Johnson discussed issues they felt were important to members of the AAB. Commissioner Gaiter expressed his appreciation on the feedback he receives from the Board. Commissioner Donnelly discussed the emerging issues between the "old west" and "new west", especially when it comes to water. Water concerns remain an important priority in Larimer County. Commissioner Johnson updated the Board on the rebuilding that was occurring at the fairgrounds.

Gail Meisner brought up the opportunity for the AAB members to be involved in educational outreach with the Commissioners. The Commissioners support educating the residents of Larimer County about agriculture. Some opportunities that exist are with the Bee Family Farm, Lee Martinez Park, the Larimer County Fair, the County 101 program, possibly an ag tour like the one held in Weld County, and possibly partnering with other entities such as CSU, NRCS, Farm Services Agency, etc. There was some discussion about sponsoring an educational

meeting about the upcoming farm program. Gail also brought up the idea of occasionally holding AAB meetings in other locations.

The AAB members asked the Commissioners if they could get formal input on the ballot language for the Open Lands Program or have the ability to have a joint meeting with the Open Land Board for some discussion. The AAB members would also like to participate in the Open Land Master Planning effort.

IV. Jeffrey Boring with Larimer County Open Lands updated the Board on the South Platte Basin Roundtable. There are nine basins in Colorado, with the South Platte Basin being the most urbanized and industrialized basin in the state. Seventy-two percent of all of Colorado's agricultural water use comes from the South Platte Basin. The challenges for the basin are meeting recreational needs, urban needs, water rights, and water storage. There are nine projects on the table in the South Platte Basin. Comments on the Colorado Water Plan can be directed to the South Platte Basin roundtable at: [www.SouthPlatteBasin.com](http://www.SouthPlatteBasin.com). Comments need to be made by July, 2014, when the draft Basin Implementation Plans are due.

V. The January 8, 2014 AAB Meeting Minutes were approved.

VI. Discussion on agricultural and community interests. The Board brain-stormed on issues and concerns in Larimer County. Jon Slutsky brought up a concern over the ballot initiatives by the Humane Society of the United States involving dairy and other agricultural animals, which include tail docking, cruelty to livestock which involves best management practices for livestock, the number of animals, feed, shade, water, the elimination of free style barns for dairy, hot iron branding, and that cattle cannot be in a pen where they cannot turn around.

Another initiative discussed was the Public Trust Doctrine. The Board mentioned they would like to either write a letter regarding this initiative or take a position on it. There have been sixteen opposition statements already given.

VII. Discussion of Annual Report. Brenda handed out copies of the draft 2013 Larimer County Agricultural Advisory Board Annual Report. This is the first year this report has been drafted and Brenda stated the importance of sharing the work of the AAB with the

Commissioners. Brenda asked the Board members to read through the report and provide her with information that may be missing from the report. She will then finalize the report.

VIII. There was discussion on whether future meetings should continue to be held at the CSU Larimer County Extension office or whether they should be held in various locations around the county. Additionally, there was discussion on whether meetings should be held monthly, bi-monthly, and what the contents of these meetings should be. Should meetings be business meetings only or should there be time allowed for individual presentations that may benefit the Board? Gail offered to send out an e-mail to all members asking for their feedback and will provide the results at the next Board meeting. Until a decision by the Board could be made, the meetings will continue at the CSU Larimer County Extension office on a bi-monthly basis.

IX. The next AAB meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 , at 12:30 p.m. at the CSU Larimer County Extension Office, 1525 Blue Spruce Drive, Fort Collins, CO.

X. The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.