

**SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

February 26, 2019

MINUTES FROM THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE CEDAR ROOM AT THE SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT OFFICES, 1975 FIELD ROAD, SECHELT, BC

PRESENT:	Chair Members	David Morgan Paul Nash Gretchen Bozak Barbara Seed Gerald Rainville
ALSO PRESENT:	Director, Electoral Area F Director, Electoral Area E Manager, Planning and Development Planner Recorder Public	Mark Hiltz Donna McMahon (part) Andrew Allen (part) Julie Clark Autumn O'Brien 2
REGRETS:	Member	Erin Dutton
ABSENT:	Members	Jon Bell Faye Kiewitz

CALL TO ORDER 3:32 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS Round table introductions of those present.

AGENDA The agenda was adopted as amended to add the following topic:
Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) Information Update

Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) Information Update

Manager, Planning and Development provided an update from the Agricultural Land Commission Act and Regulation changes respecting housing in the ALR and soil and fill use in ALR.

The changes came into effect on February 22, 2019 and was received by the SCRDP Planning Division on February 25, 2019. The information update will be forwarded to AAC committee members.

1. There is now a 500 square metre maximum house size in the ALR. This won't directly impact SCRDP as we already have a 350 sq.m size though it would apply if one wanted to apply for variance permit.
2. There is no longer an allowance for manufactured home for family/farm help. This will require an application for a 'non-adhering' use. Its long been an option utilized on the Sunshine

Coast. The new regulations also prohibit claiming non-conforming siting should one be removed.

3. Suites within the dwelling are continued to be permitted.

While the SCRD Ag Zone will remain in place, which enables manufactured homes for family members or farm workers or a second single family dwelling. If housing is proposed beyond the allowable single family dwelling and auxiliary dwelling, an application for 'Non Adhering Use' must be made to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). This is an effort by the ALC to ensure that ALR land is being used for farming.

MINUTES

Recommendation No. 1 *AAC Meeting Minutes for January 22, 2019*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that the meeting minutes of January 22, 2019 be received and approved.

Recommendation No. 2 *ALC Decisions on ALR Applications*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that the Agricultural Land Commission's final decision on ALR applications that have been reviewed by the AAC be communicated to the committee for information.

DISCUSSION

A member of the public, Tim Rockford provided the Committee with background on his experience with determining suitability for farming on his property.

Raquel Kolof, Southern Sunshine Coast Farmers Institute provided the Committee with information regarding the newly formed Farmers Institute. She highlighted issues of concern for the Institute's members as being water use, development of farming facilities and support for bringing product to market.

REPORTS

Discuss Policy Priority Areas for Farm Related Issues on the Sunshine Coast

The Planner advised the AAC that the SCRD Board adopted the following recommendation on February 21, 2019:

040/19 **Recommendation No. 11** *AAC Minutes of January 22, 2019*

The Planning and Community Development Committee recommended that the Agricultural Advisory Committee minutes of January 22, 2019 be received;

AND THAT as per Recommendation No. 3 from the January 22, 2019 minutes, the Agricultural Advisory Committee be advised that the SCRD Board welcomes their suggestions regarding priority policy areas, including water use, for the remainder of their term.

The AAC discussed priority areas for farm related issues. Key points of discussion included:

- Water use for agricultural purposes
- Lot size for farming purposes
- Marketing

- Policy area development from Agricultural Area Plan
- Use of crown land for agriculture
- Encourage food growing
- Key enablers for farming on the coast from Agricultural Area Plan
- What is already being planned for water changes?
- What are the results of the Pilot study done in Elphinstone, referenced on page 43 of the Agricultural Area Plan
- AAC would like an update on the Drought Management Plan
- What is the timeline needed to be making decisions for the Drought Management Plan
- Definition of a farm – ALR Land, Farm Status.
- Distinguish Farm Status vs. Hobby Farms. People with Farm status should be given separate status in water usage.
- Provincial definition of use for ground water.
- SCREDO involvement in promoting agriculture
- Zoning Bylaw 310 questionnaire results should be shared with AAC
- Agricultural cluster/development/densification and demonstration

The committee discussion concluded with an emphasis that water use for farming be their main focus for developing policy suggestions, as well as exploring where agriculture could intensify on the Coast given available water. Secondary focus areas are parcel size and the use of Provincial land for Agriculture.

Recommendation No. 3 *Stage 4 Water Restriction Exemption*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that going forward food growing operations with Farm Status should be exempt from Stage 4 water restrictions.

Recommendation No. 4 *Southern Sunshine Coast Farmers Institute*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that the Southern Sunshine Coast Farmers Institute be invited to appear as a delegation to the next AAC meeting;

AND THAT the Terms of Reference be amended to add a representative of the Southern Sunshine Coast Farmers Institute as a member of the committee.

Recommendation No. 5 *Invitation for Infrastructure Water Staff Presentation*

The Agricultural Advisory Committee recommended that SCR D Infrastructure Water staff be invited to the March AAC Committee to present regarding the Drought Management Plan and water use for agriculture.

NEXT MEETING Tuesday, March 26, 2019

ADJOURNMENT 5:00 p.m.