

## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD

415 South Pine Street - Walhalla, SC



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**MINUTES**

6:30 PM, Monday, March 12th, 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

OCONEE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEX

**Members Present:**

Ms. Sewell District 1  
Mr. Hollifield District 2  
Dr. Gray District 3  
Mr. Land District 4  
Ms. Willoughby District 5  
Ms. Alexander At-Large  
Mr. Blanton At-Large  
Mr. Howard Ex-Officio

Staff Present: Adam Chapman, Zoning Administrator

Media Present: None

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order at 6:30

**2. Approval of Minutes**

February 12<sup>th</sup> minutes: Motion for approval by Mr. Land, seconded by Dr. Gray.  
Unanimous vote for approval.

**3. Discussion of Agricultural Element for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan.**

Gwen McPhail, of the Oconee County Planning Commission, formally asked the Agricultural Advisory Board to begin work on the Agricultural Element for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Mrs. McPhail posed the task as "How do we preserve and grow agriculture, in Oconee County, going forward?" Mr. Chapman began explaining the possible ways for the AAB to go about this. One option is to have a meeting in each voting district to gather information. Mr. Hollifield recommended having a well-advertised meeting for the Comprehensive Plan and a meet & greet in Council Chambers.

Mr. Chapman agreed and thought that idea could be very helpful but still recommended at least one meeting be held in each voting district, as well.

**4. Development of AAB led events for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.**

Mrs. Alexander, who has taken the lead on the possible trail ride event for the 150<sup>th</sup> gave some options for dates and locations. Mrs. Alexander mentioned Westminster as well as the FARM center as destinations for the trail ride. The board members thought that Westminster, due to horse and people safety, was the best option. The timeframe the board agreed upon was to do the trail ride in conjunction with the Apple Festival, which is in September, and possibly a little cooler weather. Mrs. Sewell showed a brochure that the AAB had used previously and mentioned updating it and getting to the Oconee Bell festival, the following weekend. Staff offered to print the brochures. The board members were concerned about the data; however Mrs. Sewell updated the data utilizing the 2012 Ag. Census data. Mrs. Alexander and Mrs. Sewell are still in need of “150 things about Agriculture” from the rest of the Board members.

**5. Discussion on the AAB letter of introduction**

Mr. Blanton asked for more input on the letter to be given to him by next meeting.

**6. Discussion on County Council and Agricultural awareness.**

A discussion was had regarding promoting the benefits of the Agricultural sector to County Council at each of the Council meetings, where possible. Mrs. Sewell also recommended that the AAB has a presence at the farmers’ market and all other venues. Mr. Land wants Council to know that agriculture is every bit as important as Duke Power, industrial development or any down-town plan. Mr. Land stated that having a line item in the budget for the County for agriculture should be a priority for the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Land also noted the lack of support, historically, for agriculture from the County Government. Mrs. Alexander noted that the number of farms is growing but the number of acres of land is being reduced, which means, more smaller farms, with data from the Agricultural Census of 2012. Mr. Blanton noted that networking with other groups is important for pushing forward an agricultural agenda. Mr. Blanton asked the AAB members to come back with a list of five or ten items that the board members see as most important, for agriculture. Mrs. Sewell made a motion that individual Board member’s may speak , on behalf of the AAB, at County Council meetings asking for support from Council and within a scope of agreed upon items. Mr. Land seconded the motion, 7-0 in favor. Mrs. Sewell volunteered to speak at the next Council meeting.

**7. Discussion on AAB representative education**

Mr. Blanton asked what educational options were available. Some scholarships were available for Leadership Oconee, however those have closed. Mr. Blanton asked what ACOG classes were available. Staff will reach out to ACOG and see what could be an option for AAB.

**8. Discussion on AAB marketing and advertising at events**

Mr. Blanton stated that he was working on some advertising boards for the AAB to bring to events, he also mentioned wanting to get a roster of Board members to represent the AAB at various fairs and festivals and other events. Mr. Chapman mentioned that utilizing the “Destination Oconee” logo is not available for the AAB, however we could use their color palette Staff noted that we may be able to use the FARM center logo template. Mr. Blanton asked for the Board members to ask around for a designer for a

logo. Oconee Grown, Mr. Blanton mentioned that “Oconee Grown” is the voted upon logo. Mr. Blanton also recommended that a letter writing campaign to the paper may be good in getting the word out about the Board.

**9. Old Business**

None

**10. New Business**

Mr.Hollifield updated the Board on new laws affecting Poultry Houses in the State.

**11. Adjourn**

Mrs. Alexander made the motion, Mr. Land seconded the motion. 7-0 in favor.

DRAFT