

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH AGRICULTURE ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman – LaMarr Anderson (01)	Tony West (03)	VACANT (06)	Kenneth Hoffman (10)
Vice Chair – Misty O’Connor (09)	Alexandria Hoffman (04)	Adam Jensi (07)	Thomas Bergey (11)
VACANT (02)	Jozef Slowik (05)	Stephen Brown (08)	Abby Raisanen(12)

MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING
DSJ BUILDING
LOWER-LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM**

**February 19, 2025
4:30 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER

Staff member Ms. Reilly called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.
 Members present and establishing a quorum were: LaMarr Anderson, Tony West,
 Alexandria Hoffman, Jozef Slowik, Adam Jensi, Misty O’Connor, Kenneth Hoffman
 Members absent and excused: Thomas Bergey, Abby Raisanen
 Members absent: Stephen Brown
 Staff present: Suzanne Reilly, Asset Manager
 Joseph Metzger, Land Management Division Manager
 Margie Cobb, Department Administrative Specialist

Ms. Reilly welcomed Mr. West to the Board.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Hoffman nominated Mr. Anderson for Chairman; Ms. O’Connor seconded. No other members were nominated. All in favor.

Mr. Hoffman nominated Ms. O’Connor for Vice Chairman; Mr. Jensi seconded. Mr. Hoffman was also nominated but declined. All in favor.

Ms. Reilly turned the meeting over to Mr. Anderson.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Agenda approved as presented.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Limit 3 minutes)

Beverly Cutler: Looking forward to listening to the Board tonight. She is also looking forward to staff contact regarding their farm, per the notes from the prior meeting’s work session.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The following correction to the December 18, 2024 Minutes was noted: VI. Member Comments, Mr. Anderson: Very productive (not production). No other corrections were noted. Minutes were approved as amended.

VI. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

A. Staff Report – Ms. Reilly

- Upcoming Ag Conversion for Stahl & Oleck will be coming to them in upcoming meetings for their recommendation to the Assembly.
- A draft list of Mat-Su Farms was handed to the Board. Ms. Reilly explained that this list will help with drafting the Title this Board is working on. She requested the Board members send her changes/updates needed to this; information should include farm name, year established, what they do, how many acres.

B. Work Session Follow up – New Title

Ms. Hoffman motioned to go into Committee As A Whole at 5:00 pm.; Mr. Slowik seconded.

Discussion on New Title from previous meeting was available for all members. Additional discussion points from this meeting added and attached.

Mr. Jenski motioned to come out of Committee as a Whole at 5:53 pm; Mr. Slowik seconded.

VI. MEMBER COMMENTS (Limit to 3 minutes)

Mr. West: There is a demand/need for locally grown. While what can be grown is limited, there are options. Ideas are great; enforcement will be necessary later on.

Mr. Slowik: Appreciated Mr. Wells' comments; there are delays on some of their projects due to current government layoffs; hoping this gets sorted out.

Ms. Hoffman: It is complicated to try to make a plan for the future as well as the present and try to anticipate how things could go wrong; it was a really good start today on this conversation.

Mr. Hoffman: Looking forward to new title with more freedoms, understanding it will mean more responsibility.

Mr. Jenski: Was told by Assessments that the Borough is recognizing the State deferment for buildings used for agricultural purposes. ARRC Funding for farmers will be out of money in about a month; this will affect local farmers.

Ms. O'Connor: SBDC AI Summit is next Friday; would like MSB to have a booth there; she will send everyone on the Board an email with further information. She is working with clients on Ag Loans; she has been notified some of their grant/loan programs have been frozen at this time; she is willing to forward that email to anyone interested.

Ms. Reilly: Will work on draft of new Title for review and continued work next month.

Ms. Cobb: If any Board members would like to claim mileage for participation at meetings; please see her for the form to complete. You can do this monthly or at the end of the year.

Mr. Anderson: Thanked the Board members for attending; these discussions can't happen without you. When we don't, we lose continuity and take one step back. Encouraged everyone to make future meetings. Consider whether meeting during summer months is possible so that this Board can be provided to the Assembly.

VII. NEXT MEETING: March 19, 2025

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Anderson adjourned the meeting at 6:08 p.m.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'LaMarr Anderson', is written over a horizontal line. To the right of the signature, the date '3-19-25' is handwritten in blue ink.

LaMarr Anderson, Chairman

DATE

ATTEST:



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Margie Cobb', is written over a horizontal line.

Margie Cobb, Department Administrative Specialist

Mat-Su Farms

1. **VanderWeele Farms (1967):** Also known as Arctic Harvest Deliveries, this is one of the largest farms in the Mat-Su. They produce a wide variety of vegetables including potatoes, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage and carrots on 200 acres in Palmer.
2. **Pyrah's Pioneer Peak Farm (1979):** A popular U-pick farm offering a range of vegetables and berries, prepared meals, and local events on 277 acres in Palmer.
3. **Arctic Organics (1988):** Specializes in organic vegetables, herbs, berries, apple trees, cut flowers, bees, and poultry for eggs & meat on 20 acres in Palmer.
4. **Rempel Family Farm (1962):** Produces over 70 different certified organic vegetables, including the now famous Rempel Carrots, on 135 acres in Palmer.
5. **Cottonwood Creek Farm (2000):** An alpine goat farm known for goat milk, milk products and baby goats on 7.85 acres in Wasilla.
6. **Spring Creek Farm / Alaska Pacific University - Kellogg Campus:** Focuses on sustainable agriculture and education at the Kellogg Campus on 700 acres in Palmer.
7. **Reindeer Farm (1987):** Offers a unique mix of reindeer, elk, and other livestock, providing educational tours.
8. **Full Circle Farm (1996):** Provider of a variety of west coast organic vegetables and participates in community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs.
9. **Musk Ox Farm (circa 1964):** While primarily focused on musk oxen, this farm also contributes to local agriculture through educational programs, qiviut products, and tours on Palmer.
10. **Sun Circle Farm:** Known for its organic vegetables and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs in Palmer.
11. **Palmer Produce:** Specializes in a variety of vegetables and participates in local farmers' markets².
12. **Alaska Berries:** The only certified berry farm in Alaska, producing a variety of berries and berry products².
13. **Bushes Bunches:** Offers a wide range of vegetables and operates a farm stand².
14. **Northern Lights Dairy:** Produces milk and dairy products, focusing on sustainable practices².

15. **Triple D Farm & Hatchery:** Known for poultry and eggs, as well as a variety of vegetables².

16. **Birch Creek Ranch:** Specializes in beef and pork, along with some vegetable production².

17. **Alaska Sprouts:** Produces a variety of sprouts and microgreens².

18. **Green Earth Gardens:** Focuses on organic vegetables and herbs².

19. **Willow Farm:** Known for its diverse vegetable production and participation in local markets².

20. **Northern Lights Elk Ranch:** Raises elk for hunting & meat production, chickens for egg & meat production, and other farm animal products.

These farms contribute significantly to the local food supply and economy, showcasing the diversity and productivity of agriculture in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

