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Minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting

May 30, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Meadows Room

12007 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 2B5

Voting Members: A. Aquilini
 J. Bachmann
 H. Bitter
 Drew Bondar, B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Food (*Non-Voting Member*)
 T. Hopcott*
 S. Howkins
 W. Jack
 D. Kosicki
 T. Vader

Council Liaisons: Councillor Manion
 Councillor Meachen (Alternate)

Regrets: L. Kemper
 J. Parmar
 P. Robinson

Members of the Public: S. Robinson

Staff: M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment (Chair)
 M. Roberts, Chief Administrative Officer
 S. Maki, Director of Engineering
 P. Ward, Director of Planning & Development

Recording Clerk: T. McCaw, Committee Clerk II

1. CALL TO ORDER

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, acknowledged with respect and gratitude that the City of Pitt Meadows is located on the traditional, unceded territory of ᑭᓴᓴᓴ (Katzie) First Nation who were stewards of this land since time immemorial.

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 AM.

2. LATE ITEMS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was general consent amongst the committee to approve the May 30, 2024 Agricultural Advisory Committee agenda.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the minutes from the April 25, 2024 Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting as circulated.

5. NEW BUSINESS**5.1 Water Study Update**

S. Maki, Director of Engineering & Operations, provided an update on irrigation needs, water concerns and initiatives by the City forming a part of the minutes as **Attachment 1**.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- Questions were raised around impacts to water licenses for the municipality and the new initiatives being implemented (Staff noted the municipality does not currently have a license and the City will determine what level of water they are comfortable with in the ditches as well as the drainage networks that will require review and assessment);
- Discussions were held around risks, costs, and recovery for the City should they become an irrigation district;
- A suggestion was made to clean out the ditches to the engineering standards which would increase the volume of water being stored (Staff confirmed that their ditch and cleaning practices have not changed);

- Salmon and fish in the ditches was discussed;
- The importance of preserving farms and farmland in Pitt Meadows was discussed;
- The recommendation was made for the City to collect more data prior to making a decision around moving towards becoming an irrigation district;
- Questions were raised around the benefits of the City becoming an irrigation district and whether consultation with the agricultural community will be had;
- Staff confirmed that data gathering will come from the Irrigation study and will involve the AAC before making any decisions; and
- A request was made for Staff to reach out to the City of Delta to come speak to the AAC regarding their experiences with becoming an irrigation district (Staff confirmed they will reach out to the City of Delta prior to extending an invitation to speak to the AAC).

**T. Hopcott joined the meeting at 10:59 am.*

5.2 Update: Metro Vancouver Regional Food Systems Strategy

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, provided an update on the Metro Vancouver Regional Food Systems Strategy.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency, food destruction and waste was discussed; and
- The impacts of fossil fuels and fertilizer, which are imperative to food production in farming.

5.3 Soil Fill in the Agricultural Land Reserve

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, & T. Hopcott, provided an update from Metro Vancouver on Soil Fill in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

There were no further discussions or comments made by the Committee on this topic.

5.4 Pitt Meadows Farmers Institute

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, provided an update on the opportunity for the re-instatement of the Pitt Meadows Farmers Institute.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- Discussions were held around possible funding opportunities to support the operation of a Farming Institute in the City of Pitt Meadows (Staff confirmed there are funding opportunities available to support this initiative);
- The question was raised whether a Farmer's Institute would be a separate initiative from the City (Staff confirmed yes, this would not be a City-run initiative);
- Discussions were held around the operations of a standard Farmers Institute; and
- The question was raised whether there would be an opportunity for the AAC to provide funding for \$5-\$10k for the instatement of the Farmer's Institute.

5.5 Educational Signage Along Dikes & Farming Areas

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, provided an overview on new educational signage along the dikes and farming areas in Pitt Meadows.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- Important to include the history on farming cranberries and blueberries and possibly noting how many berries/other commodities are grown and produced in Pitt Meadows each year;
- The recommendation was made to include information on the five major commodity groups within the City; and
- Discussions were held around what the primary focus of these signs would be (Staff confirmed the recommendation would lay with whatever members find value in, such as education around off leash dogs and the impacts).

5.6 AAC Application Tracker

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, provided update on the AAC Application Tracker attached in today's agenda.

There were no further discussions or comments made by the Committee on this topic.

5.7 AAC Action Items

M. Baski, Project Manager, Agriculture & Environment, provided an update on the AAC Action Item Tracker.

There were no further discussions or comments made by the Committee on this topic.

6. ROUNDTABLE

The Committee participated in a roundtable discussion, there were no motions or recommendations put forward.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:01 PM

The next ***Agricultural Advisory Committee*** Meeting is scheduled for
June 27, 2024 at 10:00 AM.

Certified as correct:

Tatiana McCaw

Tatiana McCaw, Committee Clerk II