

**CITY OF PITT MEADOWS  
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Held at the Pitt Meadows City Hall, Meadows Room, Pitt Meadows, BC  
Thursday, February 9th, 2017

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Joe Bachmann, Co-chair  
Leo Captein, Co-chair  
Macky Banns  
Janis Elkerton, Alternate Council Liaison  
Dieter Geesing, Ministry of Agriculture  
Bob Hopcott  
Dan Kosicki  
Mike Manion  
Bill Park  
Mike Stark, Acting Council Liaison

**REGRETS:**

Bruce Bell, Council Liaison  
Hank Bitter  
Scott Pelton

**STAFF:**

Kate Zanon, Director of Community Services,  
Meeting Chair  
Forrest Smith, Director of Engineering and  
Operations  
Lisa Grant, Manager of Community Development  
Katia Robichaud, Engineering Technologist  
Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship  
Officer  
Elaine Harrison, Recorder

**GUESTS:**

Christian Hall  
Sandy Howkins  
Sharon Johnson  
Chris Johnson  
Steve Robinson  
William Wild

The meeting was called to order at 10:01am.

**Adoption of Minutes November 10th, 2016**

Moved by Dan Kosicki and seconded by Joe Bachmann that the minutes of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016 be adopted.

**CARRIED**

**Appointment of Chair**

Terms of Reference require the appointment of the Chair at the first meeting of every year.

Bill Park moved and Dan Kosicki seconded the re-appointment of the Co-Chairs, Leo Captein and Joe Bachmann. The vote in favour was unanimous.

**CARRIED**

**Soil and Fill Permit Application - 18598 Advent Road**

Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer gave a short presentation providing details about the Soil and Fill Permit Application that had been submitted by Johnson Tree Farm (Specimen Trees). The applicants were asking to remove the soggy bark mulch area at the north east of their property and replace it with structural granular fill for growing plants in containers and to aid access for workers. The old mulch would be disposed of on site and it was anticipated that the process would take no longer than 2 months to complete.

The Committee asked the applicants who were present at the meeting if the elevation levels would increase with this fill, if they were confident that the fill would be of good quality, and that it would be free of noxious weeds and contaminants. The applicant replied that the levels would remain the same and that a reputable contractor was being engaged so they were confident about the source of fill.

Moved by Leo Captein and seconded by Joe Bachmann that the Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends Council support the Soil Deposit and Fill Application for 18598 Advent Road.

**CARRIED**

**Soil and Fill Permit Application - 12405 McTavish Road**

Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer advised that this item was being withdrawn from the Agenda.

**Soil and Fill Permit Application update - 16982 Ford Road**

Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer gave a brief update to the Committee regarding the farm road at 16982 Ford Road. She stating that the City had advised the developer that they would need to submit a Soil and Fill Permit Application for the farm road and in turn this would be reviewed by the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Agricultural Land Commission and would require Council's approval.

Moved by Mike Manion and seconded by Joe Bachmann that the information be received.

**CARRIED**

**Drainage Policy Review meeting – update**

Forrest Smith, Director of Engineering and Operations brought forward the minutes of the Drainage Policy Review meeting which had been held on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to review and discuss Policy C016 Administering Internal Drainage Facilities. He reported that the meeting had been well attended by a good cross section of the farming community and they had provided input and suggestions of how to improve the drainage at various times of year in their particular regions. After collating this information a draft set of changes had been provided to the policy. There are predicted cost changes if the proposed policy revisions are implemented of approximately \$10,000 from increased BC Hydro charges.

A letter had been received from Meadowlands Farm expressing concern at the proposed changes to the Policy as they felt that it would have an adverse effect on their crops if frost protection was not maintained by keeping the water levels at their current settings. Guests at the meeting also expressed concern at the change in the policy particularly with the divide at Hale Road. They stated that they felt that the gates work well but need further modification to benefit all farmers rather than a change in policy. They also pointed out that there is a culvert under Hale Road which they felt currently works against the control gates and this needs to be investigated by the City.

Moved by Bill Park and seconded by Dan Kosicki that the policy be referred back to staff so to allow them to meet with the stakeholders who had expressed concern at the suggested policy changes and report back to the Committee.

**CARRIED**

**AAC Sub-Committee meeting – Farm Property Tax Reform**

Kate Zanon, Director of Community Services reported that following direction from the AAC a Sub-Committee meeting had been held to discuss Metro Vancouver's proposed farm property tax policy. The purpose of the paper is to assess if tax reform could encourage farming and discourage non-farm

use on lands in the ALR in the Metro Vancouver region. The sub-committee met with Metro Vancouver staff to better understand the purpose and the background for the paper.

The Committee acknowledged the need to promote diversification and ensure generational and secondary uses on farms but did not want taxes that would be detrimental to farming.

Moved by Mike Manion and seconded by Joe Bachmann that staff draft a letter back to Council for the Co-Chairs to sign stating that the AAC are in concurrence with Metro Vancouver's recommendations along with other ideas suggested by the Committee.

**CARRIED**

#### **Farmer to Farmer Forum on Farmland Advantage**

Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer informed the Committee that a Farmer to Farmer Forum was being held on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the South Bonson Community Centre from 10 am to 2pm. The forum would be café style to encourage discussion and feedback. Items on the agenda included hot topics, invasive aquatics, drainage and water quality, water quantity, Katzie First Nation and information about the Farmland Advantage Program. Dave Zhender would be the host speaker and the Watershed Watch Salmon Society was spearheading the Forum.

The Committee expressed concern at some of the issues the Program supported but as stakeholders they recognise the need to attend such events to let their voices and opinions be known. Areas of concern included ditch setbacks, municipal and private ditches, fish friendly pumps, water licenses, the DFO, water levels in ditches, invasive species and farmland uses.

#### **New and amended ALC Policies – information update**

The Committee noted the information update provided by the ALC on amendments and adoption of new policies.

#### **ALR Exclusion, Harris Road (Cardiff Farms)**

Dan Kosicki asked the Chairman for permission to review an item from 2007 relating to the ALR Exclusion of Cardiff Farms on Harris Road in light of staffing and Councillor changes since that time. In 2007 the AAC had stated a position and he wanted to discuss whether the Committee wanted to re-confirm their position or not. Ms. Zanon agreed that the item could be reviewed.

Mr. Kosicki reminded the Committee that in September 2007 an application had been submitted and subsequently approved for the removal of 13.3 ha of land know as Cardiff Farms from the ALR. At that time the AAC had provided the following comments:-

- “AG land will be lost; not a good precedent to set but understand the issues with this piece.
- Vehemently opposed to residential development in this area.
- The proposed airport runway extension and subsequent noise rules out residential housing.
- Movement of goods is favourable for light industry.
- Industrial/commercial zoning will be good for tax base.”

The Committee agreed that they still concurred with that decision and that a balanced residential and industrial tax base is advisable for the City.

Moved by Leo Captein and seconded by Bill Park that the minute from the Agricultural Committee dated September 13, 2007 be re-affirmed.

**CARRIED**

### **Hobby Dog Kennels in the ALR**

Lisa Grant, Manager of Community Development reported that an application had been received for a hobby dog kennel for 5 dogs or less on a one acre area of land situated in the ALR. The City process requires approval of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) even though hobby kennels are a permitted use by the ALC. To address this redundancy staff is suggesting removing this requirement from the City's regulations. The Committee was asked if they would like to receive further information on this proposed regulation change.

Moved by Dan Kosicki and seconded by Joe Bachmann that the Committee have no comments to make on the application and it be forwarded directly to Council.

**CARRIED**

### **Roundtable**

Joe Bachmann – said that he had recently attended the Pacific Agricultural Show in Abbotsford and his farm had won 1<sup>st</sup> place for Agricultural Safety. The Committee congratulated him on his success and Ms. Zanon suggested that this could be a 'Celebrate Pitt Meadows' item on a future Council Agenda.

Mike Stark – said that he would be attending the Farmer to Farmer Forum.

Macky Banns – raised the problem of the CP trains at Kennedy Road and felt that they had increased in frequency and were testing the boundaries.

Bob Hopcott – asked whether the information package regarding weddings being held in the ALR would be coming back to the Committee. Ms. Zanon said that staff were working on it and it would be coming back in the near future.

Leo Captein – asked about the property proposed for 16982 Ford Road and whether it would have hotel status. Ms. Zanon said that City was currently working through the farm use application and the house application was on hold at the moment.

Bill Park – commented that the traffic lights at Lougheed Highway and Harris Road were causing delays for travellers entering and leaving Pitt Meadows and was becoming increasingly frustrating for residents. Staff advised that this was under Provincial jurisdiction.

He also asked whether the junction at 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Harris Road could be considered for a left turning lane and dedicated turning traffic signal. Mr. Smith advised that with the increased industrial development at the southern end of Harris Road producing more traffic, the need for upgrades at this junction had been recommended.

Dan Kosicki – praised the work that City Crews had undertaken in dealing with the recent snowfall and felt that the roads in Pitt Meadows had been cleared to a much higher standard than neighbouring municipalities. The Committee agreed with his sentiments.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.