



Agriculture Advisory Committee (AAC) Meeting

Haldimand County Administration Building/ Virtual Conference
March 17th, 2021

Present: Councillor Metcalfe, Henk Lise (Chair), Stuart Heeg (Vice-Chair), Bruce Armstrong, Ron Young, Richard Blyleven, Nick Kinkel (OMAFRA), Stephanie Campbell-Heron, Jordan Fowler, Rick Armstrong, Louise Heyming (GRCA), Sue Brocklebank (GRCA)

Staff: Lidy Romanuk, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, Alison Earls Senior Economic Development Officer, and Breanna Beauchamp, Division Support.

Regrets: Richard Blyleven

1. Welcome and Introduction

Meeting called to order by Chair Henk Lise at 6:05 p.m. Members and guests introduced themselves.

2. Council Update

Councillor Metcalfe provided an update on Council activities including the upcoming operating budget, rural broadband project, and an update on COVID-19 vaccinations.

A discussion then ensued.

3. Rural Water Quality Projects

L. Heyming presented three Rural Water Quality Project for the committee's approval.

File # 109- Cover Crop Project was presented. 170 acres, 75 acre max; \$20/acre

Moved By R. Armstrong, and seconded by S. Heeg that the project be approved totaling \$1,500 at 6:11 pm.

APPROVED

File #110 Cover Crop project was presented. 100 acres, 75 acre max; \$20/acre

Moved by S. Heeg and seconded by D. Armstrong that the project be approved totaling \$1500.00 at 6:13 pm

APPROVED

File #103 Cover Crop project was presented. 106 acres, 75 acre max; \$20/acre

Moved by B. Armstrong and seconded by S. Heeg that the project be approved totaling \$1500.00 at 6:16 pm

APPROVED

4. 2021 Work Plan Priorities

A. Earls provided the committee with the results from the online poll that was distributed to members prior to the meeting, the top three priorities identified for the 2021 Work Plan were to increase processing opportunities (large scale/ethanol), focus on attracting youth to the agriculture sector and development of a strategic plan for the agriculture sector.

A roundtable discussion took place focusing on the top priorities identified, and the committee's focus, key highlights included:

- H. Lise suggested the committee focus a future meeting on a SWOT analysis, and make a plan for best practices for the agricultural strategy;
- S. Heeg provided feedback that we need to pivot these priorities given the current landscape, focus on small scale meat processors instead of large scale processing facilities;
- R. Young provided feedback that the land being developed is largely residential and that will make an impact on the agricultural sector and expansion in the future;
- J. Fowler inquired about the possibility of working with the school board to provide co-op positions, this may also be a great opportunity to address workforce issues for local trades/ agriculture;.
- R. Armstrong provided that social media could be used to attract youth to agriculture, or at least distribute information to a younger demographic more effectively
- B. Armstrong questioned if there is an issue with attracting youth in agriculture, would be beneficial to access some local statistics if available to see if this is still a pertinent issue; and
- J. Metcalfe provided that the price of land has increased substantially, which makes it difficult for youth to purchase farms and pursue a career in agriculture. He also added that local restaurants proudly support small scale meat processors, and supporting these processors should be a focus moving forward.

A discussion then ensued.

5. Fed Dev Ontario Tourism Marketing Grant

L. Romanuk delivered a presentation on the FedDev Ontario Tourism Marketing Grant. In 2020, Haldimand Economic Development & Tourism received a grant totaling \$166, 952 to promote tourism and support the tourism sector locally. Key highlights included:

- New Tourism website with guided experiences, blogs, and addition of the 'Real Local' online Marketplace.
- New Tourism Haldimand Instagram account was created to promote the Haldimand County Tourism Brand and build a following on Instagram.
- Virtual Videography Workshop hosted by award-winning filmmaker Graeme Bachi from Windecker Road Films to lead this 3 part webinar series, plus one-on-one personal coaching to help local business owners develop filmmaking and storytelling skills. This course was offered at no cost to the business owners, and was valued at over \$1,500.
- Tourism Gift Cards were purchased at 31 local tourism focused businesses that responded to the open call for future contesting, spending \$200.00 at each businesses that registered.
- Acquisition of 73 photography assets that were purchased from 6 local photographers to utilize on the new tourism website, and seasonal and social media campaigns.
- Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporations Conference Registrations were purchased to cover the full conference fees for registered business owners in the tourism industry, 19 businesses attended the two day conference.
- Real Taste of Haldimand Guide was created to highlight local restaurants offering takeout and curbside options, with 40 restaurants participating. This was delivered to every household in Haldimand County
- Real Local Marketing Kit was created which includes consistent branding for local businesses at no cost to them including social media templates, window decals, stickers and signage.
- Window Decals were installed throughout the downtowns of Haldimand County, staff worked with owners to beautify the front windows with large decals, promoting the County and it's tourism assets, and to encourage traffic to the new tourism website
- Geocaching Experience is currently in development with 20 geocache containers to be installed (when weather permits) throughout Haldimand County to encourage visitors to explore natural areas.
- Art Installation and Tour is currently in development, with installation of public art celebrating the significance of Grand Erie & Lake Erie to Haldimand County. Local artists are designing 25 wooden paddles which will be installed throughout the County.

A discussion then ensued.

6. Approval of Minutes and Business Arising

Moved by. R. Armstrong and seconded by B. Armstrong that minutes of Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting dated January 20th, 2021 be approved as presented at 7:40 pm.

APPROVED

7. On Farm Diversified Uses

A. Earls delivered a short presentation on-farm diversified uses, and showed the committee various examples of what is happening in Haldimand County, and other local communities, key highlights included:

Richardson's Farm and Market's Maple Experience ,Thrive Norfolk's Farm to Table Dining, Snyder Family Farm's Make Your Own Campfire, and Burning Kiln's Harvest Hike.

A discussion then ensued.

8. EDT Update

A. Earls provided an EDT Update, key highlights included:

- RWQP Council Update
- County of Brant Agricultural Virtual Workshops
- 2021 Gypsy Moth Aerial Spray Program for the Niagara Peninsula

A discussion then ensued.

9. Adjourned at 7:58 pm

10. Next Meeting

April 21, 2021 from 6pm to 8pm
Virtual Conference.