



## **Agriculture Advisory Committee (AAC) Meeting**

Haldimand County Administration Building  
Wednesday, May 17, 2023 6:00 pm

**Present:** Councillor Metcalfe, Chair Neil Hedley, Vice Chair Christine Wilkinson, Dan Court, Stuart Heeg, Henk Lise, and Cody Snyder

**Staff:** Lidy Romanuk, Manager of Economic Development and Tourism, Alison Earls, Senior Economic Development Officer, Jessica Easson, Research and Marketing Technician, Jaymie Nelson, Project Manager, Business Retention and Expansion, Richard Geerdink, Coordinator, Fire Safety & Training and Al Gee Fire, Prevention Officer.

**Regrets:** Richard Blyleven, and Kevin VanderSpek.

### **1. Welcome and Introduction**

Meeting called to order by Chair Hedley at 6:04 p.m.

### **2. Approval of the Minutes**

Moved by H. Lise and seconded by Vice Chair Wilkinson that minutes of Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting dated March 15<sup>th</sup>, be approved as presented at 6:04 pm.

**APPROVED**

### **3. Council Update**

Councillor Metcalfe share an update from Council including the road work underway, water main replacement in Caledonia and the Ward 4 by-election on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **4. Burn permits**

R. Geerdink and A. Gee from Haldimand County's emergency services shared a presentation on burn permits. The presentation highlighted the dangers of open air burning and challenges when burn permits are not obtained. By consulting with the fire department and obtaining a burn permit fire prevention officers can provide guidance to operate as cleanly and safely as possible. Burn permits may also mitigate responses to complaints i.e. if a complaint is made for a property without a burn permit, the fire department is required to suppress the fire and the property owner is responsible for the costs. The Fire Department's goal is to work with land owners and prevent the need to call out fire crews. A discussion ensued, emergency services recommended calling in dangerous fires that release toxins and encouraged the proper disposal of plastics.

### **5. BR+E Presentation**

J. Nelson shared a presentation about the Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program in Haldimand County (an analysis of the current business climate based on standardized interviews with businesses) and encouraged the committee to share the information with their networks. Conversation clarified that businesses do not need to prepare for the interview, questions seek to understand the current needs of businesses. The results of the survey will help inform future activities, potential support

offerings and/or programs (i.e. possible agriculture strategy). A discussion ensued about representing different business types within sectors.

## **6. AgScape**

J. Easson shared that staff were invited to the AgScape Careers Competition in Norfolk County and preliminary discussions with the GEDSB indicated an interest to bring the event to Haldimand. The event brought together several grade 7 and 8 classes from many different schools to learn about different possible careers in Agriculture.

A discussion ensued about programing for alternative age groups to increase awareness such as highschool events, breakfast on the farm, local advocates and attending community events.

Vice-Chair Wilkinson made a motion to support staff moving forward with the AgScape Careers Competition Event, seconded by H. Lise.

**APPROVED**

## **7. Upcoming agenda and workshop discussion**

The committee discussed ways to move forward past objectives (attracting youth to agriculture and increasing processing opportunities). Highlights included events like AgScape and breakfast on the farm along with partnerships to connect with end users i.e. inputs to products. To promote processing the committee disused exploring mobile processing, agri-business attraction, and marketing activities.

## **8. EDT Update**

L. Romanuk then shared EDT updates, key highlights included:

- A reminder to complete AODA training
- The keynote presentation from the Business Excellence breakfast will be posted on the website until June 23, 2023
- EDT is partnering with the Brantford Brant Business Resource Centre to offer a Business Basics workshop on Monday, May 29, 2023
- There will be an upcoming tourism experience development training in Jarvis on Thursday, June 1, 2023.
- Alison Earls will be moving on from Haldimand County, having accepted a new role with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

## **9. New Business**

Councillor Metcalfe raised a question regarding the Grand River Antique Show. L. Romanuk shared the planning division's concerns and advised staff are working with the property owners. A discussion ensued.

H. Lise raised concerns regarding avian flu outbreaks and establishing procedures moving froward. A discussion ensued.

C. Snyder shared a question regarding EV infrastructure. L. Romanuk share EDT is unaware of any projects at the current time. A discussion ensued.

The Committee shared that Dave Murray is working to host the International Plow Match in 2025 in partnership at the West Niagara Fairgrounds and the HFA is having a BBQ at the Fisherville Lions Hall on August 17, 2023.

**10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm, moved by H. Lise seconded by C. Snyder.

**11. Next Meeting**

Wednesday, September 20, 2023 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm  
Haldimand County Administrative Building