



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

**MA-2**

DATE: Tuesday, May 19, 2015

PLACE: Regional District offices, Dawson Creek, BC

PRESENT: Leonard Hiebert, Director, Electoral Area 'D' – Meeting Chair  
Ruth Veiner, Alternate - Peace River District Women's Institute  
Maurice Fines, Peace River Farmer's Institute  
Jim Collins, Alternate – Peace River Farmer's Institute  
Judy Madden, PR Regional Cattlemen's Association  
Don Dunbar, Member at Large West Peace

D-1 Delegation  
Director Karen Goodings, Electoral Area 'B'  
Director Brad Sperling, Electoral Area 'C'  
Director Dan Rose, Electoral Area 'E', 10:25 am

D-2 Delegation  
Kevin and Barbara Knoblauch, 11:45 am

Guests  
Julie Robinson, Ministry of Agriculture, 10:10 am  
Lori Vickers, Ministry of Agriculture

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 10:00 a.m.

**Notice of New Business:**

Ruth Veiner New Chair – Agriculture Land Commission  
Jim Collins Update - Groundwater study, feasibility of irrigation  
Lori Vickers Update – weather monitoring study, climate action

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

2) Adoption of the Agenda MOVED by Ruth Veiner, SECONDED by Judy Madden, that the Agriculture Advisory Committee agenda for the May 19, 2015 meeting, including New Business and Additional Items, be adopted.

**Adoption of the Minutes:**

M-1 Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2015

**Business Arising from the Minutes:**

**Delegations:**

D-1 Electoral Area Directors - future of the Agriculture Advisory Committee  
D-2 Kevin Knoblauch – Peace Valley Alluvial Floodplain

**Correspondence:**

C-1 April 23, 2015 letter from the Ministry of Natural Gas Development, Tenure and Geoscience Branch regarding the landowner notification program.

**Reports:**

R-1 March 20, 2015 Chair's report regarding the status of the March 18, 2015 AAC meeting recommendations to the Regional Board.  
R-2 May 7, 2015 report from the Assistant Manager of Development Services regarding the North Peace Fringe Area Official Community Plan.

**New Business:**

NB-1 BC Oil and Gas Commission criteria pertaining to agriculture land.  
NB-2 New Chair – Agriculture Land Commission  
NB-3 Update - Groundwater study, feasibility of irrigation  
NB-5 Update – weather monitoring study, climate action

**Items for Information:**

**Diary and Terms of Reference:**

**June 11, 2015**

CARRIED.

## MA-2

### MINUTES:

3) M-1  
AAC Mtg. Minutes

MOVED by Don Dunbar, SECONDED by Judy Madden,  
that the Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2015  
be adopted.

CARRIED.

### CORRESPONDENCE:

4) C-1 re: L/O  
notification  
letter

The Ministry of Natural Gas Development, Tenure and Geoscience Branch  
have confirmed that the Ministry can send a Landowner Notification Program  
letter to landowners shortly after the referrals are forwarded to local government.  
The landowner letter will contain contact information allowing landowners to  
directly contract regional district staff with any potential concerns. It was felt that  
consultation on the sale of land tenures should take place prior to the sale.

### REPORTS:

5) R-2 re: NPFA  
OCP Community  
Advisory Cmte.

The Regional District is undertaking a review and update of the North Peace  
Fringe Area Official Community Plan (OCP). This review is based on the need to  
ensure the OCP is responsive to development pressures experienced due to  
development and Site C within the Fringe Area. Part of the review process  
includes the establishment of a community advisory committee, members will  
assist in the review as described in the Terms of Reference.

Discussion ensued regarding the requirement that membership preference will be  
given to individuals who are not currently serving on regional district committee's  
or have served on a regional district committee in the last 5 years. It was felt that  
this would exclude people with experience/knowledge that could be vital during  
the planning process.

MOVED by Don Dunbar, SECONDED by Ruth Veiner,  
That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that  
membership to the North Peace Fringe Area OCP Community Advisory  
Committee not exclude past/present regional district committee members  
from its selection process as these individuals have experience and knowledge  
that would benefit the OCP planning process.

CARRIED.

MOVED by Ruth Veiner, SECONDED by Maurice Fines,  
That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that  
Jim Collins be nominated from the agricultural community to participate on the  
North Peace Fringe Area OCP Community Advisory Committee.

CARRIED.

### DELEGATION:

6) D-1 re:  
future of the AAC

The Electoral Area Directors were in attendance to obtain input from members  
of the AAC on the future direction of the Committee. Dissatisfaction on the  
effectiveness of the AAC has been expressed by members of both the AAC and  
the Electoral Area Directors. For example:

- stakeholder representation has not been consistent over the years;
- information flow back to stakeholder groups has been challenging due to the inconsistent representation;
- AAC input is under-valued;

#### Discussion points:

- Role of AAC could be very beneficial to Board and Electoral Area Directors
- Expectations, AAC feels they are spinning their wheels. AAC is a multi-commodity resource group – good value. Fragmentation is a result of some members feeling their input is under-valued.
- Board does not seek input on agricultural related issues, i.e. building bylaw – huge impact to agriculture.

## 6) D-1 cont'd:

Discussion points: (continued)

- Succession planning, are there others in stakeholder organizations that are interested in being an AAC member
- Apathy, cannot get anyone to put their name forward for electoral area director
- Most only care if something is going to impact them
- Some issues identified by the AAC have not been dealt with, i.e. 210 Road – AAC suggested a berm – never happened. AAC expressed concern that the disposal well in Rolla area was configured wrong – ignored. Feel like AAC is not important and not valued – this needs to be addressed.
- OGC participation has been hindering, cannot get answers to AAC questions

**Suggestions:**

- Forward AAC minutes to stakeholder organizations, so they become more aware of what is going on/what is being discussed
- Vagueness in Terms of Reference, refine what we are doing
- To make it stronger be more diversified, open agendas
- AAC could be providing ideas on what the Board can do to assist/improve agriculture, i.e. projects such as grain elevator, slaughter facility, flour mills, natural gas, etc.
- All members should be given the opportunity to vote
- EADC should be a part of AAC, as members
- Forward AAC recommendations to EADC for review prior to going to Board
- AAC could provide general ideas related to specific agricultural issues and impacts to the Regional Board for reference, such as homesite severance, etc.
- To bridge rural and urban, name another municipal representative to the AAC

## 7) Recess:

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:05 pm

## 8) Reconvene:

The meeting reconvened at 1:00 pm

**DELEGATION:**9) D-2 re:  
Peace Valley  
Alluvial Floodplain  
and handout

At its February 12, 2015 meeting the Regional Board referred the December 15 and 18, 2014 letters from Mr. Knoblauch to the AAC for recommendations on how to address Mr. Knoblauch's concerns.

Mr. Knoblauch handed out an information package dated May 19<sup>th</sup> and requested the following:

1. That a study of all the best river flat floodplains in the Peace Region be conducted, for long term preservation for the essential needs of local food production at every community in the Northeast;
2. That regulations be drafted, at the Regional District level, to protect these areas in perpetuity for horticulture and establish a land trust; and
3. That regulations be drafted, at the provincial level, restoring respect to the ALC process with specific inclusion of the Peace Region's horticultural land base into a trust for perpetuity.

Mr. Knoblauch noted that he is asking for assistance to change the culture of using agricultural land for ditches (industry).

Discussion points:

- Food sustainability is essential
- Land Trust, Mr. Knoblauch suggested that covenants be attached to parcels, private and Crown to protect for future horticulture and to sustain northeast economies. Landowner has to take responsibility to ensure land is not degraded. Need to maintain ability to feed ourselves.
- Will get push back on restrictions (covenants) on private property
- It was suggested that a study of river flat floodplains has already been documented by the Agriculture Land Commission.
- Will get push back on restrictions (covenants) on private property
- It was suggested that Mr. Knoblauch contact the ALC for support.

- 9) D-2 cont'd: - It was suggested that Mr. Knoblauch connect with other advocates for support, i.e. Peace Security, DC Horticulture Society.

The Chair thanked Mr. Knoblauch for attending.

The delegation left at 2:10 pm

The Ministry of Agriculture advised it is willing to provide assistance in identifying suitable sites for horticultural production in the Peace Region.

MOVED by Don Dunbar, SECONDED by Ruth Veiner,  
 That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommends to the Regional Board that a letter be forwarded to Leslie MacDonald, Assistant Director, Ministry of Agriculture in support of Mr. Knoblauch's request to enable a soils survey and identify appropriate parcels, soil types, micro climates and land titles (crown and private), with a copy to Mr. Knoblauch.

CARRIED.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 10) NB-1 re: BC OGC It was requested that future agenda topics/issues related to the Oil and Gas Delegation Agreement, pipelines, referral processes, etc. that require specific responses be forwarded to the appropriate individual at the BC Oil and Gas Commission.

- 11) NB-2 re: ALC Chair Frank Leonard has been appointed as the new Chair for the Agricultural Land Commission.

MOVED by Jim Collins, SECONDED by Judy Madden,  
 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 the draft regulations related to Bill 24 Agricultural Land Commission Amendment Act be made available to the Agriculture Advisory Committee and Peace Region commodity groups before it is enacted, with a copy to Brian Underhill, Agriculture Land Commission.

CARRIED.

- 12) NB-3 re: Groundwater study Update The Groundwater Baseline project currently being conducted held meetings to provide residents with an update on the first phase of the project. Meetings were held Dawson Creek, Chetwynd and Fort St. John. Information is available on the Regional District's website.

- 13) Committee report MOVED by Judy Madden, SECONDED by Maurice Fines, that the recommendations from the Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting of May 19, 2015 be recommended to the Regional Board for approval.

CARRIED.

- 14) Adjournment MOVED by Maurice Fines, SECONDED by Don Dunbar, that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm

Leonard Hiebert,  
 Chair

Suzanne Garrett,  
 Corporate Services Coordinator