



**MINUTES OF THE
PENINSULA & AREA AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
Committee Room 1, Saanich Municipal Hall
Thursday, MARCH 14, 2019 AT 7:00 PM**

Present: Phil Christie; Jack Mar; Carol Davidson; Linda Geggie; Larry Kimmett, Bev Marley; Terry Michell; Larry Sluggett; Dianne Williamson; Councillor Thompson (C.Saanich), Coumcillor Smythe, N.Saanich). Also present was Doug Pepper, Regional Agrologist; and Isobel Hoffmann, Recording Clerk.

Guests: Michael Doehnel, SPWAC, Ray Galey.

Regrets: Satnam Dheenshaw.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The current Co-Chairs, Phil Christie and Jack Mar indicated they were willing to retain the positions for another year. There were no other nominations.

MOTION: Moved by Terry Michell and Seconded by Carol Davidson: "That Phil Christie and Jack Mar be nominated as Co-Chairs for 2019."

CARRIED

The current Treasurer, Carol Davidson, agreed to remain in the position for another year. There were no other nominations.

MOTION: Moved by Bev Marley and Seconded by Linda Geggie: "That Carol Davidson be nominated as Treasurer for 2019."

CARRIED

Minutes: The Minutes of January 10, 2019 were adopted.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Carol Davidson

The Treasurer advised she had nothing to report. The Secretary reviewed the Commission's Administration costs for 2018, noting that the invoices have been sent. PAAC also has a balance of approximately \$6,000 in its account which can be used to supplement the upcoming seminar in April on Farm Succession, as well as the proposed Farm Tour in June.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU: none scheduled. Bob Maxwell suggested Melissa Lacroix, a Safety Consultant for Vancouver Island with AgSafeBC, who could talk about the use of proper masks on the farm when dealing with dust from grains and compost, etc. The secretary will contact her.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Information distributed about a team of Memorial University researchers who are turning Newfoundland's southwest coast into an agricultural tourism destination.

FARM SUCCESSION WORKSHOP – APRIL 10, 2019

Planning of the workshop is progressing. The room has been booked at the Saanich Fairgrounds; Jack Mar has advised the Oak Room has been reserved but it should be

possible to get a larger room if required. Equipment – such as screen, projector, sound system, round tables and chairs - have been reserved.

Notification: An initial email has been sent to PAAC contacts, as well as other groups, individuals and organizations who may be interested, such as Farm Credit Canada, SIOPA, ALC, Ministry of Agriculture, DFMA, BC Horse Council, CR-Fair, Comox Agricultural Society, Duncan/Cowichan Agricultural Society, and all PAAC contacts. All sponsoring municipalities have been advised also.

Financing: The deposit cheque has been sent to Elaine Froese (\$1,250); Farm Credit Canada has offered to contribute \$1,000. The DFMA has been asked to support the project as well; response still pending. Elaine is requesting \$50 per person attending. PAAC is charging \$25 per person if they registered by March 30; \$30 after March 30.

Estimated costs are as follows:

• Speaker's Fee:	\$2,500
• \$50 pp attending	\$2,500 (based on estimate of 50 people)
• Travel expenses	\$1,000 (maximum)
• Refreshments	\$ 200 (estimate)
• Printing	\$ 200 (estimate)
• Misc.	<u>\$ 200</u>
TOTAL	\$6,600

PAAC contribution:	\$2,500
Farm Credit Canada	\$1,000
Admission Fees (50 pple)	<u>\$1,250</u> (minimum)
TOTAL	\$4,750

Shortfall: \$1,850

If the DFMA provides support, PAAC can make up the shortfall.

Promotion: Councillor Thompson offered to help with a poster for promoting the event. He will send a draft to the Co-Chairs and Secretary shortly. Suggested the information be sent to the municipalities to post on their websites. Linda will arrange for media coverage thru CBC or CFX radio, an interview with both Elaine and Linda.

Discussed whether we should pay for an ad in the local newspapers (Black Press). Suggested we try to get a news article on the event first – Linda to arrange for first week in April. She will also do an information piece for the regular Friday column in the Black Press – although she noted her last submission was not printed for some unknown reason. A media release was also discussed about 10 days before the event.

When the posters are ready, agreed they should be distributed widely at various places, as well as the Cowichan/Duncan area.

Ray Galey entered the meeting at 7:15 pm

Noted that Elaine presented a workshop promoted through the Bank of Montreal in the Courtenay/Comox area which was well attended. Carol offered to take some posters to the Duncan area.

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES – NEW

Islands Agriculture Show – February 1 and 2, 2019 -Saanich Fairgrounds

PAAC sent a \$1000 cheque to the organization to assist with costs.

Farmer2Farmer – February 28, 2019

Letter dated January 27, 2019 from CR-Fair requesting \$1,000 in support of the event. Because of the Islands' Ag Show at the beginning of February, a different format for the F2F workshop been considered so as not to duplicate effects. Instead, the F2F workshop will focus on climate change and the impacts on agriculture. Saanich has a Climate Adaption Plan and there is good data available from UVIC and the BC Agricultural Institute.

A planning meeting will be held on January 17 and a representative from PAAC is invited to attend. It is also intended to seek funding from the Ministry of Agriculture; Linda will submit an application through Doug Pepper, the Regional Agrologist.

MOTION: Moved by Larry Kimmett and Seconded by Jack Mar: “That PAAC sponsor the 2019 Farmer2Farmer Workshop for the amount of \$1,000.”

CARRIED

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES – CURRENT

- a) **Goose/Deer Management Strategy (Bev Marley & Jeff Weightman)**
see discussion on page 2 of the Minutes
- b) **CRD Food & Agriculture Strategy (Linda Geggie & Jeff Weightan)**
The Task Force has completed its two-year appointment under the Terms of Reference. We are now waiting to see if the Board will reappoint. There is still some work to complete. Information is available on the website for public viewing although the updated report is not on line yet. When and if the Task Force is reappointed the updates will be completed.
- λ) **Saanich Agriculture and Food Security Plan – Cam Scott, not present.**
Saanich Council has approved the plan but the job description to hire the new planner is still in progress.
- d) **Island Pollinator Initiative (IPI) (Bob Maxwell) – not present**

e) Sandown Update

Linda reported that nothing is happening at this time; the new Mayor and Council is trying to get up to speed. It has been suggested that PAAC have an opportunity to review the Plan. Linda suggested that we request a planner from North Saanich to come to a PAAC meeting to provide an update.

f) Woodwyn Farm Update

Jack Mar stated he spoke recently with Tara Schmidt from BC Housing, new owners of the Farm. Repairs are necessary from a structural and safety point of view to the large barn on the property, which is about 40' x 100'. A structural engineer needs to examine the building. Jack estimates costs could be as high as a million dollars to bring the building up to code.

AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY – SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Water (Michael Doehnel)

The reservoir is full. Heavy rains caused ditches to overflow, pushing sediment. He noted this ties in with climate change and adaptation – topic of discussion at F2F this year.

Ray Galey asked why there is a monthly charge on water meters. He is charged \$85/month for each 2" meter whether it is used or not (he has 8). He also has a 4" meter and is charged \$300/month. He has the highest water rates on the Blenkinsop Lake. He pumps and circulates the water back into the lake but he cannot use this water on the crops. Weekly water samples have to be taken to Sidney for testing at \$85 each time. Water rates are way out of control.

Discussion ensued and it was suggested that PAAC ask Saanich to look into its fees associated with water outlets. It is understood that the CRD delivers water through municipal infrastructure and water is sold at a wholesale rate; the municipalities then set their own rates to cover the cost of the infrastructure and delivery. Farmers have a lower rate than residential and commercial users. The CRD controls the water and the municipalities control the delivery.

Michael Doehnel confirmed that individual municipalities decide on the various fee structures; some have a minimum fee for the meter and/or connection fees. Every water user is responsible for paying for their own meters. The question is why is there a continuous fee for a water meter every month?

It was agreed to look into this issue, refer to the next meeting for further discussion and a Motion in support to examining municipal water rates. There should be consistency to help farmers.

CARRY to February Meeting

b) Farm Economics (Terry Michell – not present)

Robin Tunnicliffe stated that the Metchosin Market on December 18, 2018 was the biggest and most successful month ever for the local market.

c) Agricultural Land Base (Phil Christie)

Phil again raised the point about the inequality of funding between forestry and fisheries to that of agriculture. In the past few years, the agriculture and food production GDP has continued to increase to a value of \$15 billion. Very soon agriculture and food production may surpass forestry

in BC but it continues to receive one tenth of the budget. He acknowledged this is not a fair comparison in that agriculture is mostly a private enterprise and they are two completely different areas. We need to get some context in agricultural growth.

It was suggested that we invite a speaker from the South Island Prosperity Project to a meeting to discuss agricultural growth and what investments are needed to make agriculture and food production more successful.

It was noted that Pendray Farms no longer operates as a dairy farm; the cattle were shipped to Abbotsford.

d) Education and Outreach (Linda Geggie)

The Island's Agriculture Show is February 1 and 2, 2019 at the Fairgrounds and the Farmer2Farmer will be held on February 28, 2019. CR-Fair has requested PAAC for \$1000 to assist with the costs of F2F. (Motion passed earlier in the meeting)

OTHER BUSINESS:

John Buchanan's Metchosin property – issue with predators

Bev Marley urged PAAC to support John Buchanan's recent battle with the CRD about protecting his sheep from predators – bears, cougars and dogs.

Doug Pepper stated he has talked to John about the problem and has been informed that the CRD caught the dog responsible and they knew the owner. He thinks it will become a civil matter between the dog owner and John Buchanan.

Jeff Weightman stated the CRD does not have a budget to pay for loss of animals. When they do issue a payout, the funds have to be taken from another area.

2019 Farm Tour for New Mayors and Councillors

PAAC proposes to host another farm tour for newly elected councillors and mayors, as well as existing councillors and staff. The last tour in 2015 and was very well received. Discussion ensued noting the following:

- The tour needs to highlight a variety of farm and farm-related operations
- Establish a sub-committee to put together a draft plan to bring to PAAC for discussion
- Members were asked to submit potential farms, wineries, etc. for the tour (via Isobel)

Adjournment: On a Motion from Bev Marley the meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm

Next Meeting: The next PAAC meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, February 14, 2018 at 7:00 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