

The Blue Mountains

Agricultural Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

April 5, 2011

Present: James McKinlay, John Ardiel, Lance Burnham, James Farmilo, Rod Knott, Ron Marshall, Grant McMurchy and Lynn Vail.

Staff: Peter Tollefsen; Peter McGee.

Regrets: Sid Dykstra, Jacquie Hendry and Al Lockhart.

Guest: Lynn Hynd, Manager Campus Services and Community Relations, Duncan Rydall, Town Fire Dept. Cindy Welsh, Town Planning Dept.

Chair James McKinlay called the meeting to order at **7:00pm** in the Building Meeting room, Town Offices.

1. Delegation: Lynn Hynd, Georgian College

Lynn described the new campus being built in Collingwood for all the communities including the Town of The Blue Mountains. They want to get input from all the municipalities on the project. Looking at programs to assist the agricultural sector. Has been talking to agricultural groups including Ontario federation of Agriculture. Asking for some volunteers from the Committee to participate in a 1 – 2 hour workshop focus group meeting in about 2 or 3 weeks. The Chair thanked Lynn for her attendance and said that we would think about it and get back to her after the meeting.

2. Fire Prevention for Bunk Houses and Fire Permits:

A presentation was made by Duncan Rydal, Chief Fire Prevention Officer. There is a training session 2nd week of June, a schedule for bunk houses. Duncan has met with the Fruit Growers Association. Talked about Burn permits, don't burn pressure treated wood. Information on Town website, go to One Click Away and there is a hot line 519 599 5411.

3. Town Official Plan;

Cindy Welsh, Senior Planner discussed that there is a 5 year review underway and a lot of public consultation required. Wants to target the agricultural community. One of the consultants retained is an agricultural specialist, Michael Hoffman. Asking for contacts, Cindy given for Fruit Growers; Harvey McMurchy. Discussion on Speciality Crop land designation actually allows more severances than Agricultural land?

4. Support for Chesley High School program

That was raised by Jacquie Hendry, last meeting at the last meeting.

The following resolution was passed;

Whereas this Agricultural Advisory Committee believes the closing of this agricultural program is very inconsistent with the current movements for environmental sustainability and local food production by failing to train and provide the agricultural providers of the next generation, and

WHEREAS the Counties of Bruce and Grey have a strong agricultural economic base, which provides a livelihood and lifestyle to many families on area farms, and

WHEREAS the(Grey, Bruce) County Federation of Agriculture welcomed and supported the Specialist High Skills Major Program – Agriculture (SHSM) as making a meaningful contribution to preparing our students for a future in agriculture, as well as providing lasting benefits to the families and the economy of the Grey-Bruce area, and

WHEREAS the SHSM Agriculture program is dependent on the availability of a barn and cropland, both of which are uniquely well-situated at the existing location of the Chesley District High School,

WHEREAS the Bluewater School Board is currently conducting an Accommodation Review for the area that includes CDHS, which may mean possible re-location or changed usage of the school,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the The Blue Mountains Agricultural advisory Committee urges that retaining the SHSM – Agriculture Program be a primary focus in any decision of the Accommodation Review Committee and the Bluewater Board of Education, as it relates to the Chesley District High School.

AND; Forward this resolution to the Co-Chairs of the Accommodation Review Committee of the Bluewater School Board and to Town of Blue mountains Council for a resolution of support.

5. Minutes from the last meeting (March 1)

Revised- add the word “with” after the words...”education program to assist the public ..” under 4.4 Noxious weed problem. Minutes approved and ADOPTED.

6. Other Business

7. Environmental Award ; The Committee made a motion to nominate Chris Knott. CARRIED.

8. Environmental Farm Plan James McKinlay updated the Committee that Council turned down the request for funding. Committee was disappointed as this concept originated at the Agricultural Tour, encouraged by the CAO and supported by Council last year in the staff report asking for more investigation. There was a lot of time and effort spent by the Committee and County Agricultural Services.

9. John Ardiel asked if anyone knew about walking trails Beaver River? No.

10. Grant asked the status of the request for funding for the Ont. Soil + Crop Improvement Association summer tour

11. Status of tree planting idea. Peter to check with Shawn Everitt.

12. Next Meeting Tuesday May 3, 2011 at 7:00pm at the Town Office.

13. Adjournment.