

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
(Committee of the Whole)

Thursday, November 24, 2016

PRESENT:	Chair	Mark Parker
	Directors	Eileen Benedict Shane Brien Mark Fisher John Illes Dwayne Lindstrom Rob MacDougall Bill Miller Jerry Petersen Darcy Repen Gerry Thiessen
	Directors Absent	Taylor Bachrach, Town of Smithers Tom Greenaway, Electoral Area "C" (Fort St. James Rural) Thomas Liversidge, Village of Granisle Rob Newell, Electoral Area "G" (Houston Rural)
	Alternate Directors	Bob Hughes, Electoral Area "C" (Fort St. James Rural) Linda McGuire, Village of Granisle Andrea Newell, Electoral Area "G" (Houston Rural)
	Staff	Melany de Weerd, Chief Administrative Officer Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services Roxanne Shepherd, Chief Financial Officer Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parker called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Miller
Seconded by Director Brien

AG.2016-9-1

"That the Agriculture Committee Meeting Agenda of November 24, 2016 be approved."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Agriculture Committee
Meeting Minutes
-September 22, 2016

Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director Brien

AG.2016-9-2

"That the minutes of the Agriculture Committee meeting of September 22, 2016 be received."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORRESPONDENCE

Brand Marketing & Management Inc. - Viability Initiative – Federally Inspected Best Packing Plant in BC

Moved by Director MacDougall
Seconded by Director Lindstrom

AG.2016-9-3

“That the Agriculture Committee receive the correspondence from Brand Marketing & Management Inc. regarding Viability Initiative – Federally Inspected Beef Packing Plant in BC.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion took place regarding the impact of the recent Presidential Election in the United States in regard to the correspondence titled “Viability Initiative - Federally Inspected Beef Packing Plant in BC.” The lack of local input in regard to the report was also discussed.

BC Farmland Lease Workbook -Assisting Landowners and Land Seekers in Preparing a Farm Land Lease Agreement

Moved by Director Repen
Seconded by Alternate Director McGuire

AG.2016-9-4

“That the Agriculture Committee receive the correspondence regarding the BC Farmland Lease Workbook – Assisting Landowners and Land Seekers in Preparing a Farm Land Lease Agreement.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Director Repen spoke of the need to inventory agricultural lands in the region to determine eligible lands for parcel sub-leases to allow for small scale farming at a more affordable price.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Chair Parker – RE: Agriculture Forum Update

Agriculture Forum

- Held November 9, 2016;
- Vineyard Church in Burns Lake;
- 44 people in attendance – well attended;
- Agriculture Land Commission:
 - o Due to travel issues were not able to attend in person;
 - o Attended via teleconference;
- Presenters:
 - o Megan D’arcy, FARM Director, BC Agriculture Council;
 - o Ministry of Agriculture;
 - o Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development and Christine Kinnie, Beyond the Market;
 - o Maria Sandberg, Planner and Jennifer McIntyre, Planner RDBN;

DISCUSSION ITEM (CONT'D)

- Very diverse cross section of attendees:
 - o David Connell, Associate Professor, Ecosystem Science and Management, University of Northern BC;
 - Discussed how to encourage young farmers into the Agriculture industry;
 - Mr. Connell e-mailed a study titled “Study on the Acquisition of Farmland in Canada and its Potential Impact on the Farming Sector” to Chair Parker and Director Fisher;
- Director Thiessen suggested that going forward at a future Agriculture Forum it would be beneficial to choose and address two major items;
- Director Brienen mentioned that the Agriculture Forum showcased a willingness to learn;
 - o Similar to Forestry there is a real need to have updated agriculture land inventory;
 - o Concern of individuals buying large tracts of agriculture lands for non-agriculture purposes;
- Director Benedict spoke to the need to follow up on the issues that were brought forward at the forum;
 - o Concerns and issues regarding noxious weeds;
 - o RDBN contributes to the Northwest Invasive Plant Council – need to have discussions with them or have them present to the Regional Board in 2017.

Chair Parker thanked Director Fisher and RDBN staff for their assistance in regard to the Agriculture Forum.

Receipt of Chairs Report

Moved by Director Miller
Seconded by Director MacDougall

AG.2016-9-5

“That the Chairs Report regarding the Agriculture Forum be received.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Genetically Modified Organisms

Director Fisher mentioned he is scheduling a meeting in regard to Genetically Modified Organisms. He noted that Nathan Cullen, MP Skeena Bulkley Valley has agreed to fund the facility and refreshments. The meeting topic for discussion will be in regard to best practices and coexistence in regard to the use of genetically modified organisms and non-genetically modified organisms in farming.

Small Scale Producers and BC Organics have indicated they want to develop a fact sheet in regard to best practices in regard to genetically modified organisms and risks in regard to certain practices. He also noted that the BC Agriculture Council is intending to launch a public trust campaign in the future.

NEW BUSINESS (CONT'D)

Statistics Canada

Director Fisher mentioned his frustration in regard to receiving a call from Statistics Canada regarding his farming practices. The questions did not apply to his operation and he was told to come up with answers. Chair Parker had a similar experience. He spoke to the need for research and information to be accurate in order for that information to be utilized and assist the agriculture community. Director Fisher and Chair Parker will contact Statistics Canada to follow up.

**SPECIAL IN-CAMERA
MEETING MOTION**

Moved by Director Miller
Seconded by Director Brien

AG.2016-9-6

"In accordance with Section 90 of the *Community Charter*, it is the opinion of the Board of Directors that matters pertaining to Section 90 (2)(b) – the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party (Cheslatta Carrier Nation Negotiations and Building Inspector Qualification Working Group) and Section 90 (1)(g) litigation or potential litigation (Home Occupation at 22361 Gala Bay Road) or information received relating to these matters must be closed to the public therefore exercise their option of excluding the public for this meeting."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Benedict
Seconded by Alternate Director Newell

2016-9-7

"That the meeting be adjourned at 2:22 p.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Parker, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant