



Norfolk County Agricultural Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: March 22, 2018

Time: 9:00 am

Location: Ramblin' Road Brewery Farm, La Salette

Present: Brett Schuyler (Chair), Mike Bakos, Mike Berkel, Anita Buehner, Trish Fournier (Vice Chair), Roger Geysens (Alternate Council Liaison), Doug Long, Murray McLaughlin, John Picard, Dusty Zamecnik.

Resource: Clark Hoskin (Norfolk County Staff Liaison / Recorder), Mat Vaughan (Norfolk County Planning).

Guests: Jim Miller, Derek Stubbe (Premier Equipment)

Regrets: Mike Columbus, Erich Remler, James Hill.

1. Welcome, Declaration of Pecuniary Interest, Review Agenda

Mr. Schuyler welcomed everyone. Introductions were made. There were no declarations of pecuniary interest. There were two additions to the agenda.

2. Review Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Agriculture Advisory Board were reviewed.

Motion by: Mike Bakos

THAT the minutes of the Agriculture Advisory Board dated January 17, 2018, be received as information. **CARRIED.**

3. Business Arising

3.1. Bunkhouse Issues

3.1.1. Septic Criteria Resolution

Members reviewed the draft motion. It was agreed that when the motion passed, it would be forwarded to Norfolk County Council for review and, if supported, circulated to provincial agricultural organizations and other municipalities. It was agreed that a deputation to Council would be made by the Agriculture Advisory Board.

Motion by: Trish Fournier

WHEREAS when total combined septic flows of all septic systems on a property are greater than 10,000 litres per day, current Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) policy requires property owners to obtain a MOECC Environmental Compliance Approval;

AND WHEREAS it is likely that most farm properties with multiple existing septic systems would be around or greater than 10,000 litres per day combined septic;

AND WHEREAS obtaining an Environmental Compliance Approval can take up to two years and cost in excess of \$30,000;

AND WHEREAS the policy determining the need for a MOECC Environmental Compliance has no regard for parcel size, for example: one acre is treated the same as 300 acres;

AND WHEREAS the policy determining the need for a MOECC Environmental Compliance has no regard to distance to adjacent land owners;

AND WHEREAS the policy does have a detrimental impact on agriculture and rural communities in Ontario;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Norfolk County Council send a letter to the Minister of the Environment requesting that this policy be reviewed to consider parcel size, distance to adjacent parcels, and land use when determining the need for a MOECC Environmental Compliance Approval;

AND THAT Norfolk County Council request the MOECC to work with the Agriculture Advisory Board to find a solution that meets the unique needs of agriculture as opposed to residential uses.

CARRIED.

3.1.2. Bunkhouse Approvals Document Communications

Mr. Hoskin outlined results of the Advisory Board's request to communicate the document to the farming community. The document was showcased in Norfolk County Agriculture News email to subscribers, and in a paid advertisement inserted in the Norfolk Farms newspaper published by Media Pro Publishing. A workshop for farmers

is planned next, with involvement from Building, Planning and Health departments, organized by Tourism and Economic Development staff.

Follow Up: Mr. Hoskin will share details of the workshop with the Advisory Board, when they become available.

3.1.3. **Bunkhouse / Single Family Dwelling Conversions**

The Advisory Board discussed challenges related to farmers wishing to convert single detached dwellings into bunkhouses. It was agreed that a deputation to Council would be made by the Agriculture Advisory Board.

Motion by: Mike Bakos

WHEREAS under current policy single-detached dwellings are only permitted to house a family of four unrelated people;

AND WHEREAS the agriculture sector relies on the use of single-detached dwellings for the housing of seasonal farm labour;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Norfolk County Council assign their Chief Administrative Officer with the task of investigating the issue and the associated policy to propose solutions to permit the housing of more than four unrelated people in a single-detached dwelling in the rural area. **CARRIED.**

3.2. **Road Entrance Permits**

A recommendation was passed by the Advisory Board and members asked if it had been presented to Council. Mr. Hoskin will provide follow up information in the minutes, if available.

Follow Up: Lee Robinson, General Manager of Public Works, communicated to Councillor Mike Columbus that staff are working on the issue and will bring a report to Council likely in April or May. In the interim, if there are any issues, Ms. Robinson asked that they be brought to her attention and she is confident staff can work through them.

3.3. **Locally Significant Woodlands presentation**

Mr. Hoskin reported that the presentation was circulated as requested.

4. **New Business**

4.1. **Half Load Roads**

Advisory Board members reviewed a map of Norfolk County indicating that the

former Township of Delhi has more roads with half-load restrictions than anywhere else in the County. The situation may effect farmers drawing heavy loads of apples or other commodities from storage facilities during that season. Mr. Schuyler reviewed the situation with Councillor Columbus, who told him that it is being reviewed by Public Works staff.

Follow Up: Advisory Board members suggested that a memo to Council be prepared by staff with input from the Advisory Board Chair on the need to provide consistency related to half-load restrictions.

4.2. Community Improvement Plan Review

Mr. Hoskin reported that staff are reviewing incentives, policies and procedures related to the Community Improvement Plan (CIP). Suggested changes to the CIP will be circulated to the Advisory Board.

Follow Up: Staff will circulate suggested changes to the CIP to the Agriculture Advisory Board for feedback.

4.3. Economic Development Strategy Review

Mr. Hoskin reported that on April 3, 2018, Council will decide on a terms of reference for the review of Norfolk County's Economic Development Strategy, which was last reviewed in 2010-2011. The proposed terms of reference encourages participation by the Agriculture Advisory Board and stakeholders in the process, which will continue over the course of ten to twelve months.

5. Other Business

5.1. Terroir Symposium / Terroir Rural Retreat

Mr. Hoskin reported that Norfolk County has won the bid to host the 2018 Culinary Tourism Alliance Terroir Rural Retreat. Chefs, food purveyors, farmers and other ambassadors will be invited to the event on April 24, 2018. It follows the Terrior Symposium in Toronto the day before, which Chair Schuyler has been invited to attend. The event will showcase Norfolk County as a major agriculture, local food and culinary destination to media influences from Canada and overseas.

5.2. Agriculture Tour

There was discussion about the annual Agriculture Tour, scheduled for September. Councillor Columbus and staff will organize the tour again this year.

5.3. Annual Report

Mr. Hoskin provided a copy of the Annual Report for the Tourism and Economic Development Department of Norfolk County. It will be presented to Council at a future date.

5.4. Flexible Housing

There was discussion about an item from the November 2017 meeting, when the Advisory Board asked Planning staff to look into a flexible housing policy for tourists and students on-farm. Mr. Vaughan reported that Planning staff are working on recommending changes to the Norfolk County Zoning By-Law which would allow on-farm diversified uses, as of right. Approval of these changes depend on how long it takes the Province of Ontario to approve Norfolk County's revised Official Plan. Staff hope, within a year, there will be a lot more permissions than restrictions with changes to the Zoning By-Law. Mr. Hoskin also reported that Short-Term Rentals will be the subject of a review by Tourism and Economic Development and Licensing to determine the best way to keep the travelling public safe.

5.5. Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program Audits

Mr. Zamecnik advised that he serves on the labour committee of the Canadian Horticulture Council where discussion has been focused on the surprise audits of farmers participating in the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, causing delays in filling the labour needs of the agriculture sector. He said the Canadian Horticulture Council will be launching a series of videos outlining the excellent working conditions for seasonal workers on farms. Also, a round table is being scheduled in May to determine next steps.

6. Next Meeting Dates

Next meeting: Thursday, October 25, 2018, at 9:00 a.m, or at the call of the Chair.
Location to be determined.

7. Meeting Termination

The meeting terminated.

