

DISTRICT OF NORTH SAANICH

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Agricultural Advisory Commission**

December 4th, 2008 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Convener/Council Liaison	A. Scoones
Members	B. Brennan H. Crawford A. Finall B. Hughes R. Kline I. Mishchenko J. von Kaldenberg
Alternate Council Liaison	P. Chandler
Staff Liaison	C. Kingsley
Recording Secretary	L. Coburn

ABSENT:

	B. Dunic N. Schafer
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The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. Councillor Peter Chandler, the newly appointed Alternate Council Liaison, introduced himself.

RESIGNATION OF CHAIR

A. Finall resigned as Chair of the Commission following her inauguration as Mayor and left the meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Councillor Scoones called for nominations for the position of Chair.

MOVED BY: H. Crawford
SECONDED: I. Mishchenko

9-AAC THAT B. Brennan be nominated Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Commission.

CARRIED

SUBJECT TO ADOPTION

Councillor Scoones called three times for any further nominations for Chair. As there were none, B. Brennan was declared Chair.

Councillor Scoones then called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

MOVED BY: B. Brennan
SECONDED: H. Crawford

10-AAC **THAT I. Mishchenko be nominated Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Commission.**

CARRIED

Councillor Scoones called three times for any further nominations for Vice-Chair. As there were none, I. Mishchenko was declared Vice Chair.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

B. Brennan added as item C. under **New Business**: Egg Grading Issue.

MOVED BY: J. von Kaldenberg
SECONDED: B. Hughes

11-AAC **THAT the agenda be approved as amended.**

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY: H. Crawford
SECONDED: J. von Kaldenberg

12-AAC **THAT the minutes of the October 2nd, 2008 Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting be approved as circulated.**

CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

A. Report from Council Liaison on council discussions relevant to the Agricultural Advisory Commission and votes on recommendations to Council from the Commission:

a) McTavish School Site Disposal

A Scoones reported that Council received the recommendation from the Agricultural Advisory Commission that the land comprising the McTavish School site remain in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

B. Comments from Liaison and AAC members regarding:

Juan De Fuca Farm Forum, October 2008

A. Scoones discussed the conference she and B. Brennan attended. She explained that the proceedings were in two parts: displays and a workshop to brainstorm ideas with regard to farming and farmland in the area. She and B. Brennan displayed the written material they had picked up should others were interested in reviewing it. There were pamphlets and handouts regarding farm plans, food charters, school gardens, buffers, etc.

CRD Farmland, Foodlands, Our Future, November 2008

Members discussed this one day conference many of them attended. Many different jurisdictions were represented. I. Mishchenko noted that all the presentations were to be posted on the conference website. Members discussed leasing land for farms, local government issues and other issues raised during the conference. Mention was made of the excellent closing speech by Nelson – Creston MLA Corky Evans.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Results of I. Mishchenko's Freedom of Information request regarding 9645 West Saanich Road.

I. Mishchenko gave a brief summary of the issues concerning the property at 9645 West Saanich Road. He stated that he pressed staff for more information about the property and subsequently made a FOI (freedom of information) request. He felt the material he received pursuant to the FOI request was incomplete; that several emails were missing and one document was withheld. He took issue with having to make an FOI request at all. C. Kingsley explained the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) and the restrictions it places on the release of information affecting the privacy rights of others. B. Hughes asked who releases the information and was informed by C. Kingsley that it is the decision of the Chief Administrative Officer, governed by FOIPPA and advice received from the District's legal adviser. C. Kingsley explained the Act attempted to balance the right to information with the right to privacy.

B. Brennan expressed concern that the Agricultural Land Commission had not received the comments of the Agricultural Advisory Commission.

C. Kingsley advised that the ALC had advised that it had made its decision with regard to the property and the District would be in receipt of that decision shortly.

MOVED: I. Mishchenko
SECONDED: H. Crawford

13-AAC THAT staff prepares a complete and accurate report of all compliance issues for the property at 9645 West Saanich Road for release to the Agricultural Advisory Commission, Council and the Agricultural Land Commission

CARRIED

B. AAC Provincial Workshop, February 2009, Nanaimo

R. Kline advised the Commission that this would be one of three regional workshops, rather than a province wide workshop as previously planned. He stated that organizers were interested in receiving from participants a list of topics they wanted on the agenda. B. Brennan noted that while it is useful to focus on Island issues, not being able to meet with colleagues from outside the area was a disappointment.

C. Flavour Trail

The Commission agreed to host the Flavour Trail again in 2009. R. Kline asked if Investment Agriculture or Island Agriculture was being approached for funding and noted that funding deadlines must be kept in mind. He suggested that N. Schafer contact him to look into funding sources.

MOVED: B. Brennan
SECONDED: H. Crawford

14-AAC THAT N. Schafer be named chair of the Flavour Trail subcommittee of the Agricultural Advisory Commission.

CARRIED

D. Agricultural Area Plan

R. Kline reported that he had been in contact with Investment Agriculture and that they have expectations that certain milestones would be met before any further funds were distributed. He was assured the funds are being held for the District. He suggested that the District determine its timeframe for moving the plan forward through to December 2009. He suggested that in January 2009 the Commission pull together the focus of the project, decide what the goal/objective is, what staffing will be required and prepare a request for proposals. R. Kline stated that he could assist the AAC steering committee or designate and would provide AAC members with copies of RFPs from other jurisdictions. I. Mishchenko suggested constructing an RFP could delay progress and suggested that the boilerplate language could be taken from other District RFPs. He suggested that staff prepare a rough draft of an RFP and bring it to the Commission in January. B. Brennan requested that members bring to next month's meeting the name of any consultant they think might be suitable to assist with the development of the agricultural plan.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Draft Tree Protection Bylaw

A. Scoones explained to the Commission that the draft bylaw was developed because of concern over tree cutting practices in the District. The bylaw is currently being reviewed by the District's lawyers. The discussion moved to the draft hedgerow policy. B. Hughes

SUBJECT TO ADOPTION

asked for a copy as he is strongly in favour of protecting hedgerows. A. Scoones noted that while Council supports hedgerows, nothing can be done to protect hedgerows on private property. She noted that some farmers dislike hedgerows as they encourage the presence of birds which then eat their crops.

H. Crawford stated that a complete review of all the District's agricultural bylaws needed to be done as most were not compliant with the Agricultural Land Commission rules. He wondered what the timeframe was for this. He suggested that a sub-committee be established to review those bylaws. I. Mishchenko and J. von Kaldenberg agreed to participate in the subcommittee.

B. Food Charter

Members discussed the draft Food Charter. There was some concern expressed about the lack of any mention of water in the Charter. I. Mishchenko noted that North Saanich has a policy statement in the Official Community Plan that requires North Saanich to maintain affordable water.

B. Hughes felt there is a need for mandatory cooking classes in high schools. A. Scoones suggested that might be a suitable resolution to take to the next annual conference of the Union of B.C. Municipalities.

The Commission agreed to add "local" to the first bullet on the draft Food Charter. To the eighth bullet the members added after the word "purchasing":

"...growing, and preparation of secure food..."

MOVED: H. Crawford

SECONDED: B. Hughes

15-AAC THAT the Agricultural Advisory Commission recommends to Council that it adopt the document as amended attached as Appendix A as the North Saanich Food Charter.

CARRIED

C. Egg Grading Issue

B. Hughes told the Commission that he had heard a report that either the Canadian Food Inspection Agency or the health department had visited restaurants and threatened them with closure if they were found to be serving free range eggs that had not been through a grading station. Mention was made of the lack of grading and slaughter facilities on the lower Island. He was asked by the members to look into this and bring his report to the next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

January 8th, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: B. Hughes
SECONDED: H. Crawford

16-AAC THAT the meeting be adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

CARRIED

Chair

APPENDIX A

The District of North Saanich supports Canada's national commitment to food security. As part of the Capital Regional District we support the following elements as a basis for a

NORTH SAANICH FOOD CHARTER

- ◆ The right of all residents to
 - ◆adequate amounts of local safe nutritious food
 - ◆quality and supply of water for home and agricultural use
- ◆ The protection of our local agricultural land base
- ◆ Support local farmers by encouraging residents to purchase seasonal products and other farm foods
- ◆ Promote health strategies which increase the good health of all members of the municipality
- ◆ Promote food safety programs and services
- ◆ Work with the local School Board to encourage the Healthy Snack program in local schools
- ◆ Partner with community, cooperative, business and government organizations to increase the availability of healthy foods
- ◆ Encourage the recycling of organic materials which nurture soil fertility
- ◆ Promote education programs in all our schools to educate our children in healthy food choices, purchasing, growing and preparation of secure food and what healthy fresh products are available in the District of North Saanich
- ◆ Promote and encourage farmers' markets on the Saanich Peninsula
- ◆ Collaborate with other municipalities in the Capital Regional District to promote health food-purchasing practices which support locally-grown food and food businesses

These objectives will be achieved by working in partnership with community-based organizations, associations, aboriginal peoples, resident groups, business organizations, trade unions, education and health institutions and other levels of government