



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

Haldimand County Administration Building  
Wednesday, September 20, 2023 6:00 pm

**Present:** Councillor Trainer, Richard Blyleven, Dan Court, Neil Hedley, Stuart Heeg, Henk Lise, Cody Snyder, Kevin VanderSpek, Christine Wilkinson.

**Guests:** Louise Heyming (Grand River Conservation Authority), Kim Drew (Purple Haven), Gary Nelson (Scotiabank) and Gregory Kippers (Scotia Wealth Management)

**Staff:** Lidy Romanuk, Manager of Economic Development and Tourism, Jessica Easson, Senior Economic Development Officer and Hannah Brown, Research and Marketing Technician.

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

Meeting called to order by Chair, N. Hedley at 6:02 p.m.

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

Moved by R. Blyleven and seconded by H. Lise that minutes of Agriculture Advisory Committee Meeting dated May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, be approved as presented at 6:03 p.m.

**APPROVED**

### **3. Scotiabank Succession Planning Presentation**

G. Kippers and G. Nelson shared a presentation on succession planning.

Highlights included:

- Transitioning the family farm
- Access to Lifetime Capital Gains Exemption
- Family Transitioning
- The Family Factor, determining the right option for your family

N. Hedley welcomed Councillor Trainer. Roundtable introductions then ensued.

### **4. RWQP Proposals**

L. Heyming from the Grand River Conservation Authority presented an introduction on the Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP). The RWQP offers financial and technical assistance to farmers to implement best practices to benefit water quality. This program operates with an annual budget of \$25,000 from Haldimand County and has been in place since 2012. L. Heyming discussed past projects and provided an overview of the funding opportunities in Haldimand through the RWQP, including: Livestock Fencing,

Erosion Control Structures, Sediment Basins/Wetland Creation, Tree Planting/Natural Area Restoration, Wellhead Abandonment, Cover Crops, Crop Nutrient plans/Soil testing, Living Snow Fence and Innovative Projects.

L. Heyming then presented two Rural Water Quality Projects for the committee's approval.

File # Haldimand 125 – Well Decommissioning  
Proposal to decommission a 20' deep, 36" diameter bored well. Located in the middle of the driveway, poor water quality.

Moved by K. VanderSpek, and seconded by R. Blyleven that the project be approved totaling \$1,000 at 6:36 pm. Carried.

**APPROVED**

File # Haldimand 126 – Well Decommissioning  
54 year old drilled well, 64' deep and 6" diameter. Casing deteriorated and was pulling in sediment. Not in use since 2013.

Moved by D. Court and seconded by C. Wilkinson that the project be approved totaling \$1,000 at 6:37 pm. Carried.

**APPROVED**

## **5. Agri-tourism**

K. Drew, owner of Purple Haven Lavender Farm, shared a presentation on Agri-tourism.

Highlights included:

- Business background and overview
  - Gift shop
  - Activities for customers – yoga in the field, nature walks, lilac tours, and pick your own wild flowers
- Product expansion
  - Expanded their business beyond lavender to offer a wide variety of products
- Creating an experience through Agri-tourism
  - Large market for Agri-tourism even through Covid – people wanted the experience
  - Customers worldwide come to visit and experience the farm

K. Drew acknowledged EDT staff for their assistance in starting her business.

## **6. Term Workplan and Future Agenda Items**

Workplans were distributed and L. Romanuk explained the workplan items.

Section one of the workplan (attracting youth in the agricultural sector) was discussed. Ag scape event will take place in November 2024, and will aim to increase the

awareness of career options to young children. Discussion then ensued regarding involving more youth in agriculture.

L. Romanuk commented on teachers' ability to promote and encourage agricultural learning, suggesting they have local farmers and volunteers visit class rooms.

K. VanderSpek suggested partnering with existing organizations such as Grain Farmers of Ontario and Agscape. L. Romanuk asked how the County can assist to make these connections. K. VanderSpek recommended reaching out to school boards.

Grand Erie jobs was mentioned and committees desire to gain more insight on this,

The letter to the Mayor from the honourable Lisa Thompson regarding the Increasing Deadstock Capacity Initiative was then discussed. It was mentioned that there is a need to contact businesses to ensure their awareness of the funding. EDT has included this information in the weekly e-news blast.

## **7. Council Update**

Councillor Trainer provided a council update.

## **8. EDT Updates**

L. Romanuk then delivered an EDT update, key highlights included:

- The North Caledonia Employment Lands Feasibility and Servicing Study project phase 1 was presented in Haldimand County Council on Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>. The next step in the project is phase 2, the financial analysis and business plan.
- The Business Retention and Expansion project is ongoing, interviews underway continuing to reach out to additional businesses and looking for a number of specific farm related businesses.
- Small Business Week Breakfast takes place on October 19<sup>th</sup> at Selkirk Community Centre
- Emily Project update
- AODA Training Reminder

## **9. New Business**

D. Court then initiated a discussion regarding narrow road concerns and improving road safety. A discussion then ensued.

L. Romanuk suggested inviting a Roads Operations and Engineering staff to attend the next meeting to address committee concerns.

H. Lise started a discussion regarding weeds on development lands. Discussion then ensued regarding the current by-laws in effect and need to further enforce those by-laws.

## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12, moved by R. Blyleven seconded by C. Snyder.

#### **11. Next Meeting and Action Items**

Wednesday, November 15 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm  
Haldimand County Administrative Building

Action Items:

1. Share information on Grand Erie Jobs
2. Send AODA link to members who have not completed training
3. Roads and Engineering staff member join next meeting