

Minutes: Agricultural Advisory Committee

MEETING DATE: May 22, 2012
LOCATION: Town Office – EPW Meeting Room
PREPARED BY: Adam McMullin, Engineering and Public Works

A. Call to Order

Present: Lynn Vail, Alfred (Jim) Farmilo, James McKinlay, Jacquie Hendry, Shawn Everitt (Director of Recreation - TBM), Patti Kendall (Blue Mountain Resorts), Dan Mainguy (Centurion)
Regrets: Lance Burnham, John Ardiel, Al Lockhart, Sid Dykstra, Ron Marshall, Rod Knott, Grant McMurchy

A.1 Review and approval of minutes

James noted minor changes to the minutes. The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes.

James thanked the Committee for the nomination for the Order of The Blue Mountains.

B. New and Unfinished Business**B.1 Centurion Update**

Shawn welcomed Dan to the meeting. Dan indicated that he wanted to sit down with the Committee to discuss the changes to the Centurion race this year. Dan noted that there are changes to the start of the event in an effort to avoid Jozo Weider. Dan said the sprint events and hill climbs are scheduled for Saturday from 2:00pm – 6:00pm instead of Friday night, which occurred last year. Dan added that they wanted to limit the impact to Scenic Caves Road. Dan said that the 25-mile event will take place on Saturday morning starting at 7:30am and that they changed the start time of the event from 10:00am last year because an earlier start will have less impact on traffic and residents. Dan added that the route is similar to last year and the changes to the route will ensure that there is no overlapping of riders, meaning that riders will only occupy one side of the road at a time. Dan said that there will be a police presence at intersections to ensure the safety of the riders and the public. Dan said that there is a planned children's ride in Thornbury on Saturday as well.

Dan continued that the 50-mile race is similar to last year, but that the Grey Road #2 portion of the route has been removed and now the race will go down the 13th/10th line. Dan noted that this would benefit some farms, avoiding Grey Road #2, but would be inconvenient for those living on the new route. Dan said that the 50-mile race starts at 7:30 am on Sunday.

Dan said that the 100-mile race route is similar to the C50 and that the start time will be 8:30 am on Sunday morning.

Dan wanted to formally thank the Georgian Bay Growers for donating over 2000 apples to the event last year.

James asked the committee if there were any comments or questions.

Jacque asked if the committee could discuss the long term impact of the event and cycling in the area. Jacquie said that she respects the event but has concerns with the potential long term effects, especially for safety. Jacquie asked if there was any way to get the cyclists off of the road. Jacquie noted that she saw a family cycling without safety helmets.

Shawn said that the Town is actively promoting the 'Share the Road' program and working with the Police Department to spread the word about road safety. Shawn said that cyclists have a right to use the road but that they must follow the rules. Shawn said that the Police have been providing safety information to cyclists over the past two weeks. Shawn said that it is very costly to pave pathways and that road cyclist generally do not use paved trails and prefer the riding on the roadways.

Jim recommended that the Municipal road design criteria be modified to require a 3 to 4 foot paved shoulder for all roads to increase the capacity of the streets to accommodate cyclists. Jim added that this consideration should be included in the Official Plan. Jim said that he thinks that paving trails may be unfeasible due to the cost, but that a bicycle licensing and registration would help improve safety awareness.

Shawn said that the MTO has made progress and have included bike lane shoulders from Tobermory to Ferndale and that Grey County has a policy of 1.5 metre shoulder width.

Jacquie said that at the 19th and 2nd side roads is a dangerous corner and a potential accident.

James asked if there is an opportunity to add parking to the 2nd line area. Shawn responded that he has looked into it and parking at the corner may not be the best location compared to up the street.

James said that he supports the Centurion event and has no problem with the day of the event. James said he sympathises with Jacquie and that the locals have to deal with the added cycling traffic in the lead up to the event. James added that mixing tractors, cyclist and cars can cause safety issues.

Dan said that moving forward the best case scenario would have educated bikers that follow the rules of the road, combined with strict enforcement and paving of road shoulders to increase space for everyone. Dan said that riders are required to move into single file when approached by a car. Dan said that safety information is included in the kits provided to each Centurion participant.

Jim asked if this safety information could be included on the Centurion website. Dan said that it is already available on the web.

Jacque asked if this information and the Share the Road program has been shared with the schools. Shawn says that he has been working with schools and that the information has been distributed.

B.2 Share The Road

Shawn said the Town will learn about a funding application in early June to help develop an awareness video and that he will come back to the committee with an update.

Shawn circulated an OPP cycling safety brochure to the committee and said that for the previous two weeks police have been conducting ride alongs where they distribute information to cyclist that are not following the rules of the road. Shawn said that the biggest infraction involved cyclist not stopping for stop signs.

Shawn then showed the committee new share the road signs that include a picture of a tractor and a cyclist. The committee was pleased with the new signage.

James said that he is encouraged that Police have a presence and that there is a perception that cyclist own the road.

Jim agreed that it is a good to have a Police presence and has seen the volume of cyclist on the road increase but more compliancy with the rules of the road.

B.3 Order of The Blue Mountains

Jim said that the Chamber of Commerce are adding awards, potentially including a youth and agriculture category. Jim said that he wanted input from the committee regarding the type of award that should be added regarding agriculture, should it be focused on a specific aspect or more generalised.

James said the he sees merit in keeping the award generalized so that various people can be recognized for various efforts in the agricultural community. Lynn agreed with James.

Jim said that he would bring this to the chamber and report back to the committee.

B.4 Municipal Local Food Policy Update

Adam said that the local food policy has been approved by the Town's senior management team after initially voicing a concern with the policy.

Jacque asked if this policy could be expanded to other facilities, such as Health Care. Adam responded that those operations are highly regulated but that there is always opportunity.

James said that he is pleased that the policy has been approved and that it has been a long time since the committee proposed the idea. James thanked the committee for their diligence in promoting this policy.

B.5 New Business

Jacque asked what happened with the environmental farm plan. James responded that in 2010 all of the money was utilized and in 2011 the same amount was requested. James said that in 2011 Council rejected the funding request for the EFP but then the money was re-allocated by Lisa Kidd out of the economic development budget. James said that this year the EFP was again rejected by Council, but then the money was re-allocated from the now defunct chilli cook-off.

Lynn added that Council has never actually approved direct funding for the EFP and that the program was received funding after the fact. Lynn asked if the EFP could get incorporated into the base budget as opposed to a budget enhancement. James asked what the best way to go about requesting the funding from Council. Adam said that getting in front of Council early and often is an effective way to communicate the benefits of the program.

James asked the committee about wild chervil. Lynn responded that it's all over the community and that some people have it as flowers in their garden. Jacque said that it has spread so fast. James added that cleaning the ditches and roads can spread it. Lynn says that it is too late, that the plants have already started to seed. If the plants take over, there will be a dramatic impact on hay crops, pasture and the beef industry in our area.

C. Correspondence

C.1 Day of The Honey Bee

D. Next Meeting Date

Tuesday, June 26th, 2012

E. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.