

# ***Agriculture Development Council Meeting Minutes***

December 29, 2022

## **I. Call to order**

Chair John Wicks called to order the meeting of the Agriculture Development Council at 2:00 pm on Thursday December 29, 2022.

## **II. Roll call**

Dani Jones conducted roll call and introductions were made by council members and department staff.

Council Members: Chair John Wicks, Megan Hedges, Lars Hanson, Sara Hollenbeck, Department of Commerce Director Scott Osterman, and Zach Coccoli, proxy for Director Christy Clark.

Department Employees: Andy Fjeseth, Bailey Kaskie, Marty Earnheart, Cort Jensen, and Dani Jones.

Members of the public: Cody Miles from High Horizon Gardens and Nadya Faulx from Yellowstone Public Radio

## **III. Public Comment**

Chair John Wicks called for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

## **IV. High Horizon Gardens Amendment Request**

Cody Miles with High Horizon Gardens presented the amendment request to the council. The original contract was a grant with the start date of 12/7/2020 and end date of 07/31/2023; grant amount of \$37,750.00 for the establishment of hi-line hydroponics urban farm & store in Havre. Funds to be spent on 20x116' greenhouse with store front. Match was the purchase of the commercial lot in town and was purchased January 2021.

Proposed amendment- instead of purchasing the greenhouse with storefront, High Horizon Gardens would like to purchase a food truck trailer (wood fire pizza). Reason for change is due to high costs of the greenhouse, sewer, bathroom, etc. Cost and income outlook information was presented to the council. Zach Coccoli made the motion to accept the amendment as presented. Director Scott Osterman 2nd the motion. Vote was 5 yes and 1 no. Motion passed

## **V. Montana Ag Tech Summit**

Andy Fjeseth shared with the council the inaugural Montana Ag Tech Innovation and Investment Summit is set for January 24, 2023, in Great Falls. The summit is looking to bring together innovators, entrepreneurs, ag producers, ag industry product development, and investors. The main goal of the summit is to move agriculture from the concept stage to the development stage and then into the hands of producers and markets. The highlight of the summit is the Speed Pitch Competition. Marty Earnheart shared that the speed pitch will have a pitch area. The speed pitch applicants will have a booth and 1 minutes to pitch their product to the audience. Judging will be completed by everyone present at the summit. The audience will have 1 hour to visit will all the presenters and will decide on the winner. Sara Hollenbeck asked how many were registered at this time. Marty shared that there are currently six registered and the deadline is January 13, 2023. Megan Hedges made the motion to fund the Speed Pitch competition at the Montana Ag Tech Innovation and Investment Summit. Zach Coccoli 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

## **VI. Loan Rates**

Andy Fjeseth reminded the council that loan rates need to be set for the 2023 awards. He asked for Lars Hanson's take on loan rates at this time. Lars Hanson shared with council that rates are currently 6-7% with a 5-year fixed. Lars Hanson made the motion to set the high rate at 4%, low rate at 0%, with a 7-year term. Megan Hedges 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All in favor motion passed.

## **VII. Next Meeting- February 2023**

The next council meeting is set for Tuesday February 7<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in Helena at the department of Agriculture conference room. Bailey Kaskie shared that the applications and videos will be on a webpage for the council. She will have all the information completed and out to the council by next week, which will give the council a month to review.

## **VIII. Public Comment**

Chair John Wicks called for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Director Scott Osterman made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:57pm. Meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: Dani Jones

Minutes approved by: