



MINUTES OF THE
PENINSULA AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
Council Chambers, Saanich Municipal Hall
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2015 AT 7:30 PM

Present: Bob Maxwell in the Chair; Phil Christie; Bernadette Greene; Kim Lonsdale; Bev Marley; Terry Michell; Also present was Isobel Hoffmann, Recording Clerk.

Guests: Gary Holman, MLA, Saanich North & the Islands; Jane Evans, Planner, Saanich.

Regrets: Councillors Graham, Stock, McLennan, Derman and Kahakauwila; Jack Mar; Linda Geggie; Nikki Tate-Straton; Dianne Williamson; Samantha Charlton.

Minutes: Moved by Bernadette Green and Seconded by Bev Marley: "That the Minutes of October 8, 2015 be adopted with a change to page 6 re VisonSandown Fair, 2nd and 3rd paragraphs, with respect to the size of the property. It should be 12 acres and 83 acres, not hectares".

CARRIED

TREASURER'S REPORT – Samantha Charlton – not present

SPEAKER'S BUREAU: no speakers

CORRESPONDENCE

- Copy of letter from PAAC to Central Saanich in support of water extension services to Longview Farm
- Copy of letter from PAAC to Central Saanich re **Martindale Flats** drainage issues, which was considered by Council at its meeting on Monday, November 9, 2015. Council accepted the letter as sent and will continue to monitor the area and organize local farmers as suggested by PAAC.

Phil Christie stated he and Bob Maxwell met with Dave McArra, Saanich Public Works. Mr. McArra was keen to have PAAC participate and noted this particular flooding problem is discussed regularly. The next stage will be to set up a meeting with the farmers and Central Saanich, as well as Saanich and PAAC, to get everyone on side. Jack Mar has advised he has contacts regarding funding. Phil advised he will continue to monitor the situation and report back.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM OCTOBER 8, 2015 MINUTES

Saanich Agricultural Food Security Task Force

Jane Evans stated:

- The deadline for applications to sit on the task force has been extended to the end of the month. They have not received as many applications as expected.
- Staff are reviewing the proposals from consultants and hopefully will make a decision by next week.
- Applicants to the task force do not necessarily have to be Saanich residents. We are looking for people working in schools, health, marketing, and farmers – people with an interest in health and food security.
- It would only involve 5 or 6 meetings over the course of a year.

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Discussion ensued, noting the following comments:

- Ⓞ Good organizations to contact would be UVIC, Royal Roads University or the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific.
- Ⓞ All agreed that it is better to make personal contact rather than just post info on a website.

VISIONSANDOWN – Comments from Ideas Fair held October 15, 2015

- The event had good displays in several categories – historical, agricultural, ecological, etc., and information was presented about the project in general.
- About 30 people attended and discussions were held at the different tables. Lots of good ideas suggested.
- A few of the local farmers attended the “farm walk and talk” event.
- There will be a presentation for the Gateway project at the end of the month – this is federal land.
- The Randall family are looking for tenants for the 12 acre parcel they are planning to develop.

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES – CURRENT

a) Goose Management Strategy (Bev/Rob)

- Bev attended the meeting at the end of October. Costs are rising and funds are getting low.
- Max wrote a letter to the CRD Committee on behalf of PAAC; no response received yet.
- Although the pilot cull was considered a success, It is not enough to do one cull in one particular area.
- At one time, hunters were invited to a meeting of the Goose Committee; perhaps they need to be more involved and participate, or approach other gun clubs etc., such as the North Saanich Gun Club.
- The CRD committee has done a lot of work on this over the years, and spent a lot of money – but we still don't have the results we need.
- The programme in Kelowna has been successful; it cost a lot of money but their beaches are clean and farmers are happy.
- The last count of the geese was over 9,000 birds – originally the population was 500 or so.
- How many letters do we have to write until something is done to address the problem.
- There are definite safety risks at the airport – which is a different issue to farmers' concerns.
- Schools have different social issues too, as do the CRD with their lakes, beaches, estuaries, and parks; the golf courses have their own problems as well although surprisingly they are not too vocal about it.
- The monetary damages and social risks from all these sectors keep increasing. The tally for the total costs of the study work and damages to date must be well over \$1 million.
- The sound cannons just clear the birds from one area to another.
- If our estuaries continue to be polluted, it will eventually kill the salmon.
- The only solution is a cull – and not just a one-time cull. The public reaction to this is a concern.
- Education is required. We need to make people understand how serious this is and that the problem will just continue to grow unless we take serious measures to address it – such as a cull.
- We have to go beyond the farms; they can only do so much and cannot continue to fight the battle alone. We must get all levels of government involved.
- There has to be a political will to take action, actually do something rather than sit around and talk about it. Perhaps we need to start at the local level.
- There have been so many hours of work at the CRD as well as volunteer time; progress, although slow, has been made.

- PAAC has spent many hours discussing the issue, providing volunteers to the CRD committee, writing many letters and collecting data. Perhaps we need to tell our side of the story to the media.

In response to questions from Gary Holman, it was confirmed that migratory birds are under federal jurisdiction, and PAAC feels that the senior government agencies are not taking responsibility. The regional wildlife biologist has worked with PAAC before.

Bob Maxwell agreed to work on this issue and prepare yet another letter.

CARRY to January meeting.

- b) Deer Management Strategy (Rob)** Not present - nothing to report
- c) CRD Food Systems Strategy (Linda Geggie)** Not present - nothing to report.
- d) ALR Core Review (Linda Geggie)** – Not present - nothing to report
- e) Farmland Trust (Linda, Nikki, Mary Alice)** – Not present - nothing to report

AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY – SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Water (Michael Doehnel)** – not present
- b) Farm Economics (Terry Michell)**
 - There has been a 6% increase in the sale of agricultural products over last year in BC; \$12.5 million.
- c) Agricultural Land Base (Phil Christie)** – nothing to report
- d) Resource Stewardship – (Kim Lonsdale)** – nothing to report
- e) Education and Outreach (Linda Geggie)** – not present – nothing to report

Adjournment: On a Motion from Bev Marley the meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm

Next Meeting: The next regular PAC meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, January 14, 2016** at 7:30 pm, Saanich Municipal Hall.

WEBSITE: Members were asked to advise of any information items to place on the website.

<http://saanich.ca/living/afs/index.html>

I hereby certify this is a true and correct copy of the Minutes.

Isobel Hoffmann, Recording Secretary