

MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MSUFCU Headquarters #2
3899 Coolidge Rd
East Lansing, MI

Option to Join via Remote Technology
Dial: 1-248-509-0316; Conf. ID 976 540 72#

MEETING MINUTES January 31, 2024

PRESENT:

Andy Chae, Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Monica Wyant, Vice Chair, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Kathrine Garthe, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Dr. Felicia Wu, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
David Williams, Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development
Dr. Tim Boring, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Chae called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development to order at 10:30 a.m. on January 31, 2024. Chair Chae called the roll with Commissioners Chae, Garthe, Wu and Williams, and Director Boring present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA BY MOVING ELECTING NEW OFFICERS TO FOLLOW THE GREENHOUSE GAAMPS PRESENTATION. COMMISSIONER WU SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMISSIONER WU MOVED TO APPROVE MEETING AGENDA, AS AMENDED, FOR JANUARY 31, 2024. COMMISSIONER GARTHE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023, MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 8, 2023, MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER WU SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled commission meeting is March 13, 2024.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND TRAVEL

Chairman Chae has started to plant in the greenhouse. Their CSA sales have slowed down, but is expecting it to be on the rise in the spring.

Commissioner Williams had attended the Great Lakes Crop Summit in Mt. Pleasant the week before. On his farm, grain is being delivered and some corn is still in the field due to unfrozen ground.

Commissioner Wu recently ran the conference for Society for Risk Analysis as the president. A highlight of the conference was a speaker on how agricultural issues think long term, where many businesses are asking how to change tomorrow. She will be traveling to the University of Florida to the Global Nutrition Symposium to discuss nutrition in the context of agriculture and the Livestock Systems Innovation Lab of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Chairman Chae welcomed Commissioner Garthe who was previously appointed on January 1, 2024 by the Governor. Commissioner Garthe explained winter is a quiet time on their fruit farm. They are currently pruning and preparing to plant 1700 more trees by the end of April.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WU MOVED TO APPROVE THE COMMISSIONERS' TRAVEL. COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES

Chairman Chae read the retirement resolution honoring Jim Johnson, the Environmental Stewardship Division Director, on his retirement. Director Boring presented the retirement resolution to Jim's wife, Tricia Bizoukas. The director expressed gratitude to Jim for his leadership in the department, and conveyed how much he is already missed.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS MOVED THE RETIREMENT RESOLUTION FOR JIM JOHNSON BE ADOPTED. COMMISSIONER WU SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The director informed the commission the department is running in the new bureau structure that he previously announced. He introduced the new bureau directors who were present working to fill positions in the new structure. The director highlighted interviews were currently taking place for Regenerative Agriculture Manager and Chief Science Officer.

The director highlighted the Executive Recommended budget was coming out in the next week and Ms. Renteria would be discussing the upcoming budget. The director was excited about the Governor's highlights from her State of the State last week, especially with tuition-free Community College and expanded Pre-K, as they continue to build out workforce development in the rural communities.

BUDGET UPDATE

Sylvia Renteria, Director of Finance and Budget, presented to the commission on the Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 Budgets. Ms. Renteria explained the department's general fund allotted amounts, and noted if ongoing or one time funding. Ms. Renteria also explained how the Fiscal Year 2025 budget will move through the legislature in the upcoming months, and the department's commitment to the director and governor's priorities. Commission Williams asked what the restricted funds include. Ms. Renteria explained they are funds that have specific allocations for spending. Chairman Chae asked where we were on spending the one-time general funds. Ms. Renteria explained the conversation is ongoing on how those funds will be spent.

COMMISSIONER WYANT JOINED THE MEETING AT 11:02 AM

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT FUND REQUESTS

Jamie Zmitko-Somers, Agriculture Development Division Bureau Director, introduced the grant applicant Mike Sturgill from Precision Hardwoods. This grant will help Precision Hardwood invest in expansion and modernization of their sawmill, creating 15 new jobs. This new system will increase the use of small logs, like pulpwood. The recommendation would suggest a \$100,000 Food and Agriculture Investment Fund performance-based grant. Chairman Chae asked what the pulpwood would be used for, and suggested apple boxes. Mr. Sturgill explained they will create board out of pulpwood, with less waste. Commissioner Wyant asked how the company was directed to MDARD for grant help. Mr. Sturgill explained the Michigan Timberman Association connected their company and Donna LaCourt, from the Agriculture Development Bureau, was a huge help in the application and helping their company. Commissioner Williams and Garthe asked about the benchmarks on performance base grants, and if their finalized projects are reviewed. Ms. Zmitko-Somers, explained all grants have benchmarks their applicants must hit to apply, and then progress on all grants are available on the Agriculture Development Bureau website.

MOTION: CHAIRMAN CHAE MOVED TO APPROVE A FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT FUND PERFORMANCE BASED GRANT OF \$100,000 FOR PRECISION HARDWOODS. COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

PRESENTATION FROM THE GREENHOUSE GROWERS COUNCIL ON GAAMP REQUEST:

Mike Wozniak, Right to Farm Manager in the Bureau of Environmental and Sustainability, joined the commission explaining the Right to Farm Act and expressed the importance of creating the Greenhouse and Indoor Growing GAAMP. Jared Rodriquez and Chris Schwartz, both representing the Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council, testified on why creating a GAAMP is important to the greenhouse industry and indoor growers in the state of Michigan.

Commissioners asked if creating a GAAMP would protect Greenhouse and Indoor Growers against complaints. Mr. Wozniak explained protection is ultimately provided by a judge. Commissioner Wu asked how common nuisance complaints are in the industry. Mr. Schwartz explained that they are very common. He explained one greenhouse continues to deal with exhaust fan noise and road traffic complaints in their neighborhood. Mr. Wozniak explained the GAAMP would be more intentional for all growers and not directed to a specific crop.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS MOVED TO REQUEST MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES OR ANY OTHER RESOURCE OR TOPICAL EXPERTS AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE TO NAME A CHAIRPERSON FOR A GAAMPS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR GREENHOUSE AND INDOOR GROWING. COMMISSIONER GARTHE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

INTRODUCTIONS

The Director took a moment to introduce new staff in the executive office. Nate Engle, as the Director of Community Engagement, and Mikaylah Heffernan, as the Legislative Liaison.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES

Commissioners returned to Commission Issues to elect officers for 2024.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CHAE MOVED TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER WYANT AS CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION FOR 2024. COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WYANT MOVED TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER CHAE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION FOR 2024. COMMISSIONER WU SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CHAE MOVED TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER WU AS SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION FOR 2024. COMMISSIONER GARTHE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

MOTION: COMMISSIONER WYANT MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER WU SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:46 A.M.

Attachments:

- A) *Agenda*
- B) *Agriculture and Rural Development Commission Meeting Minutes November 8, 2023*
- C) *Retirement Resolution for James Johnson*
- D) *Budget Update Presentation*
- E) *Food and Agriculture Investment Fund Request – Presentation Hardwoods*
- F) *Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPS) –Proposed 2024 GAAMPS*

