

A. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM AND ROLL CALL

The regular meeting of the Board of Agriculture & Conservation (BAC) was held December 18, 2014 in the conference room 602 at the Atwood Building, 550 W. 7th. Ave., Anchorage, Alaska. Chair Ben VanderWeele called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Board members present and establishing a quorum were:

Mr. Ben VanderWeele, Chair
Mr. John Schirack, Vice Chair
Mr. Al Poindexter, Board member
Ms. Deidre Berberich, Board member
Mr. Chris Flickinger, Board member (telephone)
Mr. Troy Shelden, Board member

Staff in attendance was:

Ms. Marty Rutherford, Acting Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner, DNR
Mr. Ed Fogels, Deputy Commissioner, DNR
Ms. Elizabeth Bluemink, Special Assistant, DNR
Ms. Franci Havemeister, Director
Ms. Lora Haralson, Administrative Officer I
Mr. Robert McFarlane, AAG, Dept. of Law
Ms. Amanda Swanson, ARLF Loan Officer
Ms. Olga Lotosh, ARLF Accountant

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Board member Poindexter asked to add organic certification to new business.

MOTION: Vice Chair Schirack moved to approve the agenda with the addition.

SECOND: Board member Poindexter seconded the motion.
No objections were received.
The agenda was approved as modified.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS/SESSION

Board member Poindexter introduced Kevin Kochs as the new Future Farmers of America (FFA) advisor for the State of Alaska.

Mr. Kochs stated he came to Alaska from Montana and discussed his prior experience. He is located at the UAF Experiment Farm in Palmer and will begin to develop a plan to grow the FFA programs in Alaska.

D. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

September 25, 2014 Draft Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Board member Poindexter moved to approve the minutes of September 25, 2014 with the correction of page one (Board member Poindexter moved to **approve** the agenda).

SECOND Board member Berberich seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed without objection.

E. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Chair VanderWeele stated now is the time for conflict disclosures. You have the agenda outlining pending business and we will be going into executive session later to address loan requests. Does any member have a conflict to disclose relating to any business before the board?
(No conflicts were reported).

F. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Director Havemeister:

1. Division Update/Division Newsletter:
 - Marketing staff continue to develop and enhance a strong social media presence; the Alaska Grown Facebook page now has over 30,000 likes and recently had a weekly reach of over two million people.
 - School gardens have increased 11% in two years with 146 schools reporting some type of engagement of their students with a greenhouse, garden, or indoor growing operation.
 - Sig Restad and the Sons of Norway were presented with the “Director’s Appreciation Award” for their contribution to the agriculture industry. Over the past 14 years they have sourced over 80,000 pounds of Alaska Grown carrots, cabbage, and potatoes for their events.
 - The seed potato certification resulted in 13 certified seed growers with a total of 32 acres, 116 varieties and 315 lots that passed field certification.
 - Staff sold 100 acres in Salcha near Harding Lake with 40 acres of crop land and 10 acres for clearing requirements.

Loan Officer Swanson:

2. Presented the ARLF Interest Rates

- Reviewed the current interest rates comparable to the ARLF rates.
(The Board had no questions).

3. Reviewed the Applications in Process

(The Board had no questions).

4. Asset Report

The December asset report was reviewed.

(The Board had no questions).

ARLF Accountant Lotosh:

5. FY 14 – Year End Financial Reports

The ARLF financials were reviewed.

6. October 2014 Financial Reports

The ARLF financials were reviewed.

(The Board had no questions).

AAG McFarlane:

7. Public Session Report

There was no public session report.

Vice Chair Schirack moved to go into Executive Session.

Board member Poindexter seconded the motion.

G. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Acting Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner Marty Rutherford attended a portion of the Executive Session of the meeting and welcomed the Board.

The Executive Session for the Rodney & Dia Hoover – C Loan, AAG McFarlane Executive Session Report and the Aging/Delinquency report included Chair Ben VanderWeele, Vice Chair John Schirack, Board member Deidre Berberich, Board member Chris Flickinger (telephone), Board member Troy Shelden, Board member Al Poindexter, Special Assistant DNR Elizabeth Bluemink, Deputy Commissioner DNR Ed Fogels, AAG Robert McFarlane, Director Franci Havemeister, ARLF Loan Officer Amanda Swanson and Administrative Officer Lora Haralson.

PUBLIC SESSION

8. Hoover

Chattel Loan

Denied

- MOTION:** Board member Shelden moved to deny the Rodney & Dia Hoover C- loan. The loan officer will contact Rodney & Dia Hoover to obtain more details and a concise business plan to be resubmitted.
- SECOND:** Board member Flickinger seconded the motion.
- VOTE:** The motion passed without objection.

H. NEW/OLD BUSINESS:

Board member Poindexter stated he can't sell his Rhodiola because he is not organic certified. In Alaska there are no organic certified inspectors to certify an organic product. His understanding is it is a three month process and costs a lot of money.

Director Havemeister stated an Organic Inspector from Washington comes to Alaska twice a year. Reimbursement funds are available from USDA through the Division of Agriculture in the amount of \$750.00. She will work with the division inspectors to see if it is possible to obtain organic certification.

I. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

(The Board had no comments).

J. SET NEXT MEETING & AGENDA ITEMS:

The next Board of Agriculture & Conservation meeting will be scheduled at a later date.

K. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.