

District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Agricultural Advisory Select Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

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**Present:** Robin Tunnicliffe (Chair), Councillor Donaldson, John Buchanan, Brent Donaldson, Andrew Penn, Peter Chettleburgh, Alex Fletcher (recorder)

**Regrets:** Karen Hoffman

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**1. Agenda, Additions and Approval.** Addition of Land Use Bylaw Recommendations, item 6.e)

**Moved and Seconded** by John and Andrew that the Committee approve the agenda as presented.

**Carried**

**2. Presentations**

Stephanie Dunlop presented about the new FireSmart for Agriculture program funding opportunity. The intake period is short so any farms considering applying for this intake period would have to move quickly. Need to have a Critical Infrastructure Assessment completed, contact Metchosin Fire Dept to arrange. Discussion about including Emergency planning for farms in Ag Plan. Fire Dept wants to integrate FireSmart into municipal planning. They have received a grant to complete an Extreme Heat Assessment and Plan by Dec 31. Stephanie told the committee about a successful emergency response system being used in other farming communities, Farms install a sealable tube at the entrance to their farm with map and directions for first responders in case of emergency.

**3. Public Participation.** Ellen Frisch contributed information to discussions about land use bylaws 6.e) and rezoning application 7.a). They have experience working with ALR applications and municipal zoning.

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

**Moved and Seconded** by Brent and Peter that the Committee approve the minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Select Committee meeting held on May 10, 2023.

**Carried**

**4. Receipt of Minutes - Received**

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

- a) Metchosin Ag Plan. Alex reported that Robin, Shelly and Alex met with Sue-Lin (CAO) to discuss the Ag Plan process and getting started. The Subcommittee is working on a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) and is looking at Ag Plan RFPs from other communities as examples. Has received input from the Ministry of Ag but the RFP examples received from Ministry are from Regional districts with wider scope than what we are looking for. A lot of the RFP is conditions and contractual language that doesn't need to be re-written. Shelly has sent a request to Tina and Sue-Lin

for examples of other RFPs from Metchosin. Andrew used Chat GP to generate an Agricultural plan summary and read the results.

- b) Metchosin Grown Map and Tour. Andrew presented a list of local media outlets that could be used for promoting the Metchosin Grown Map. Suggestion that farms on the map update their Google business info with hours of operation. The committee would like to print and distribute the map but has used up the annual budget and doesn't have a bank account or ability to collect funds. Can't apply for a grant because we aren't a legal entity to receive funds. Maybe it is possible to find another organization to receive funds on our behalf.

**Action Items:**

- a. **Robin will send the pdf of the map to committee members.**
  - b. **Robin will inquire with APRM if they can accept funds for Metchosin Grown promotional activities**
  - c. **Andrew will send the map to media outlets.**
  - d. **Alex will inquire with Westside Instaprint about options/costs to print the map.**
  - e. **Shelly will look into getting the map up on the Metchosin website.**
- c) Metchosin Farm Forum 2023. Tentative plan is for a Saturday in October at Bilston Creek Farm, sometime between Metchosin Day and Thanksgiving. Interest in having an educational event with time for socializing. Possibility to organize it through Young Agrarians as a "mixer" with a potluck.

**Action Item: Andrew will look into options for dates at Bilston.**

- d) Promoting Farming. Robin reported that her letter to the editor for the Muse was accidentally not submitted on time for publication. Metchosin Day is planned for Sept 10. Discussed the idea of a display table at Metchosin day. Robin looked into printing more "Metchosin Grown" stickers, but the cost has gone up since last printing. Suggestion to use something called a "cricut" sticker maker.

**Action Item: Robin will inquire on the Metchosin FB page if there is someone locally with a "cricut" sticker thing willing to print.**

- e) Agricultural Land Use Bylaw recommendations. Alex sent a second version of the draft bylaw recommendations to committee members before the meeting (provided separately). Discussion about unintended consequences of the agricultural land use bylaw, particularly around setbacks and home plates. Suggestion to develop educational material for farmland owners to provide advice about how to protect farmland through setbacks, home plate and residential size. The committee agreed to add some language to the recommendations making it clear that the committee's intentions are to protect farmland without creating excessive restrictions and that in some cases it may be preferable to build a house further from the road in order to protect viable farmland. The committee also agreed to include a recommendation to develop educational material for farmland owners to help understand agricultural considerations and minimize negative impacts of land use on farmland.

**Action Item: Alex will incorporate the additions into a version 3 draft and circulate**

**7. New Business**

- a) **Proposed Rezoning Application Referral, 4409 William Head Rd.** The committee discussed the rezoning application and the permitted uses of a commercial 2 (C2) zone (ALR). The committee believes that the application lacks vision. Specifically, there are not sufficient measures to a) protect farmland b) support farming and c) provide agricultural benefit from the commercial zoning. The committee does not

support the application but sees potential and is willing to provide input and work with the applicant, to develop a plan that would make a significant contribution to the community and to supporting agriculture. The committee would welcome the opportunity to visit the site to gain a better understanding of the agricultural and commercial potential. The committee recommends that this application should only be approved if specific conditions are prescribed including allowable commercial uses that are conducive to agriculture and protections of what would be the remaining agricultural land.

b) **District of Metchosin Respectful Workplace Policy.** Committee members signed the policy.

## 8. Correspondence

a) Robin reported that there is a Peninsula Agricultural Commission tour of farms in Metchosin planned for June 10. The tour includes Bilston Creek Farm, Sea Bluff Farm and Stillmeadow Farm. Ag Committee members are welcome to attend.

## 9. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

**Moved and Seconded** by Brent and Alex that the Committee adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

**Carried**

The next meeting will be held tentatively in July.