

PITT MEADOWS AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Agricultural Advisory Committee held at 10:00 a.m. on September 13th, 2018 in the Meadows Room of the Pitt Meadows City Hall, 12007 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, British Columbia

PRESENT:-

Committee Members:- Alana Aquilini
Joe Bachmann, Chair
Macky Banns
Hank Bitter
Dieter Geesing, Ministry of Agriculture
Lynn Kemper
Mike Manion
Bill Park
Philip Robinson
Wayne Wisselink

Guests:- Darren Beairsto, Metro Vancouver
Dan Kosicki

Staff:- Dana Parr, Senior Planner, Meeting Chair
Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer
Elaine Harrison, Recorder

REGRETS:-

Bruce Bell, Council Liaison
Janis Elkerton, Alternate Council Liaison
Bob Hopcott
Mike Stark, Acting Council Liaison

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

1. LATE ITEMS

No late items were submitted.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Joe Bachmann asked that the following comment be added to the bullet points under the Sustainability of Farming item:-

- The amount of fuel tax that Canadian farmers pay for diesel puts them at a competitive disadvantage to American farmers

MOVED by Wayne Wisselink and **SECONDED** by Joe Bachmann, **THAT** the minutes of the June 14th, 2018 committee meeting as amended be adopted.

CARRIED

3. PRESENTATION BY METRO VANCOUVER – OPEN BURNING FROM AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS

Darren Beirsto from Metro Vancouver gave a presentation to the Committee regarding the regulations for open burning from agricultural operations and reducing particulate matter emissions. He reminded the Committee to use best burn practices with regards to location and timing of burning to achieve a good plume of smoke into the air. He also said that Metro Vancouver's website included an 'Air Map' which gave lots of useful information, approval forms and a telephone number (604.436.6777) for enquiring whether conditions were favourable to burn and to report complaints.

The Committee mentioned the use of burning pallets to heat greenhouses, that farmers were stopped from spreading manure in the summer and the summer wildfires.

A copy of the presentation is included with the original minutes as Attachment A.

4. TOWNSHIP OF LANGLEY FARM TOUR ON ECOLOGICAL SERVICES INITIATIVES – STAFF OBSERVATIONS

Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer gave a presentation and provided feedback from the Township of Langley farm tour which she had recently attended. She said that stream bank erosion and invasive species management were two of the main areas that Township of Langley was working on, both of which were pertinent to Pitt Meadows. She mentioned that a Natural Assets Inventory and Management Strategy in Pitt Meadows would commence this year which would help identify priority focus areas for enhancement and/or restoration initiatives.

The Committee questioned whether the streams in Langley were comparable as the ones in Pitt Meadows were required for drainage and irrigation. They also pointed out that invasive species grow in low water and if the City's ditches were deeper it would stop roots from clinging and improve flow to the pumps.

A copy of the presentation is included with the original minutes as Attachment B.

5. KATZIE SLOUGH RIPARIAN PLANTING EVENT – OCTOBER 14TH, 2018

Susanne Sloboda, Environmental Stewardship Officer informed the Committee of the upcoming riparian planting event on the Katzie Slough south of Hammond Road and north of Airport Way on October 14th, 2018. She encouraged the Committee to attend and volunteer at the event and also asked for in-kind contributions such as an excavator, mulch, landscape fabric, native plants and fencing.

The Committee asked how the planting would impact future cleaning of the slough as space is needed for heavy equipment to operate. Staff said that they were working with the Operations Department and in order to allow future cleaning the planting would be in pockets and only on one side of the slough.

6. GATHERING FOR AN EVENT IN THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE

Dana Parr, Senior Planner reminded the Committee of the background to the regulations and asked for approval of Policy C099 Gathering for an Event in the Agricultural Land Reserve and amendments to the Business Licensing and Regulations Bylaw No. 2806, 2018 to formally regulate such events. Staff reminded the Committee that the regulations were for commercial events and were designed to help increase safety.

The Committee questioned whether too much commercial entertainment was happening on farm land but also acknowledged that such activities were the future of farming providing sustainability, a voice to farmers, the opportunity to educate and they supplemented farm income.

RECOMMENDATION

MOVED by Wayne Wisselink and **SECONDED** by Hank Bitter, **THAT** Council be informed that the Agricultural Advisory Committee endorses proposed Council Policy C099 Gathering for an Event in the Agricultural Land Reserve and Business Licensing and Regulation Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 2806, 2018

CARRIED

7. ROUNDTABLE

Philip Robinson – mentioned the sad passing of a local farmer, Chase Davison, and suggested that the AAC draft a condolence letter to the family to show support. The Committee agreed with this wholeheartedly.

Bill Park – said that the upcoming election was important for agriculture and suggested that farmers get together to compile a list of questions to ask all candidates where they stand and to gauge their understanding of the needs of farmers.

Dieter Geesing – advised that the Ministry has funds available for farmers to use for outreach events such as farm tours, public relations events and the use of business plan advisors. He suggested that a PR event could be held for the AAC to showcase their work to the wider community.

Joe Bachmann – asked if the issue of best practice for members of the public speaking at meetings could be included on a future agenda. Staff said that the Committee Governance Review by George Cuff was expected shortly and once published it would be included on a future Agenda.

Lynn Kemper – asked if somebody from the City could speak on behalf of farmers at the riparian planting event. Staff said that they would be representing all stakeholders including residents, farmers and Katzie First Nation.

Wayne Wisselink – mentioned that he had been surprised to learn that 85% of the land in Pitt Meadows was agricultural and hoped that this message could be publicized to residents.

He also said that the AAC gives advice to Council and he hoped this could continue to be kept in a positive manner with all parties working together without lobbying.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The next Committee meeting will be held on October 11th, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 12:14 pm.