



**PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT  
Agriculture Advisory Committee  
Meeting Notes**

DATE: Tuesday, November 15, 2016

PLACE: Regional District offices, Dawson Creek, BC

PRESENT: Leonard Hiebert, Director, Electoral Area 'D', Committee Chair  
Karen Goodings, Director, Electoral Area 'B'  
Dan Rose, Director, Electoral Area 'E'  
Jill Copes, Peace River District Women's Institute  
Judy Madden, Peace River Regional Cattlemen's Association  
Heather Hansen, Peace River Forage Association of BC  
Tobin Dirks, Alternate – Peace Region Forage Seed Association  
Kathleen Connolly, Member at Large – South Peace

Guests

Lori Vickers, Ministry of Agriculture

Delegations

D-1 Fran Haughian, Communications Manager/Commission Liaison  
Aden Fulford, GIS Coordinator  
D-2 Viva Wolf, Executive Director, BC Oil and Gas Commission

Regional District Staff

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

1) Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am

**Notice of New Business:**

Kathleen Connolly Dawson Creek/Chetwynd Area Transmission (DCAT)

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

2) Adoption of the Agenda MOVED by Heather Hansen, SECONDED by Director Goodings, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee agenda for the November 15, 2016 meeting, including New Business and Additional Items, be adopted, as amended:

**Adoption of the Minutes:**

M-1 Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2016  
M-2 Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Notes of October 18, 2016

**Business Arising from the Minutes:**

**Delegations:**

D-1 Fran Haughian, Communications Manager/Commission Liaison and Aden Fulford, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator - Regional District website and interactive map tour  
D-2 Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations and BC Oil and Gas Commission – approval, monitoring and enforcement regulations for large water dugouts

**Correspondence:**

C-1 re: Trees for Change  
a) July 11, 2016 news article "BC Farmland protected from reforestation";  
and  
b) Trees for Change Fact Sheet (referred by EADC, October 20)  
C-2 July 27, 2016 BC Hydro – Agricultural Mitigation and Compensation Plan Framework

**Reports:**

R-1 June 14, 2016 AAC Chair Report – status of AAC recommendations.  
R-2 Regional Agriculture Plan  
R-3 July 15, 2016 report from Bruce Simard – discussion paper regarding review of ALR applications (referred by Regional Board, August 11)  
R-4 Genetically modified variety of alfalfa (referred by Regional Board, Aug 11)

- 2) Adoption of the (continued) **New Business:**  
NB-1 Electoral Area 'B' – 2016/2017 potable water process (handout)  
NB-2 Dawson Creek/Chetwynd Area Transmission line  
NB-3 Regulatory amendments affecting Agri-Tourism (referred by Regional Board, November 10)  
**Items for Information:**  
I-1 Licensing Groundwater use under BC Sustainability Act  
**Diary and Terms of Reference:** CARRIED.

**MINUTES:**

- 3) M-1 AAC Mtg. Minutes MOVED by Jill Copes, SECONDED by Kathleen Connolly, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting minutes of May 17, 2016 be adopted. CARRIED.
- 4) M-2 AAC Mtg. Notes MOVED by Jill Copes, SECONDED by Judy Madden, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting notes of October 18, 2016 be received. CARRIED.
- 5) Vary the Agenda MOVED by Director Goodings, SECONDED by Judy Madden, That the agenda be varied to deal with D-1 at this time. CARRIED.

**DELEGATION:**

- 6) D-1 re: web tour Fran Haughian, Communications Manager/Commission Liaison and Aden Fulford, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator provided a hands on tour of the Regional District's website and interactive mapping system.

**REPORTS:**

- 7) R-1 re: AAC Chair Report Update - disposal of handpicked invasive plants  
The Regional Board has requested that staff prepare a report on the secure containment of hand-picked, bagged invasive plants for Board review at its January 2017 meeting – results will be forwarded to the Committee. Public education could be expanded to include information on composting bagged weeds.  
MOVED by Director Goodings, SECONDED by Judy Madden, That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that the invasive plant education program be expanded to include methods for composting bagged invasive plants. CARRIED.
- 8) R-2 re: Ag Plan MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Jill Copes, That the Agriculture Advisory Committee accept the offer from Lori Vickers to re-format the November 25, 2014 version of the Agriculture Plan Table, provide background links and clearly denote priorities for review by the Committee. CARRIED.
- 9) R-3 Review of ALC applications The Regional Board forwarded the "Discussion Paper regarding the Review of ALR Applications" to the Committee for comment and advice concerning the pros and cons of NOT reviewing ALR applications.

The Regional District has provided a robust review of ALC applications with respect to Official Community Plan (OCP) policy and zoning regulations. At times, with recommendation from the Electoral Area Director, the Board has even held public information meetings for more contentious proposals to ensure a fair opportunity for public concerns to be heard before a decision is made.

**Reports:** (continued)

9) R-3 continued

This has afforded the Board an opportunity to critically consider whether a proposal is in accord with local policies and community preferences, which has been a highly valued consideration by the Electoral Area Directors and the Board.

**DELEGATION:**

10) D-2

Large dugouts

Viva Wolf, Executive Director, Regional Operations, BC Oil and Gas Commission was in attendance to provide information on the requirements for accessing water on private land under the Water Sustainability Act (WSA).

Under the WSA, anyone who diverts or uses groundwater for anything other than household use is required to obtain a water licence and pay water fees and rentals. As of February 29, 2016, users of groundwater for any non-domestic purposes will be required to apply for a water licence to maintain the right to use groundwater. Licencing clarifies how much water can be legally used and increases security for access to that water.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the BC Oil and Gas Commission have been undertaking an inventory of what types and sizes of dug-outs/dams are out in the rural areas.

Under the WSA whoever constructs the dug-out accepts responsibility. It was noted that if oil/gas company goes bankrupt the OGC works actively with the landowners - process has to be tightened up.

Issues:

- lost source of water needs to be addressed, consultation will require input from those impacted.
- No public outreach with respect to the WSA; OGC conducted outreach / education to industry.
- Under WSA a dugout is considered a "well."

It was noted that the Regional District will still review non-farm use applications for water storage facilities as part of the Oil and Gas Activities Act (OGAA) application review process.

11) Recess

The meeting recessed for luncheon at 12:15 pm

12) Recall to Order

The meeting was recalled to order at 1:00 pm

13) R-3 cont'd:

It is felt that the Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) does not value the time and effort the Regional District spends on the application review process. Concern was expressed that if the ALC approves an application that the Regional District will approve it as well – creates false expectations. The Regional District can still refuse the application to proceed with OCP/rezoning amendments. The ALC is not accountable to the Regional District, the Regional District is, however accountable to the public it serves.

It was felt that the role of the Regional District is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments on any active application.

MOVED by Kathleen Connolly, SECONDED by Heather Hansen,

- a) That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that staff be authorized to forward a copy of the "Discussion Paper regarding the review of ALR Applications" to each AAC member organization and members at large, requesting that they respond in writing stating their position (including reasons) regarding whether the Regional District should, or should not, discontinue reviewing and responding to ALR applications; and
- b) That responses be reviewed by the AAC prior to any decision on the matter by the Board.

CARRIED.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

14) NB-1 re: Potable water Process  
Potable Water Function – Electoral Area ‘B’  
Currently the Regional District is operating public water dispensing services at Prespatou, Boundary and Feye Spring without the authority to do so in order to continue to provide a water service function. A water service function must be established. In order to establish a service approval from the public is required.

Recently, Northern Health notified the Regional District that its water systems needed to be assessed and inspected for compliance with the Drinking Water Protection Act, which resulted in boil water advisories for Boundary and Feye.

In order to move forward Director Goodings will establish a water advisory committee comprised of community residents, who will provide feedback on the processes of public approval and potable water system operations and design. With input from the committee the Regional District, through a transparent public process, will seek approval for a potable water function in Electoral Area ‘B’.

Heather, Tobin and Jill volunteered to sit on the Water Advisory Committee.

15) NB-2 re: DCAT  
Members were advised that some landowners are experiencing difficulties with BC Hydro and the Dawson Creek/Chetwynd Area Transmission (DCAT) line. In particular, invasive plants, livestock at risk and open trenches.

MOVED by Kathleen Connolly, SECONDED by Judy Madden,  
That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that a letter be forwarded to BC Hydro requesting a status update on private and crown lands under the Dawson Creek/Chetwynd Area Transmission line with respect to mitigation and management of invasive plants, containment of livestock, and open trenches/pits.

CARRIED.

Heather Hansen left the meeting at 2:00 pm

16) NB-3 re: Agri-Tourism  
The October 26, 2016 letter from the Ministry of Agriculture was referred to the Committee by the Regional Board. The letter provides an update to consultation that took place in the fall of 2015 with respect to regulatory amendments affecting Agri-Tourism.

17) Adjournment  
The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm

original signed by

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Leonard Hiebert,  
Chair

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Suzanne Garrett,  
Corporate Services Coordinator