

Minutes: Agricultural Advisory Committee

MEETING DATE: March 6, 2012
LOCATION: Town Office – EPW Meeting Room
PREPARED BY: Adam McMullin, Engineering and Public Works

A. Call to Order

Present: Grant McMurchy, Lynn Vail, Rod Knott, Ron Marshall, James Farmilo, Al Lockhart, Jacquie Hendry
Regrets: Lance Burnham, Sid Dykstra, John Ardiel, James McKinlay
Guests: Shawn Everitt (Director of Recreation)

A.1 Review and approval of minutes

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes. The Committee requested that Adam follow-up on some items with Cindy Welsh regarding the Official Plan Five Year Review, specifically regarding mapping inconsistencies and 'hamlets'.

B. New and Unfinished Business**B.1 Share The Road (Shawn Everitt)**

Shawn thanked the group for the opportunity to speak about the Town's Share The Road initiative. Shawn said that the program is still in the infant stage and Grey County is a champion of the program.

Shawn said that the area is becoming a cycling destination which can raise frustration among cyclists and drivers. Shawn noted he has not seen programs that include a focus on the rural / agricultural component and address the conflicts that can arise between farmers operating agricultural equipment, cyclists and drivers.

Shawn said that all users of the road need to be educated and better informed. Shawn noted that cyclist often are not aware of the rules of the road. Shawn said that he is working on a pilot program that includes social marketing components as well as reaching out to schools, stores and so forth.

Shawn said that there is ongoing dialogue with the police and the police have agreed to ride along with cyclist to start raising awareness.

Shawn said Share The Road is a three way street that requires coordination among everyone – farmers, cyclist, drivers - using the road. Shawn added that there is a perception that Share The Road is biased towards cyclist, when it should be a balancing act.

James Farmilo asked if cyclist have to obey the highway traffic act. Shawn said yes and when a car passes a group of cyclists they have to move into single file by law.

James asked if licensing cyclist is an option. Shawn said that enforcement would be impractical.

Rod Knott said that the solution requires licensing of cyclist by the province.

Jacque said that safety issues arise when cars park on the side of the road for recreational cycling activities. Rod said that parking on one side of the road resolves that issue. Shawn said that the Town can identify locations for parking amenities and direct users to those locations.

Shawn noted that the previous minutes discussed the economic impact of the Centurion event. Shawn said he feels the real benefit is the increase in cyclist prior to the event and that Centurion provides marketing for the Town.

Jacque said that there does not seem to be a benefit for the agricultural community.

Shawn said that the Centurion group will meet with the Committee and discuss the race planned for 2012. Shawn said that the route will change this year as the County plans to eliminate Scenic Caves road from the race. Shawn said that the race will include rolling closures again this year.

B.2 Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)

Adam explained that the EFP budget enhancement was not passed during Council budget deliberations and that there will be no Municipal contribution to the program for 2012. Adam said that he had wrongly submitted the unrevised version of the November 1st agricultural advisory committee meeting minutes to the Clerk and that those minutes were specifically referenced by a Councillor during the EFP budget deliberations, which may have impacted the Council vote. Adam apologized to the Committee for the error.

Adam said that James McKinlay plans to attend the next Council meeting on March 12 to discuss the EFP and that the corrected minutes will be included in that Council package.

James Farmilo said that his impression is that Council does not understand the EFP and Council did not approve one thing in the budget to the benefit of the Agricultural community.

Rod noted that the program has been successful and fully utilized and that the Committee should support James McKinlay at Council on March 12.

Jacque said that the program is not expensive and is a great way to enhance awareness of agricultural efforts for the greater community.

B.3 Municipal Local Food Policy Update

Adam said that he brought forth the Municipal Local Food Policy that was approved by the Committee to the Town's Senior Management Team (SMT). Adam noted that SMT was supportive of the policy and that local foods should be included in Town events. Adam said that SMT noted a concern with formally implementing a procedure as there could be potential protectionist implications but would informally adopt the policy as a practice within the Town.

Rod said the he is disappointed that the wording could not be modified and that Collingwood has implemented a similar procedure without incident. The Committee asked that Adam send the policy back to SMT for reconsideration and noted their strong disappointment that it was not adopted by SMT.

B.4 Order of The Blue Mountains Nominations

Rod asked Adam if the nominee has to be an individual or if the Committee could nominate a family. Adam said that he was not sure but could investigate and report back to the Committee. The Committee discussed potential nominations.

Jacque moved a motion:

‘The Agricultural Achievement Award be included as a category in the Order of The Blue Mountains’. James Farmilo seconded the motion and it was carried by the Committee.

B.5 Sustainability Survey

Grant McMurchy asked Adam if the survey could be completed individually or did the group have to submit one survey on behalf of the Committee. Adam said that it was up to the Committee and he would forward any results to the steering committee overseeing the implementation of The Sustainable Path.

Jacque moved a motion:

‘The Committee complete the survey during the meeting’. James seconded the motion and it was carried by the Committee.

The Committee reviewed and discussed each question as a group and completed the survey individually.

C. Next Meeting Date

Proposed Next Meeting Date: Tuesday April 10, 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

D. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.