



Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board

Meeting Agenda for June 18, 2024, at 11:00 am

49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28806

Call to order	Chase Hubbard, Chair
Public Comment	
Approval of June 18, 2024, meeting agenda	Board
Approval of May 14, 2024, meeting minutes	Board
Board Member Reports	Board
Applications for VAD and EVAD	Avni Naik, BCSWCD
FY25 Project Proposals Discussion & Vote	Ariel Zijp, BCSWCD
Farmland Preservation Report	Ariel Zijp, BCSWCD
Announcements and Discussion	Board

To enter closed session: G.S.143-318.11(a)(2)(5)

Meeting Minutes
Buncombe County Agricultural Advisory Board - Buncombe Soil & Water Conservation District
49 Mount Carmel Rd, Asheville, NC 28787
May 14, 2024, at 11:00 am

Ag Advisory Board Members Present: Vice-Chair Wayne Welch, Erica Boyd, Anne Grier, Steve Duckett, Erica Boyd, Mark Diaz.

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

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 am by Vice-Chair Wayne Welch but there was no quorum at the time so the Board proceeded with non-voting items first until quorum was met at 11:18am.

Public Comment: No public comment at this time.

Approval of the May 14, 2024, Meeting Agenda

- **Steve Duckett made a motion to approve the May 14, 2024, meeting agenda, seconded by Mark Diaz, and the motion passed on the vote.**

Approval of the April 16, 2024, Meeting Minutes

- **Steve Duckett made a motion to approve the April 16, 2024, meeting minutes, seconded by Anne Grier, and the motion passed on the vote.**

Board Member Reports: Erica Boyd introduced herself as the newest board member.

VAD and EVAD Applications: Provided by Ms. Naik. 12 VAD renewal applications

- **Steve Duckett made a motion to approve the VAD/EVAD renewal applications, seconded by Anne Grier, and the motion passed on the vote.**

Short-Term Rentals Update: Provided by Ms. Phillips with the Buncombe County Planning Dept. Stemmed from a subaction in the Comprehensive Plan that suggested increasing housing by reducing short-term rentals. This will be one step of a series of text amendments that will be brought forward over the coming years. Ms. Phillips provided a summary of the Planning Board's Discussion of STRs. The proposal has been placed on hold for 100 days as the Planning Board requested additional time to discuss. Ms. Phillips provided the Board with an update on how bona fide ag and agritourism are exempt from the local Zoning Ordinance.

Planning & Updates to Process/FY25 Project Proposals: Presented by Ms. Zijp and Ms. Naik. Program staff has been reflecting on their processes as the program expands and new issues arise. They are planning on updating the Farmland Preservation Program Ordinance with the County as well as the VAD/EVAD ordinance language based on recommendations from the state. They also hope to clarify language around the EVAD renewals as was brought up during a meeting by a previous board member. Staff have also been working on identifying issues such as environmental hazards, liens/mortgages, etc. earlier on during the easement process to avoid delays in closing farther down the line and working with the Legal Dept. to expand on the Letter of Intent language to ensure landowners are disclosing issues earlier on.

Four new easement projects for FY25 were proposed to the Board. Staff are working on collecting estimates to determine transaction costs for the projects.

1. Lady Luck Farm, +/-70 acres, Sandy Mush. Working family farm – proposed for bond funds as the project contains soils that would not rank well state-wide.
2. Okoboji Farm, +/-47 acres, Fairview. ACEP-ALE application submitted last Fall the project was not funded due to high competition and limited budget for the ACEP-ALE program this year.

3. Battle Forest, +/-191 acres, Candler. Primarily forested, offers scenic viewshed protection. Large acreage but low prime soils make it less competitive for grant funding.
4. Sandy Hollar Farm Ph II, +/-150 acres, Sandy Mush. Working family farm with significant acreage of protected land nearby. Lower prime soils make it less competitive statewide.

Staff hope to schedule sites visits in the next few weeks before the next board meeting in June where they may vote.

- **Motion to enter closed session as per G.S.143-318.11(a)(2)(5) to discuss easement acquisition values for the Okoboji Farm easement.**
- **Steve Duckett made a motion to leave closed session, seconded by Mark Diaz, and the motion passed on the vote.**
- **Steve Duckett made a motion to present the Okoboji Farm easement acquisition request for the Open Space Bond fund, seconded by Mark Diaz, and the motion passed on the vote.**

Farmland Preservation Report: Presented by Ms. Zijp.

- Easement Monitoring in the works.
- Continuing planning for the Conservation Donor Dinner – June 13th at 6pm
 - Sending out invitations
 - Planning awards for the conservation donors
 - Preparing presentations, etc.
- Working on potential new projects & getting landowner estimates
 - Mike Adams & Katie Grear -Lady Luck Farm, Sandy Mush
 - Curtis Hawkins, Sandy Mush
 - Richard Kendricks, Alexander
 - Geoffrey Barndt, Alexander
 - Tom Battle, Candler
- Easement Project Updates
 - Larson Easement –closed easement on April 18
 - SAHC Teague Property Easement – working to exclude the disputed area.
 - Clark Easement – waiting on subordination agreement resolution.
 - Jasperwood Farm Easements – NCDAs final document review is taking longer than anticipated, hopefully for a June closing
 - Splendor Valley LLC Easement –refinancing has been approved, but another set back
 - Worthen & Krekel – addition of 24 acres to the parcel, waiting for new attorney to start deed work
 - Soden – completed title search and starting deed work
 - Parham/Fortner Farm – starting survey
 - Rogers Farm Trust – survey and environmental assessment finished, starting appraisal
 - David Rogers – survey and environmental assessment started, starting appraisal
 - Scott Fisher– survey and environmental assessment finished, starting appraisal, starting baseline documentation report and deed work

Announcements & Discussions

With no further announcements or discussion, the meeting ended at 12:01pm.

