

Agritourism Advisory Committee

Tuesday, July 1, 2025

3:30 – 5 p.m.

Stone City Events Center
16404 Old Highway 99 SE
Tenino, WA 98589

This meeting will be held in person, or can be accessed by Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82168396474?pwd=rFdEYrcTg8NHanwTpY4wf7yJhLie1O.1>

MEETING AGENDA

3:30 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.	Welcome and Call To Order Welcome of Josh Cummings and Kevin Jensen from Thurston County – Introductions	Mitch Lewis
3:40 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Approval of Meeting Minutes – Feb. 11, 2025 New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Marketing/PR Update – Emily Brooks- Review of Byway Application – Talking Cedar Brewery & Distillery	Mitch Lewis
	Project Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Byway Designation Process- Thurston Bountiful Byway Map Redesign- Digital Programmatic Advertisements – Fall (Local + Drive)	Emily Brooks
4:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Items From The Floor <ul style="list-style-type: none">- NRCS report on Agritourism- Recruitment of another committee member- Committee members (to submit for reappointment): Jennifer Colvin and George Sharp	Mitch Lewis
4:45 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.	Adjournment and Next Meeting	Mitch Lewis



Agritourism Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

3:30–5:00 p.m.

This meeting was held in person and via Zoom:
Experience Olympia & Beyond
2424 Heritage Ct. SW Suite 101
Olympia, WA 98502



Committee Members Present: Mitch Lewis, Nathan Allan, John Bourdon, George Sharp, Jennifer Colvin

Committee Members Absent: Jennica Machado, Robby Rutledge

VCB Staff Present: Braeden Armin, Emily Brooks, Heidi Roth

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Mitch Lewis. The chair welcomed the attendees and provided a brief overview of the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The minutes from the October 22 meeting were reviewed.
- Mitch Lewis motioned to approve the minutes.
- George Sharp seconded the motion.
- No further discussion; motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Membership Update

- Emily informed the committee that Jennica was unable to attend as she was OOO, and Robby was also absent.
- The county has received Robby and John's applications and is currently reviewing them. A follow-up will be conducted to check on the status of their applications and ensure timely approval.



- Andrea officially announced her resignation due to work commitments, leaving a vacancy on the committee.
- The committee discussed potential candidates to fill Andrea's seat, emphasizing the need for diversity in representation, particularly from the arts community.

Marketing & PR Update

- New rack cards have been designed and distributed to businesses along the Byway. The cards include a QR code that directs users to the updated agritourism webpage. The committee is encouraged to take some with them after the meeting.
- Website updates include a more interactive map, improved layout, and direct links to business listings, enhancing user experience.
- The upcoming digital programmatic advertising campaign, set to launch in March, will target regional audiences, including Seattle, Portland, and surrounding areas.
- The committee raised concerns about the variety of images used in the campaign, noting an over-representation of sunflower-related images. Adjustments will be made to better showcase the full range of agritourism experiences available.

Digital Advertising Campaign

- The advertising campaign is scheduled to run from March to July, with a total budget of \$7,500.
- The campaign aims to increase awareness of the Byway and attract visitors from neighboring regions.
- Metrics such as click-through rates and impressions will be analyzed in the next meeting to assess effectiveness.

PROJECT UPDATES

Wildflower Blog & Locations

- EOB asked for suggestions on locations to feature in an upcoming blog post focused on wildflower viewing opportunities.
- Suggested sites included Glacial Heritage Preserve, Scatter Creek Wildlife Area, Mima Mounds, Wolf Haven, Monarch Sculpture Park, and Deschutes Falls.



Destination Master Plan (DMP) Implementation

- Emily Brooks provided an update on the implementation of the Destination Master Plan (DMP), emphasizing agritourism and the Byway as key priorities.
- A task force has been assembled to oversee the plan's execution, with quarterly meetings scheduled to track progress and discuss strategic initiatives.

New Member Application

- The committee reviewed an application from Dancing Goats and Singing Chickens, a local farm interested in joining the Byway program.
- The applicant met all eligibility criteria and expressed enthusiasm for engaging with the agritourism community.
- A motion to approve Dancing Goats and Singing Chickens was made by Nathan Allan and seconded by Mitch Lewis. The motion was unanimously approved.

Historical Farm & Heritage Marketing Discussion

- A proposal was introduced to incorporate historical farms and pioneer stories into Byway marketing materials.
- Ideas included featuring heritage farms in blog posts, collaborating with local historians, and integrating historical elements into existing promotions.
- The group concluded that it is important to have visitor-facing historic attractions to highlight.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Farmers Market & County Fair Presence

- The committee explored the possibility of securing an indoor booth at the Olympia Farmers Market to improve visibility and engagement. The committee does not see much value in an outdoor space.
- Plans were discussed to establish a promotional presence at the Thurston County Fair, featuring a potential giveaway to attract attendees and encourage sign-ups for the Byway newsletter.
- A giveaway strategy was suggested, such as offering a curated gift basket containing products from Byway businesses.
- Emily Brooks to follow up with Farmers Market and circle back with the group to discuss dates, if an inside location is secured.

CEO Hiring Update

- A professional search firm has been engaged to assist in hiring a new CEO at EOB.



- The position is expected to be filled by July, with updates to be provided at future meetings.
- Discussion was had about making sure the new CEO is well positioned to assist with the Byway and gain knowledge about Thurston County.

Items from the Floor

- An open discussion was held on how committee members can further support agritourism initiatives.
- Suggestions included leveraging personal networks to promote events and ensuring committee members actively engage with the community.
- Discussion of having the next meeting at the New Agricultural Park was had. That is the plan.
- No additional items were raised.

NEXT MEETING

Date: May 13, 2025 – Calendar invites to be sent.

Time: 3:30–5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:52 p.m. by Mitch Lewis and seconded by Nathan Allan.