

Chapter 2.34

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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2.34.010 Established.

There is hereby established the Whatcom County agricultural advisory committee (AAC). (Ord. 2001-036).

2.34.020 Purpose.

The agricultural advisory committee provides review and recommendations to the Whatcom County council on issues that affect agriculture. The AAC also provides a forum for farmers and others interested in enhancing and promoting the long-term viability of Whatcom County agriculture. (Ord. 2001-036).

2.34.030 Function.

To report directly to the county council or other appropriate advisory boards, commissions and committees as necessary to carry out the following functions:

A. Review and provide recommendations on zoning, comprehensive plan, subarea plans, regulations and annexation issues, and of proposals which directly affect lands or agricultural activities in or adjacent to the agricultural district or the agricultural protection overlay district, or other lands of agricultural significance; and

B. Assist the county and make recommendations in the effort to establish, promote and implement a comprehensive agricultural protection/ preservation program; and

C. Analyze and develop recommendations that will assist the county in addressing other issues which affect agriculture at the county, regional, state and federal levels; and

D. Assist, upon request of the director of planning and development services, that department by providing review and comment on comprehensive planning and zoning related issues in or adjacent to the agricultural district or the agricultural protection overlay district, or other lands of agricultural significance. (Ord. 2009-002, Exh. A; Ord. 2001-036).

2.34.040 Membership – Term of office.

A. The committee shall consist of no more than 13 voting members consisting of one member from the Whatcom County conservation district board, one representative from Whatcom Farm Friends, one representative from the agricultural processing industry, one citizen representing consumers of agricultural products, and one citizen with expertise in agricultural programs.

The remaining voting positions are to include agricultural producers representing both large and small scale producers of the various agricultural commodities produced in Whatcom County. A quorum shall consist of at least half of the appointed voting members. In addition to the voting members, a representative of Washington State University Extension, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Whatcom County conservation district, FFA youth, and Whatcom County department of planning and development services will serve on the committee in an ex officio capacity.

B. The county executive will appoint the voting citizen committee members with final confirmation by the county council. Citizen member terms will be four years. (Ord. 2009-002, Exh. A; Ord. 2001-036).

2.34.050 Organization – Meetings.

Meetings of the committee shall be open and accessible to the public and shall be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act. The committee shall determine its own meeting schedule, but shall meet at least four times per year. At every meeting, the committee will schedule an open session to take public comment on agricultural issues. Written records of meetings, resolutions, findings and recommendations shall be kept and such records shall be public. The committee shall adopt its own rules and procedures for the conduct of business. The committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members who shall preside at its meetings. (Ord. 2009-002, Exh. A; Ord. 2001-036).

2.34.060 Committee staffing.

The Whatcom County planning and development services department shall provide staffing for the committee. The committee is authorized to request from the executive's office information from administrative departments as necessary. (Ord. 2001-036).