

**SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

July 28, 2020

MINUTES FROM THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM MEETING DUE TO COVID-19 RESTRICTION

PRESENT:	Members	Raquel Kolof Barbara Seed David Morgan Erin Dutton Gerald Rainville
ALSO PRESENT:	Electoral Area F Director	Mark Hiltz (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Electoral Area E Director	Donna McMahon (Non-Voting Board Liaison)
	Planner 1/Senior Planner	Julie Clark
	Recording Secretary	Genevieve Dixon
	Public	0
REGRETS		Paul Nash (Chair) Gretchen Bozak
ABSENT		Faye Kiewitz Jon Bell

CALL TO ORDER 3:36 p.m.

David Morgan assumed the role of Chair for the meeting.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as follows:

MINUTES

Recommendation No. 1 *AAC Meeting Minutes of February 25 & June 23, 2020*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that the meeting minutes of February 25 & June 23, 2020 be received and adopted as presented.

REPORTS

Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast

Key points of discussion (committee's ideas and questions):

- A key priority is to improve food resilience on the Coast.
- In 2011 there was noted 89 active farms, annual income of approx. \$40,000.

- The Coast could still be under 100 farms.
- Food hub would be a great use.
- Farmers need financial help and water infrastructure.
- How many farms have farm status: divide the funds between each farm?.
- Proposal to be submitted with parameters from each farm with farm status as to how the funds would be used.
- Farms working towards farm status could apply for a business plan to provide farm operation status.
- Farmers have food and land to leverage.
- Water infrastructure, wells, dug out ponds, low flow irrigation and poly tunnels for all season growing.
- Expand capacity for year round production and market, such as learning and equipment for winter crops
- Could these dollars fund a project that is missing from the AG Plan?
- Labour is an issue. WOOFers could be looked at for farm help, requires housing grants and housing on ALR land.
- Consider how these funds could create a legacy project and leveraging food short gages for the future.
- A lot of water waste in Sechelt. Could help utilize Sechelt's waste.
- Co-ops, sharing of equipment.
- Funds should not favour only one geographical location
- Storage water tanks for farms to share who are on low lands for summer consumption.
- Woofers is an existing program.
- \$83,500 AG fund can help with amount of food grown on the Sunshine Coast.
- Fund Agriculture Consultants to bring write grant applications and bring more funds for Agriculture to the Coast, such as in Comox Valley Regional District (contractors hired by CVRD).
- Can the money be given to a farm with farm status, as they are considered a business? Please have staff research how other Regional Districts on Vancouver Island accomplish this.
- Agri-Tourism could be looked at.
- Education on local farms?
- Soil testing.
- Greenhouse and poly tunnels for year-round farming.
- Poly tunnels last 10+ years.
- Seed Collective.
- Farmers Institute to discuss principles at July 28, 2020 meeting.
- Comments from the Farmers Institute to be provided at next meeting.
- Could SCREDO manage funding for loans?
- Committee is wavering farmers farming other then food security effort.
- Farmers classified by BC Assessment to only be eligible for the funds.

Recommendation No. 2 *Community Amenity Contribution for Agriculture on the Sunshine Coast*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommends the Farmers Institute comment on the Community Amenity Contribution on the Sunshine Coast and give feedback to the AAC and SCRCD staff.

NEXT MEETING Tuesday, September 22, 2020

ADJOURNMENT 4:51 p.m.