



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024, 9:30 AM

Via Zoom

MEMBERS

Heather Shobe, Chairperson, Eden Tree Farm

PRESENT:

Ann Siddall, Alberni District Fall Fair Association

Fred Boyko, Director, Electoral Area "B" (Beaufort)

Kaley Ruel, Island Health

Helen Zanette, SD70 Trustee

Anna Lewis, Alberni Valley Food Security Society

Lisa Aylard, Alberni Farmers' Institute, Stonehaven Farm

REGRETS:

Pat Deakin, City of Port Alberni

Cecilia Addy, Port Alberni Port Authority

Jen Cody, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

Thom O'Dell, Ministry of Agriculture & Food

Erika Goldt, Coastal Food Roundtable, Eat West Coast

Bob Collins, Arrowvale Farm

Tanya Shannon, Shannon Farms

Victoria Lake, Effingham Oyster

Alex Taylor, Shelter Farm

Claire Boudreau, Spirit Square Farmers Market

Patty Radcliffe, 4H

STAFF PRESENT:

Amy Needham, Sustainability Planner

Kristin Kerr-Donohue, Administrative Assistant

The meeting can be viewed on the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District website at:

<https://www.acrd.bc.ca/events/14-5-2024/>

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:31 am.

The Chairperson recognized this meeting is being held throughout the Nuu-chah-nulth territories.

The Chairperson reported this meeting is being recorded and livestreamed to YouTube on the Regional District website.

Introductions - Committee Members and Staff via Zoom.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED: A Lewis
SECONDED: A. Siddall

THAT the agenda be approved with the addition of one late item in section 9.a regarding Zoning Bylaw changes specific to agricultural producers.

CARRIED

3. DECLARATIONS

4. MINUTES

a. Agricultural Development Committee Minutes – April 16, 2024

MOVED: A. Lewis
SECONDED: H. Zanette

THAT the minutes of the Agricultural Development Committee meeting held on April 16, 2024 be adopted.

CARRIED

5. PETITIONS, DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

a. Carys Pinches, Water Policy Team Lead, Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship regarding the Watershed Security Strategy

Carys reviewed the Ministry of Water Land and Resource Stewardship creation, reasons for implementation of the Watershed Security Strategy, and the strategy timeline with implementation planned for late 2024. Through multiple rounds of public engagement, the Ministry received feedback on how to move forward with the strategy. A Water Table was convened in June 2022, in collaboration with Treaty Nations and delegates from around the province. The strategy will focus on long-term goals with a 20–30-year timeline.

Updates on the strategy are available here:
<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/watershedsecurity/>

The funds associated with the program (100 million investment from the Provincial Government) have been transferred to the Real Estate Foundation of BC who are working with the First Nations Water Caucus to co-develop a watershed security fund to help protect watersheds for the future. The website has been launched
<https://watershedsecurityfund.ca/>

Watershed Security Fund Webinar on June 17 to learn about priorities and available funding. [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. **KPU INSITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**
Building Drought Resilience – Summary Report – March 2024

MOVED: H. Zanette

SECONDED: A. Siddal

THAT this correspondence be received.

CARRIED

7. REQUEST FOR DECISIONS

- a. **REQUEST FOR DECISION**
Agricultural Water Planning Funding Opportunity

MOVED: A. Siddall

SECONDED: A. Lewis

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee recommend that the ACRD Board of Directors direct staff to apply for the Watershed Security Fund Grant for the balance of funds for the Agricultural Water Supply Feasibility Study

AND if unsuccessful to use \$35,000 of the Local Government Climate Action Program funds as matching funds for the Agricultural Water Supply Feasibility Study.

CARRIED

8. REPORTS

- a. Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District – A. Needham
- Greenhouse Grower course – spoke with North Island College (NIC) after the April Agricultural Development Committee meeting and are planning to meet in June to discuss a fall grant application and course intake. NIC is responsible for developing the curriculum and confirming the teacher. Also discussing options for evening/weekend course offerings open to the public.
 - Request For Proposal (RFP) for the Food Security Emergency Planning project is out right now; closes on May 17, 2024.
 - Participated in the district-wide Pro-Day for SD70 on April 19th - 22 teachers attended, toured Ecole Grand-Cedres, Eighth Ave Learning Centre and ADSS, forged connections amongst teacher champions to rejuvenate school gardens across SD70.

- Feedback from teachers was positive and requested to do the same workshop next year to both give the gardens a boost and to strengthen the teacher champion network.
 - Committee cancelled the July 16th ADC.
 - Real Estate Federation of BC (REFBC) declined the ACRD Agricultural Water Infrastructure Grant application so will be taking a request to the May 22 Board meeting to leverage climate action grant funds for the balance of this project. If this is approved by the Board, an RFP can be developed.
 - A new Drought Information Portal at <https://droughtportal.gov.bc.ca/> is available. Great resource from the Province of BC including mapping.
- b. System Change Project – H. Shobe
Draft Online Agri-Food Database resource document aimed to have a central place for the public to access information on agriculture.
[ResourcesforWebsiteCHART-draft.pdf - Google Drive](#)
Final version will be more intuitive and available online. Final meeting for the System Change Project will be on June 12 @ 10am, open to all members of the public.
- c. City of Port Alberni – P. Deakin (Provided by A. Needham)
At the BC Economic Development Association Summit in Penticton, Pat visited Avery Farms <https://averyfarms.ca/> in Okanagan Falls which is a vertical lettuce grow operation in a purpose built facility. The disease and pest protocols were exceptional. Pat also moderated a session on agriculture that featured presentations by the Executive Director of The Growcer <https://www.thegrowcer.ca/> and two of their clients, as well as a short introduction by one of the staff at the BC Centre for Agritech Innovation at Simon Fraser University <https://www.sfu.ca/agritech-innovation.html>.
There would be value in setting up a virtual presentation by the BC Centre for Agritech Innovation, plus The Growcer, for our group and organizations providing food to homeless and vulnerable populations.
- d. School District # 70 – H. Zanette
Public Board meeting April 23 at EJ Dunn. Long range facility plan was adopted, ten-year plan in place. Schools are near or over capacity and will follow procedures required by the Province to deal with capacity issues. Capital Plan Bylaw passed. Healthy School Manager application is open, new position to coordinate all the food programs and services in the district.
[media.sd70.bc.ca/media/Default/frf/5/Healthy Schools Manager-2.pdf](https://media.sd70.bc.ca/media/Default/frf/5/Healthy_Schools_Manager-2.pdf)
Next SD 70 Board meeting May 21 at Ucluelet Secondary School
- e. Island Health – K. Ruel
In the process of hiring a Community Developer will have a presence at the Regional District level connecting services in the region. New data, from 2023, released in April showing that 23% of Canadians live in a food insecure household, a 24.5% increase from 2022. One in four children under 18 live in a food insecure household. Report specifies that food insecurity is racialized, showing Black and Indigenous households report 40.4% and 36.8% respectively.

[New data on household food insecurity in 2023 - PROOF \(utoronto.ca\)](#)

Helpful toolkit established by the First Nations Health Authority for understanding and reflecting on the words Traditional Foods, Food Security, Nutrition, and Medicine.

[FNHA-Understanding-Common-Language.pdf](#)

F. Boyko requested that the report on Food Insecurity be presented to the ACRD Board of Directors.

- f. Ministry of Agriculture & Food - T. O'Dell (Provided by A. Needham)
Emergency Preparedness is of importance to the Ministry of Agriculture. It is important to keep premise ID and types and numbers of livestock up to date to allow for more efficient emergency planning. There is a new website to create your own Emergency Preparedness Plan
[Make Your Emergency Ready Plan \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- g. Alberni Farmers' Institute – L. Aylard
A recent brunch event was well attended. Emergency Preparedness was discussed, interest in creating a committee to work on a local plan. Beaver Creek Community Hall is hosting an emergency preparedness workshop on May 24.
- h. Alberni District Fall Fair – A. Siddall
Interested in exploring new ideas for the Agricultural Education building at the Fall Fair. Layout of the fairgrounds will be changing to allow better access to the Agricultural Education building this year. The Agricultural Education building will also be available earlier this year and will be receiving a new coat of paint and new lighting. Also working on updating the Fall Fair Emergency Plan.
- i. Alberni Valley Food Security Society – A. Lewis
Working on the gleaning program plan. Summer student positions will be posted on May 15th and is open to applicants aged 15-30yrs. Received funding to put toward the expansion at Dry Creek Community Garden with one bed left to be rented out. Meeting with Kuu-us to discuss potential for collaboration and food security initiatives. Meeting with Alberni Valley News to discuss the Growers Guide and agricultural editorials in the newspaper.
- j. 4-H – P. Radcliffe (Provided by A. Needham)
Registration is now complete with 22 new members. First judging rally held April 20th. Bake and manure sale held at the Spirit Square Farmers Market. Project meetings underway, where members learn about their projects and work with their animals.
- k. Primary Agricultural Producers
L. Aylard – Discussed City of Pitt Meadows news article regarding proposed tax changes for BC farmland. [Link to article](#). The Committee discussed their opposition to these changes and requested more information and discussion at the June ADC Agenda.

The Agricultural Development Committee sends their condolences to the family of Desi Thompson on their recent loss and acknowledged the impact she had on the agricultural community in the Alberni Valley.

MOVED: F. Boyko

SECONDED: A. Siddal

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee accept these reports a-k for information.

CARRIED

9. LATE BUSINESS

a. Late Business

MOVED: F. Boyko

SECONDED: H. Zanette

The Agricultural Development Committee recommends that the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors direct staff to prepare a report to go to the ACRD Electoral Area Directors meeting to consider expediting updates to the ACRD Zoning Bylaw 15 to align with all provincial agricultural policies, regulations and proposed zoning allowances included in the most recent draft of Zoning Bylaw P1333 in order to ensure agricultural producers in the ACRD can explore economic diversification and food security opportunities allowed by the Agricultural Land Commission and the Ministry of Agriculture in all Electoral Areas.

CARRIED

10. QUESTION PERIOD

Questions/Comments from the public. The Administrative Assistant advised there were no questions or comments respecting an agenda topic from public:

- Participating in the Zoom webinar
- Submissions received by email at responses@acrd.bc.ca.

11. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19 am

Certified Correct:

Heather Shobe,
Chairperson

Kristin Kerr-Donohue,
Administrative Assistant