

February 15, 2017 Minutes of a Meeting of the Agricultural Service Board of the Municipal District of Peace No. 135, Province of Alberta, held February 15, 2017 at the Municipal Office, Berwyn, Alberta.

Present

Chairman	Sandra Eastman
Councillor Member	Janice Reyda via Skype/telephone
Members at Large	Nigel Thorne Judy Bowcott George Leger @ 10:17 a.m
Manager of Agricultural Services	Nasar Iqbal
Recording Secretary	Barbara Johnson

Call to Order Chairman Eastman called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Adoption of Agenda Judy Bowcott: MOVED that the agenda for the February 15, 2017 ASB meeting be adopted with the following additions:

F. 12) ASB Summer Tour – July 10-14, 2017
 F. 13) Industrial Hemp & Flax Workshop – April 4, Whitecourt
 Carried

Approval of Minutes **November 7, 2016 Agricultural Service Board Meeting**

Janice Reyda: MOVED that the minutes of the November 7, 2016 ASB meeting be approved as presented.
 Carried

Business Arising Out of Minutes none

Reports **1. Manager of Ag Services Report**
 The Manager of Agricultural Services reviewed his written report, outlining his activities from November 2016 - February 2017.

Nigel Thorne: MOVED that the Manager of Ag Services Report be accepted as presented.
 Carried

New Business **1. Round Up Ready Alfalfa/Common Weed Rules for Peace Region**
 Nasar reviewed the discussions held at the Peace Region ASB Chairs and Fieldmen meeting held in Edmonton on January 25, 2017 regarding Roundup Ready Alfalfa and Common Weed Rules for the Peace Region.

Nigel Thorne: MOVED that the Agricultural Service Board educate and lobby local farmers and request their input on whether or not Roundup Ready Alfalfa should be grown in the Peace region.
 Carried

The Board felt that an article should be placed in the local newspaper as well as on the website and on Facebook advising ratepayers about the implications of Roundup Ready alfalfa and asking them for their input.

It was suggested that the Manager of Ag Services request that farmers who wish to receive updates on Roundup Ready alfalfa or other agricultural issues could provide the M.D. with their email addresses.

The M.D. of Peace Agricultural Service Board supports the Peace region motion that was passed recommending that the Peace Region AAAF review and create a list of elevated weeds, commonalities and discrepancies, in order to create Regional Guidelines for common weeds in the Peace region.

2. M.D. of Peace ASB Program 2017
 The Board discussed the 2017 ASB work program at length.

Nasar advised that he will be doing weed inspections himself in areas where Scentless chamomile has previously been located.

George Leger joined the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

Roadside ditches will be sprayed north of Highway 2 this year, as well as in areas that require additional control using the utility vehicle. The program for the M.D. staff to spray fencelines in the fall at no charge will continue in the fall of 2017.

The ditch brushing/mulching program will also continue in 2017.

3. ASB Summer Staff Hiring and Wages

The two mower operators will be returning in 2017, commencing with rock picking early in the spring, then mowing roadside ditches when appropriate. A dump trailer will have to be purchased in 2017 for the rock picking. The weed inspector and sprayer operator will also be returning for the 2017 season. In 2016, \$22/hour was paid to the mower operators.

Nigel Thorne: Moved that the ASB recommend to Council that \$23.00/hour be paid to returning mower operators in 2017.

Carried

4. Agriculture for Life - Field Signage - What's in the Field

This program provides information signs to educate travellers about different types of crops being grown. At this time, there is no limit to the number of signs provided in a municipality. These signs will be placed along main highways in the fields, near the road ditches. The signs will be provided in May and will have the producer's name on the sign as well as the crop being grown. The signs must be requested by the producer with the producer erecting and dismantling the signs. It was suggested that the Manager of Ag Services should contact various producers who have land adjacent to Highway 2 in the M.D. of Peace and that the program should also be advertised. The Board suggested that one sign for each type of crop should be sufficient.

5. Request for Sponsorship - Alberta Farm Fresh Producers Association

The Board accepted for information only the letter received from Alberta Farm Fresh Producers Association requesting sponsorship for the 2017 Farm to Market Conference to be held in Olds, Alberta.

6. Living with Wildlife Workshop - February 23

Nasar provided the Board with information on the Living With Wildlife Workshop that the M.D. of Peace is co-hosting on February 23rd in Grimshaw. George Leger and Nigel Thorne will be registered for the workshop.

7. Solar Workshop

Nasar asked the Board if the M.D. of Peace should host a local workshop educating ratepayers on solar energy use. The Board felt that the Manager of Ag Services should research hosting a local workshop as costs for installing solar energy have reduced and technology has improved. It was mentioned that Can-Tech Electrical may be installing panels locally.

8. Clear Hills County Trade Show - April 8, 2017

Nasar provided the Board with the invitation to the Clear Hills County 23rd Annual Agricultural Trade Show to be held on April 8, 2017 in Hines Creek and mentioned that he has two tickets available if any Board members should wish to attend.

9. 21st Century Homesteading Conference - April 5, 2017

George Leger: MOVED that all Agricultural Service Board members be authorized to attend the 21st Century Homesteading Conference to be held in Fairview on April 5, 2017.

Carried

10. ASB Grant Program Application - Legislative/Environmental Streams 2017-2019

Nasar provided the Board with the Terms of Reference for the partnering Municipalities supporting the Peace Country Beef and Forage Association's environmental stream grant program application.

Nasar also informed the Board that the M.D. of Peace ASB application for the 2017-2019 ASB Grant Program has been submitted.

12. ASB Summer Tour, July 10-14, 2017 in the Olds area

Board members will notify Nasar as soon as possible if they are interested in attending so that he can submit the registrations.

13. Industrial Hemp & Flax Workshop, April 4 in Whitecourt

George Leger: MOVED that the Manager of Agricultural Services and one Board member be authorized to attend the Industrial Hemp & Flax Workshop in Whitecourt on April 4.

Carried

11. Manager of Ag Services Performance Evaluation

Barbara Johnson and Nasar Iqbal excused themselves from the meeting at 11:21 a.m.

Nasar Iqbal and Barbara Johnson returned to the meeting at 12:07 p.m.

The Board forwarded their comments to Lyle McKen, C.A.O., but requested that Nasar provide goals and objectives that he hopes to attain in 2017 for Council's consideration.

The Agricultural Service Board recommended to Council that goals and objectives for the Manager of Agricultural Services is not necessarily a relevant performance appraisal as the ASB Strategic Plan that the Board completes with the Manager of Agricultural Services already lists very specific goals, with strategies, activities and measurable outcomes for those goals.

Members' Business

None

Information

Board members reviewed the information items.

Next Meeting

The next Agricultural Service Board meeting will be held Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

Roundtable

George Leger reported that he has recently purchased Royal LePage Valley Realty and that he will be continuing with the landscape business but on a smaller scale.

Nasar recommended that the Board send sympathy flowers to the Rick Keillor family.

Peace Country Classic Agri-Show in Grande Prairie is March 9-11 and SARDA Trade Show is March 16-17.

Farmers who wish to hire summer students can contact George Leger who has a contact with McGill University which has an agricultural diploma program.


Adjournment


Being that the agenda matters have been concluded, the meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.


Chairman


Manager of Agricultural Services

These minutes approved by Council the 9th day of May, 2017.


Reeve


Chief Administrative Officer