



Linn County NEWS



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Scio area families oppose poultry project

ALBANY — Scio area residents asked the Linn County Board of Commissioners to oppose construction of a large-scale poultry operation proposed about eight miles east of Scio.

They said this is the second of three proposed facilities. It would encompass 16 buildings, each 60-feet wide and 600-feet long. About 750,000 chickens would mature there every four months.

Linda Duman said she and her neighbors have several concerns, including:

- Water quality. The proposed facility is near Thomas Creek.
- Water quantity. She said the facility could use more than 50,000 gallons of water per day. Neighbors are concerned about the impact on the local aquifer and their drinking water wells.
- The fire danger buildings could present and those buildings are near both grass seed fields and timber stands.
- Air quality, especially since the buildings would be near a school and church, as well as area homes.

Kendra Kimbirauskas said she owns a farm downstream from the proposed facility and she is concerned about water quality.

She said if all three facilities are eventually built-out, there could be 44 large buildings producing millions of chickens annually within a 12-mile radius of each other.

Christina Eastman said she is from a multi-generation Scio farm family and she would hate to see prime agricultural ground covered with buildings.

She also is concerned about what poten-

tial water pollution might do to spawning steelhead and salmon.

Eastman is also concerned about air quality and the effect it could have on her 84-year-old mother.

Board Chair Roger Nyquist said he appreciated the public comments, but the commissioners have no authority under the state's land use laws, specifically what can be done in an agriculturally zoned area.

His comments were echoed by commissioners Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker.

The speakers asked the commissioners to contact state officials and oppose the proposed project based on air and water quality concerns.

Sprenger, who previously served in the Legislature, offered to assist them in connecting with their state representatives and senators.

She said it is unlikely anything could be done in the current short session, but the issue could be addressed in the 2023 session.

The commissioners agreed to do everything they can to make sure the public's concerns are heard.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved an application by Julie Moore for a zoning map amendment on property about one-third of an acre in size on Cascade Drive near Lebanon. She requested the property be rezoned by Urban Growth Area -Commercial to Urban Growth Area-Rural Residential. She plans to develop a drop-in fa-

cility for people with disabilities.

- Were informed by Juvenile Department Director Torri Lynn that there were 23 referrals in January and there are 176 youth in the Probation Unit. 48 are high-risk. He said the heavy equipment training program will start this week with 11 young people training on five pieces of equipment.
- Heard from Sweet Home Community Development Director Blair Larsen that progress has been made at the nearly 3-acre property the county is going to transfer to the Family Assistance and Resource Center Group to be used as a homeless encampment. The property was part of the former Willamette Industries mill site. Commissioner Tucketr said surveying is complete and "stakes are in the ground." Platts were approved Friday and the deed is ready to be recorded. He said the next steps is transferring property ownership. Linn County plans to develop an RV dump station at the site as well.
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