

City of Maple Ridge
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, held in the Blaney Room,
at Maple Ridge Municipal Hall on Thursday, January 28, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Margaret Daskis, Chair	Community at Large
Al Kozak	Agricultural Sector
Councillor Speirs	City of Maple Ridge
Bill Hardy	Member at Large
Jennifer Zickerman	Agricultural Sector
Chris Zabek	Regional Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture & Lands
Candace Gordon	Haney Farmers Market Society
Ian Brooks	Member at Large
Stephanie James, Vice-Chair	Equestrian Agricultural Sector
Lorraine Bates	Agricultural Fair Board

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Siobhan Murphy	Staff Liaison / Planner 2
Sunny Schiller	Committee Clerk

REGRETS/ABSENTS

Kimberley Lauzon	Member at Large
Tony Pellet	Agricultural Land Commission

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present Councillor Speirs called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and introductions were made.

2. 2016 CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR ELECTIONS

R16-001	It was moved and seconded That Margaret Daskis be elected Agricultural Advisory Committee Chair.	CARRIED
R16-002	It was moved and seconded That Stephanie James be elected Agricultural Advisory Committee Vice-Chair.	CARRIED

3. AGENDA ADOPTION

- R16-003 It was moved and seconded
That the Agenda be amended to add Item 7.6 Water Availability and Pricing and be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

4. MINUTE ADOPTION

- R16-004 It was moved and seconded
That the Minutes of November 26, 2015 be approved.

CARRIED

5. DELEGATIONS - Nil

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Golden Harvest 2016

Candace Gordon and Jennifer Zickerman volunteered to sit on the Golden Harvest 2016 subcommittee. It was suggested that Kimberly Lauzon and Lorraine Bates be consulted during planning due to their experience with the event. Lorraine Bates expressed appreciation on behalf of the Agricultural Fair Board for the payment received as part of the profit sharing from Golden Harvest 2015. Ideas for Golden Harvest were discussed.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Backyard Chickens

The Staff Liaison reported the letter to Council regarding backyard chickens will be added to a Workshop agenda in the near future.

7.2 Albion Flats Area Plan

The Staff Liaison reported that Planning staff made a presentation on the Albion Flats plan to Council in October. Next step is a workshop process with Council.

7.3 Regional Food System Action Plan

The Chair reported that the Regional Food System Action Plan has gone to the GVRD board and has now been issued to municipal councils for comment. Copies of the plan were provided to the committee for review and comment. The Staff Liaison will forward feedback to the GVRD.

7.4 Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidelines

The Staff Liaison reported that Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidelines have been received from the GVRD. The guidelines have been shared with the Planning Department, who will provide their feedback on the guidelines at a future meeting. The Staff Liaison explained how the guidelines can be used for development on land adjacent to farm land.

7.5 Ministry of Agriculture Discussion Paper and Proposed Minister's Bylaw Standards – Update

The Chair reported the discussion paper and proposed standards have been provided to clarify agricultural land uses. Chris Zabek, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, provided clarification on farm and non-farm uses. Feedback received from stakeholders has been incorporated into the standards. There are no major changes to the standards.

7.6 Water Availability and Pricing

The Staff Liaison and Chair will draft a position statement on water availability and pricing. The Metro Vancouver Water Forum has been postponed until the fall. The Chair shared some notes from a climate change workshop that was held in December.

Stephanie James shared there is a water management session tomorrow at the Pacific Agricultural Fair.

8. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.1 Agricultural Plan Update

Councillor Speirs reported the agricultural plan update has not yet been completed. The update involves Council prioritizing the goals of the Agricultural Plan. Staff have been directed to organize a professionally facilitated session to work through the prioritization process.

8.2 Metro Vancouver Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Chair provided an update from the Metro Vancouver AAC. Feedback on open burning has been requested from the agricultural community. The Chair will take the comments provided regarding open burning back to Metro Vancouver AAC.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The Committee was reminded of a letter forwarded earlier regarding CEED Centre upcoming events.

10. ROUNDTABLE

Al Kozak reported on his bee hives, which he has had for two years. Mr. Kozak is a member of the Maple Ridge bee club. The club has reported a high loss of hives over the winter. Mr. Kozak's two hives were robust in the fall, but were lost over the winter. The reasons for the collapse are unclear however climate change (and last summer's drought) may be a factor. Mr. Kozak reported he had contacted Mr. Stott as a representative of the Haney Farmers Market. Mr. Stott has established food hubs in a number of communities. Potential event ideas were discussed.

R16-005

It was moved and seconded

That Al Kozak strike a subcommittee to setup an educational event on agricultural infrastructure.

CARRIED

Lorraine Bates reported the Agricultural Fair is doing very well and the barns are at capacity. Maple Ridge's Agricultural Fair is the biggest 4H Fair in BC and new attendees and sponsorship are organized for the Dairy Fair this year. The plan to cover the playing fields with artificial turf by 2017 will have a huge impact on the Fair, as the fields are used for camping and parking during the event. Ms. Bates questioned the regulations regarding livestock transportation after an experience last fall when the method used to transport lambs to auction was called into question. Ms. Bates was encouraged to contact the auction to find out more about what regulations were being enforced.

The Staff Liaison will request statistics regarding the Agricultural Fair from the Economic Development Office.

Stephanie James reported the Pacific Agricultural Fair (currently underway) is hosting forums on biogas and urban agriculture.

Bill Hardy reported his Grow and Gather Nursery is currently under renovation. Mr. Hardy reported the 2016 Green City Conference is coming up in March 14 – 18 in Vancouver. Mr. Hardy is serving as the Chair for the event, which is the first to bring international horticultural and landscape groups together. Events are open to the public and include walking tours featuring green initiatives. More information can be found at: <http://www.cnla-acpp.ca/greencity>. Mr. Hardy reported he is very much looking forward to the event, which has been two years in the planning. Mr. Hardy explained some of the ideas behind the Green City initiative.

Candace Gordon thanked the committee on behalf of the Famers Market for the recent payment received as part of the Golden Harvest profit sharing. The Haney Farmers Market AGM is coming up soon. 2015 was a very good year for the Haney Famers Market and the outlook for 2016 is positive. Ms. Gordon reported she had applied for a grant which would allow the food security inventory (currently over six years old) to be updated.

Councillor Speirs reported that Maple Ridge is now a Blue Dot community (David Suzuki's program relating to access to clean water, air and soil). Councillor Speirs clarified recent changes to advisory committees, including budgeting requirements, meeting schedules and the establishment of an Active Transportation Advisory Committee and an Environmental Advisory Committee. Councillor Speirs reported he and Lino Siracusa, Manager of Economic Development recently visited Remo Nutrients, a successful local business which provides plant nutrients (www.remonutrients.com)

Jennifer Zickerman reported she is working on a feasibility study and business plan.

Margaret Daskis reported Hard Bite Potato Chips is expanding and leaving Maple Ridge. Their previous facility is available for a food processor. Ms. Daskis confirmed that Lino Siracusa, Manager of Economic Development will be invited to the February meeting. Ms. Daskis reported that the Canadian Institute of Food Science Technology conference is coming up. Ms. Daskis recently judged a competition of Lower Mainland students making pulse based foods – 2016 is the UN General Assembly International year of the pulse.

Councillor Speirs shared that the Katzie are working to re-establish their plant traditions, including the planting of wapato.

11. QUESTION PERIOD

12. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting be adjourned at 9:14 pm.

Chair

/ss