

*SUBJECT TO ADOPTION*  
**Minutes of the meeting of  
DISTRICT OF NORTH SAANICH  
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**Held Thursday, April 03, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:**

Chair	A. Finall
Members	B. Brennan
	H. Crawford
	R. Kline
	I. Mishchenko
	N. Schafer
	B. Hughes
Co-Council Liaison	S. Fea
Co-Council Liaison	A. Scoones
Staff Liaison	S. Bowden
Recording Secretary	V. Stefani

**REGRETS:**

B. Dunic

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**INTRODUCTIONS AND CALL TO ORDER**

A. Finall called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

MOVED BY: H. Crawford  
SECONDED:I. Mishchenko

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting held March 06, 2008 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

MOVED BY: H. Crawford  
SECONDED:I. Mishchenko

THAT the agenda for the April 03, 2008 meeting be approved with the addition of "Public Statements by Commission Members" under informational items.

CARRIED

## **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF MARCH 6, 2008**

### Cage Free Eggs

A. Scoones will bring this item forward to Council at their next meeting, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

## **REFERRALS**

### North Saanich Flavour Trail

Commission members discussed organizing the event and funding needs for 2008. As the event takes place in August, time is a consideration. Funding may be available from the provincial government. Lynn Fanelli, a member of the Community Spirit Committee organized the first event which took place last year. Peter Van Dongen of Courtenay may be familiar with grant requirements.

MOVED BY: N. Schafer  
SECONDED: H. Crawford

THAT the Agricultural Advisory Commission apply for grant funding to assist with the 2008 North Saanich Flavour Trail.

CARRIED

H. Crawford agreed to contact Peter Van Dongen for details on grant requirements. S. Bowden agreed to contact Lynn Fanelli and if an application for funding is appropriate, begin the application process and circulate the information to members. R. Kline agreed to provide assistance as some applications do not succeed.

Members discussed whether to include other municipalities in the 2008 Flavour Trail. As there were a number of issues raised, it was decided to advise the District of Central Saanich of the date with an invitation to participate if interested.

### North Saanich Agricultural Area Plan

Commission members considered whether to involve a consultant in the work of creating an agricultural area plan.

R. Kline, Agrologist for the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands provided an overview of the process recently followed by Salt Spring Island. He advised that the Investment Agriculture Foundation provides funding for communities and that Salt Spring Island obtained \$30,000 to assist with the development of their farm area plan. The grant application was jointly prepared by two farming groups and Islands Trust committed one of their trustees to the steering group. The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands committed \$5,000 and R. Kline's time to prepare an agricultural land use inventory. The steering group identified the process which included public consultation meetings and a consultant to oversee and produce a plan. The process concluded at the end of 2007 with a presentation of the farm area plan to the public at a dinner featuring local produce. 80-120 people attended each of the 4 public sessions. The plan detailed

approximately 26 recommendations and the 3 highest priority items have been selected for action. R. Kline agreed to forward information on the different categories of communities.

B. Hughes joined the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

R. Kline noted that the Investment Agriculture Foundation only funds 3 plans a year and noted that so far 2 are expected for 2008. The AAC should apply as soon as possible. R. Kline will provide dates the Foundation meets and examples of applications, and will liaise with District staff regarding the application process. He advised considerable work is involved in an application and it is normally prepared by a consultant; however the North Saanich plan could be less involved than the Salt Spring Island plan. He recommended that North Saanich apply on its own rather than in coordination with the District of Central Saanich as they are still working on their OCP. He also recommended that a project management process be employed to move the plan forward.

B. Hughes offered to invite Ann Macey, who was a key participant in the Salt Spring plan process, to speak at the next meeting. If she is not available, H. Crawford agreed to organize someone from another community.

S. Bowden will conduct preliminary work in coordination with R. Kline, and will also obtain sample RFP's. If required, the Commission will call an extra meeting to address this matter.

### Land Assessment Refinements

On an inquiry from A. Finall as to the possibility of obtaining more information on this topic, S. Bowden agreed to look into meeting times and advise members. R. Kline advised that F. Leonard is making a presentation to the PAC at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the Saanich Municipal Hall.

I. Mishchenko reported that where farm assessments have been challenged, most appeals have been unsuccessful. Commission members expressed concern and discussed some individual cases and noted that many small scale farmers are being affected. I. Mishchenko felt that farmers need to be better prepared and noted the possibility of a class action suit.

R. Kline advised that Lorraine Gilbert of the B.C. Assessment Authority may be contacted for information on the assessment procedure and the upcoming work schedule.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### Farm Status Assessments

A list of North Saanich properties assessed and taxed as farms was previously circulated to members. N. Schafer suggested creating a publication or directory with information about what types of farming go on in North Saanich.

R. Kline advised that an updated land use inventory will be published in mid summer in the form of a report.

Members discussed farm statistics, land use and the economy of agriculture. I. Mishchenko suggested that this Commission and Council listen to Regional Agrologist Mark Robbins' presentation on the contribution of farming to the community tax base.

MOVED BY: I. Mishchenko  
SECONDED:H. Crawford

THAT Mark Robbins, Agrologist, be invited to a future Committee of the Whole meeting to make a presentation with respect to the business of farming and how agricultural activities benefit the community and that Agricultural Advisory Commission members be encouraged to attend the meeting.

CARRIED

Council authorization to AAC to invite representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture to a future AAC meeting to provide information on agricultural area planning

R. Kline will invite Jim LeMaistre to the next meeting to speak on Agricultural Area Plans and Edge Planning.

#### Public Statements by Commission Members

S. Fea advised that when speaking in public, Commission members should state whether they are speaking on behalf of an organization or as a member of the public.

With regard to Cage Free Eggs, B. Hughes mentioned that he has a contact in England and has found a website. He will research this matter more thoroughly and bring the information forward at the next meeting. R. Kline noted that any policy should take into account provincial regulations.

R. Kline distributed copies of "Growing a Healthy Future for BC Families".

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Agricultural Advisory Commission meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on May 1, 2008.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.