DATE: Tuesday, October 21, 2014
PLACE: Regional District offices, Dawson Creek, BC
PRESENT: Leonard Hiebert, Director, Electoral Area ‘D’, Meeting Chair
Jill Copes, Peace River District Women’s Institute
Maurice Fines, North Pine Farmer’s Institute
Judy Madden, PR Regional Cattlemen’s Association
Heather Hansen, Peace River Forage Association BC
Rod Kronlachner, Member at Large – South Peace

Guests
Lori Vickers, Ministry of Agriculture, Dawson Creek
Julie Robinson, Ministry of Agriculture, Fort St. John
Gregory Bartle, Ministry of Agriculture, Victoria – via teleconference

Delegation
Jeff Rahn, General Manager of Environmental Services
Kari Bondaroff, Manager Invasive Plant Program

Staff
Bruce Simard, General Manager of Development Services
Suzanne Garrett, Corporate Services Coordinator

1) Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Notice of New Business:
Lori Vickers 2015 AAC workshop
Jill Copes Water and sewer meetings

Adoption of the Agenda: MOVED by Heather Hansen, SECONDED by Jill Copes,
that the Agriculture Advisory Committee agenda for the October 21, 2014
Meeting, including new business and additional items for the agenda, be adopted,
as amended.

Adoption of the Minutes:
M-1 Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2014

Business Arising from the Minutes:
BA-1 Item #7 Neonicotinoid Pesticides (referred July 10, 2014) and handout –
October 10th news article from the Peace Country Sun.

Delegation:
D-1 Kari Bondaroff, Invasive Plant Manager and Jeff Rahn, General Manager
of Environmental Services regarding clarification on the Regional
District’s invasive plant program.

Reports:
R-1 Chair’s report regarding status of the September 16, 2014 AAC meeting
recommendations to the Regional Board.

New Business:
NB-1 October 3, 2014 Regional Agriculture Plan – Table revisions
NB-2 2015 AAC Workshop
NB-3 Water and sewer meetings

Items for Information:
Diary and Terms of Reference: CARRIED.

MINUTES:
3) M-1 MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Jill Copes,
that the Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2014
be adopted.

November 13, 2014 CARRIED.
BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:
4) BA-1, Item #7 re: Neonicotinoid pesticides 
(referred from July 10, 2014 Board meeting)

It was noted that there are two delivery systems in the use of neonicotinoid pesticides. The system being used in Ontario is primarily vacuum seeding methods common to corn and soybeans. When these crops are seeded talcum powder is added. During the vacuum seeding process some of the seed treatment containing the pesticide is rubbed off by the talcum and can be distributed into the air which can then settle on flowering plants. This is the factor that has been impacting the honey bee industry.

The grains and oilseed industry in the Peace Region primarily use a fan system, blowing any particulates into the ground with the seed which limits/eliminates the distribution of pesticides into the air.

MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Maurice Fines, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that based on information collected there is insufficient evidence to prove that the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is causing any negative impacts to the bee industry in the Peace Region, therefore it is felt that a ban on the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is not warranted.
CARRIED.

DELEGATION:
5) D-1 re: Invasive Plant Program

Jeff Rahn, General Manager of Environmental Services and Kari Bondaroff, Manager Invasive Plant Program provided information on the Regional District’s Invasive Plant Program. Topics included:

- Over the 2014 season, the Invasive Plant Program responded to weed concerns on a reported complaint based system, via email, telephone calls, direct communications and weed report forms.
- The Area Controller responded to the majority of private land reports and verified most of the reports for Crown Land.
- The Manager of the Program passed reports for all other jurisdictions to the appropriate venues for follow-up treatments.
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure dealt with complaints especially if the weeds were adjacent to agriculture
- Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations will not treated Creeping (Canada) Thistle but will treat Scentless Chamomile
- The Regional District is still waiting for clarification from legal counsel on how the Crown can work outside of the Weed Control Act
- IAPP system (Invasive Alien Plant Program), database containing plant surveys, treatment records for the entire province.
- No tickets have been issued this year, focussed on education and awareness
- other Ministries have compliance and enforcement components that can be utilized

MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Heather Hansen, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO), with copies to Perry Grilz, Acting Director – Range Branch, FLNRO; Todd Bondaroff, District Manager, FLNRO and Denise McLean, Invasive Plant Specialist – Northern BC, FLNRO; requesting that the Ministry provide a copy of its current Pest Management Plan for the Peace Region.
CARRIED.

MOVED by Jill Copes, SECONDED by Maurice Fines, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that the Committee supports the hiring of an Invasive Plant Coordinator to assist in the delivery of the Invasive Plant Program in the Peace Region.
CARRIED.

The delegation left at 11:15 a.m.

November 13, 2014
REPORTS:
6)  R-1 re: Chair’s Report re: ALC North Regional Panel (Rec #4)

MOVED by Maurice Fines, SECONDED by Jill Copes, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that a letter be forwarded to the Honourable Norm Letnick, Minister of Agriculture requesting that criteria for Agriculture Land Commission appointments be changed to ensure that potential applicants have extensive agricultural qualifications and practical knowledge in order to provide balanced decision making.

CARRIED.

MOVED by Heather Hansen, SECONDED by Maurice Fines, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that members of the Agricultural Land Commission – North Regional Panel, namely, Dave Merz, Vice-Chair, Sandra Busche and Garry Scott, be invited to a future AAC meeting to open up a dialogue and review land use priorities for the Peace Region, i.e. homesite severance, agriculture zones, ¼ section subdivisions, etc.

CARRIED.

(Rec #5) The following recommendation was referred back to the Committee for clarification:

MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Jim Collins, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that, in the future, any regulatory consultations taking place that affects agricultural land be held jointly with the agriculture community, to offset any segregation viewpoints.

CARRIED.

The Committee stressed that the recommendation was not a criticism – it is understood that there was tight time frame for this consultation meeting (held to discuss proposed changes to the ALR zones.) It is felt that there is a need to develop a tool for communicating and reporting back to each other. In this instance the Regional Board met with the Minister in the morning, agriculture producers met in the afternoon. The Minister could have received two contradictory messages. It is felt that the Board and Committee need to communicate more and get together as a combined group. The Board cannot provide views of agriculture community issues without first consulting with the agriculture community. It was suggested that the process include (1) request for consultation, (2) provide information, and (3) report back to agriculture community. It is felt that the agricultural community is not getting verbal support from elected officials, united we carry more weight to get issues changed. The Committee does not expect elected officials to respond on our behalf as this puts them in an awkward position. There is a need to have a united front.

MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Jim Collins, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that, in the future, any regulatory consultations taking place that affects agricultural land be held jointly with the agriculture community (appropriate commodity groups) via meetings, email, etc., to develop a united submission, with results being communicated/reported back to the agriculture community.

CARRIED.

7)  Recess: The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:05 noon.

8)  Reconvene: The meeting reconvened at 12:45 p.m.
NEW BUSINESS:

9) NB-2 re: 2015 AAC Workshop
Ms. Vickers advised that the next Agriculture Advisory Committee workshop has been scheduled for February 18, 2015. Detailed information and an invitation letter will be forthcoming. Chair Hiebert, Heather and Jill expressed an interest in attending.

10) NB-3 re: water and sewer meetings
The Regional District is hosting a number of meetings around the region to provide information to rural residents on service levels, impacts and costs on the proposed water and sewage functions.

This came about as the City of Fort St. John advised the Regional District that rural residents and industry will no longer have access to their public sewage transfer station after December 31, 2014.

Prior to this the Regional District had been investigating a potable water tankloader facility for Tomslake and Farmington. Rather than look at these needs separately, the Regional District decided to look at both services on a regional basis – over the entire region. This will provide safe, secure and sustainable access to water and sewer for rural residents now and into the future.

Members were advised that additional information and meeting dates are available on the Regional District’s website.

11) NB-1 re: Revisions to Ag Plan table
Members reviewed the October 3, 2014 edition of the Table.
- will need to prioritize the priorities
- does the Water Modernization Act protect surface water?
- Priorities to be determined at the next meeting – short, mid, and long term.
- Public consultation to take place in 2015, before calving and seeding

A revised table will be forwarded to members to review for priorities.

12) Next Meeting
MOVED by Maurice Fines, SECONDED by Judy Madden, that the November 18, 2014 Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting be rescheduled to November 25.
CARRIED.

13) Committee report
MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Jill Copes, that the recommendations from the Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting of October 21, 2014 be recommended to the Regional Board for approval.
CARRIED.

14) Adjournment
MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Heather Hansen, that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Leonard Hiebert, 
Chair

Suzanne Garrett, 
Corporate Services Coordinator

November 13, 2014