Kitsap County Agriculture Advisory Council

Regular Meeting
Date: September 24th, 2026
Time: 5pm – 7:15pm
Location: Kitsap County Administration Building - 619 Division Street, Port Orchard, WA

Members Present:
Dawn Oien (Chair), Gary Winn (Vice Chair), Mira Rosenkotz, Angela Cordiano, Scott Hall, Karissa Holcombe, Mickey Centeno, Miles Paden, Hannah Orando-Baldus
Members Absent: Tonya Hirtzel, Kylie Denton

Staff Present: Heather Cleveland, Department of Community Development (DCD)
Diane Fish, Kitsap Conservation District (KCD), Jess Sappington (WSU)

Public Present: Members of the public were present – Jeremy Anunson (Woodpecker Hill Farm, Mason Kitsap Farm Bureau), Sonja Via, Kathleen Rose (WSFB), Larry Boltz (Mason Kitsap Farm Bureau), Nancy Olsten

Call meeting to Order

Chair called the meeting to order.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Agenda

Angie moved to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mickey and passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Dawn moved to approve the May 28th, 2026, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mickey and passed unanimously.

Public Comment – Agenda topics (3 minutes/per person)

No comments from the public.

Old Business

Updates from May meeting

The Council was informed that the revised bylaws were approved by the Board of County Commissioners and are now posted on the Council webpage. The 2026 Plan of Work and Operational Guidelines, previously approved by the Council, have also been posted to the Council webpage.

Resolution for New Appointees

The Council was informed that youth members Miles Paden and Kylie Denton were appointed in June. Hannah Orando-Baldus was also appointed and seated as a Council member and attended her first meeting tonight.

Rural Lands Analysis

Heather provided an overview of the Rural Lands Analysis project and noted that presentation materials had been distributed to Council members in advance of the meeting. Council members were informed of an upcoming Rural Lands Analysis meeting scheduled for October 29 at Village Green in Kingston and were encouraged to participate, noting that attendance is limited.

Heather explained that the project is evaluating four primary topic areas: development, forestlands, salmon recovery, and agriculture. She noted that the Comprehensive Plan directs growth to urban areas and that additional analysis is being conducted to better understand rural growth pressures and inform future policy decisions. The Council was informed that a Forestry Working Group has been established in addition to the Agriculture Advisory Council to support this effort.

Discussion focused on the potential development of an agricultural overlay designation. Heather explained that, unlike forestry, agriculture does not currently have a comparable overlay or designation. Recent updates to the Comprehensive Plan included the addition of terms such as Agricultural Area and Forestry Area, and the Department of Community Development is exploring options related to an agricultural overlay and potential recommendations associated with it.

Heather then facilitated a brief activity to introduce topics that may be discussed in greater detail during a future Council working session. Areas identified for further Council input included working lands and economic viability, potential overlay requirements and eligibility criteria, benefits associated with an agricultural overlay, long-term agricultural land preservation strategies, and the use of available preservation tools and funding sources. The Voluntary Stewardship Program was identified as a related topic for later discussion on the agenda.

Heather also provided a brief update regarding Title 17 code amendments (Title 17 Definition Edits) related to data warehousing, noting that the County has placed a moratorium on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) uses.

Following discussion regarding the Council's role in providing input on the project, Karissa moved to establish a temporary subcommittee that will specifically focus on the Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Project. The motion was seconded by Miles and passed unanimously.

The Council appointed Miles, Karissa, Scott, and Hannah to serve on the subcommittee. Heather will provide staff support. The subcommittee was asked to meet prior to the next Council meeting and return with a draft charter for review and consideration.

Agritourism Subcommittee

Gary, Chair of the Agritourism Subcommittee, provided an update to the Council. He reported that the subcommittee had not yet met since being formally established.

Gary shared information from a recent meeting of the Pierce County Agriculture Advisory Committee, where agritourism was discussed. He noted that Pierce County is nearing completion of an agritourism ordinance but continues to encounter differing perspectives among agricultural stakeholders. Council members discussed the potential to learn from Pierce County's experience and evaluate strategies that may be applicable in Kitsap County.

During discussion, Scott noted that any future recommendations related to agritourism should carefully consider the use of the terms "commercial" and "commercial use." Council members also discussed whether addressing agritourism would require code amendments or whether the issue could be addressed through other means.

Diane reported that she had developed a draft subcommittee charter template, which would be reviewed during the next agenda item.

New Business

Subcommittee Charters

Staff reported that a draft subcommittee charter template had been developed and distributed to Council members as part of the meeting pre-work materials. The template is intended to provide a consistent framework for future Council subcommittees.

Staff created a draft charter for the Agritourism Subcommittee as a starting point. The subcommittee was directed to review the draft charter, update applicable sections, establish its scope and operating parameters, and propose any recommended revisions.

Staff noted that subcommittees are not permitted to have a quorum of the Council, allowing them flexibility in scheduling meetings. It was also noted that participation may include individuals who are not members of the Agriculture Advisory Council.

The Agritourism Subcommittee will present a draft charter for Council review and approval at the October special meeting.

Board Education

Staff reported that Council members were provided with pre-meeting materials on Robert’s Rules of Order, including a simplified guide and supporting reference handout. During the meeting, the Council reviewed the materials and discussed procedures for making and amending motions.

The Council also discussed potential topics for future educational sessions and identified areas where additional information would be beneficial. Suggested topics included communication pathways between

the Council and the Board of County Commissioners, the process by which Council recommendations move forward, and a more detailed overview of the Department of Community Development's code development and amendment process.

Council membership

Staff reported that Council Member Tonya Hirtzel, representing Central Kitsap, has not attended any Council meetings since being seated. The Council reviewed Section 2.1, *Vacancy Due to Absences*, of the Council bylaws and discussed the member's lack of participation.

Following discussion, the Council expressed its desire to recommend removal of the member in accordance with the attendance section outlined in the bylaws.

Heather will determine the appropriate process for moving forward with the recommendation and for requesting a new candidate through the Central Kitsap Commissioner. Staff will also seek clarification on the Board of County Commissioners' role in future member removals, including whether formal Council recommendations are required or whether vacancies may be declared pursuant to the procedures established in the bylaws.

Burn Ban -Noxious Weeds Update

Heather provided an update on the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's proposed residential yard waste burn ban rulemaking and shared informational materials with the Council. She noted that agricultural operations filing a Schedule F tax form would be exempt from the proposed ruling and that the proposal would apply to all Kitsap County, rural and urban growth areas. Heather reported that she had spoken with a regional representative regarding the proposal and noted that the agency is continuing to gather public input prior to releasing a draft rule. She shared that concerns and feedback from stakeholders are being collected and considered as the process moves forward. Heather also noted that the Kitsap County Noxious Weed Control Board and the Kitsap Conservation District are following the proposal closely. She stated that she will continue to provide updates to the Council as additional information becomes available.

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

Heather provided an overview of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP), including its origins as an alternative approach developed through discussions among counties, agricultural interests, and tribes to address critical areas protection while maintaining agricultural viability. She explained that Kitsap County did not initially participate in the program because funding was not available at the time and it was viewed as an unfunded mandate. Subsequent legislative funding made participation available to interested counties.

Diane reported that counties participating in VSP establish a local advisory committee to guide development of a work plan and monitoring program. Participating counties receive funding to support implementation and may administer the program directly, contract with a conservation district, or utilize a shared administration approach.

Heather noted that many participating counties are now approaching ten years of program implementation, providing an opportunity to review lessons learned and evaluate potential benefits to the agricultural community. She reported that Kitsap County has begun exploring the program, invited Mike Poteet, VSP Coordinator for the Washington State Conservation Commission to present to DCD, and he provided helpful perspective from his time with Pierce County. Heather indicated that she plans to continue gathering information from neighboring counties, including Mason County, and will provide additional updates to the Council as more information becomes available.

Special Meeting

The Council discussed scheduling a special meeting on October 22, 2026. It was noted that the meeting would include discussion of the Rural Lands Analysis project and would also serve as a replacement for the canceled July meeting.

Miles moved to hold a special meeting on October 22, 2026, at the Kitsap Conservation District. The motion was seconded by Gary. Hearing no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

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BOCC Update – Complaints

Heather reported that the Department of Community Development may periodically receive complaints related to agricultural issues and would like to provide relevant updates to the Council as appropriate. She noted that a specific complaint has been identified and may be presented to the Council for discussion at a future meeting.

The Council discussed adding a standing complaint update to future meeting agendas. Staff will incorporate this item into the Council's agenda going forward.

Staff Update

Heather is now posting draft minutes right after the meetings, to be helpful for the council. They will not be formalized until adopted at the next meeting.

General – Eat Local Proclamation

Jess reported that staff worked with partners to coordinate an Eat Local Month proclamation for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners. The proclamation was adopted, and Hannah presented on behalf of the Kitsap Farmland Preservation Coalition.

Council members expressed interest in receiving advance notice of similar proclamations, recognitions, or Board actions related to agriculture, and specifically where the Agriculture Advisory Council may be relevant. Members noted that advance communication would provide an opportunity for Council members to attend, offer support, or participate as appropriate. Staff agreed to provide notification of such opportunities when possible.

Public Comment (open)

The Council received public comment from:

Jeremy Anunson, representing the Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau, regarding the importance of supporting and preserving agriculture within Kitsap County.

Kathleen Rose, representing the Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau and WillaBella Farm (Pierce County), shared information regarding Pierce County's agritourism efforts and noted the potential availability of additional expertise and guidance for the Council's agritourism discussions.

Larry Boltz, a Mason County resident and Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau member, provided comments regarding the Voluntary Stewardship Program and encouraged the Council to review resources developed by other counties as part of its evaluation of the program.

Adjourn Meeting

Dawn moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Miles. There being no discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Special Meeting: October 22nd, 2026, at Kitsap Conservation District - 10332 Central Valley Rd NE, Poulsbo
Next Regular Meeting: November 19, 2026, Kitsap Conservation District - 10332 Central Valley Rd NE, Poulsbo

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