



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2025, 12:45 PM

Zoom/Board Room (Hybrid) – 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Tanya Shannon, Shannon Farms, Vice-Chairperson
Ann Siddall, Alberni District Fall Fair Association
Fred Boyko, Director, Electoral Area “B” (Beaufort)
Helen Zanette, SD70 Trustee
Erika Goldt, Eat West Coast
Cecilia Addy, Port Alberni Port Authority
Anna Lewis, Alberni Valley Food Security Society
Lisa Aylard, Alberni Farmers’ Institute, Stonehaven Farm
Sarah Rymer, Spirit Square Farmers’ Market
Wayne Smith, Alberni Farmers’ Institute
Amber Lamb, Feathers be Found

Ex-Officio Members

Pat Deakin, City of Port Alberni
Katie Miles, Coastal Roundtable Facilitator, Tofino Community Food Initiative
Penny Cote, Director, ACRD, Agricultural Advisory Committee

REGRETS:

Heather Shobe, Chairperson, Eden Tree Farm
Bob Collins, Arrowvale Farm
Patty Palmer, 4H
Kirsten Nesbitt, SD Healthy Schools Manager
Jen Cody, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Dietician
Thom O’Dell, Ministry of Agriculture & Food – Regional Agrologist
Kaley Ruel, Island Health Dietician
Larry McMahon, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Russell Dyson, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Robert Haynes, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Star Miklashek, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Ray Dol, Agricultural Advisory Committee

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/15-7-2025/>

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice-Chairperson called the meeting to order at 12:45 pm.

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

The Vice-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. Siddall

SECONDED: A. Lewis

THAT the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. DECLARATIONS

4. MINUTES

a. Agricultural Development Committee Minutes – April 15, 2025

MOVED: S. Rymer

SECONDED: A. Lewis

THAT the minutes of the Agricultural Development Committee meeting held on April 15, 2025 be adopted.

CARRIED

5. PRESENTATIONS

a. Cynthia Dick, General Manager of Administrative Services, ACRD regarding AVICC and UBCM Deadlines and Processes (Presentation and Report)

b. Serena Manhas, Planner 1, ACRD regarding Area D (Sproat Lake) OCP Introduction and Engagement (Presentation)

Committee is requested to support the OCP process by answering the questions that were outlined in the staff presentation. A. Needham will forward a copy of the questions to the Committee with responses due by July 31, 2025, also available online [here](#).

Committee recommended that fisheries and forestry values are included in the agricultural conversation and engagement.

6. CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

- a. **FARM TO SCHOOL BC**
2023-2024 Annual Report
- b. **ALBERNI VALLEY FOOD SECURITY SOCIETY**
Strategic Plan Summary
- c. **BC FOOD HUBS**
July Newsletter
- d. **BC MINISTRY OF HEALTH**
Farmers' Market Nutrition Program News
- e. **AGRISERVICE BC**
Islands Regional Newsletter – July 2025
- f. **HONOURABLE LANA POPHAM**
Copy of Letter from Minister of Agriculture and Food re: Farmgate Program Review

MOVED: A. Lewis
SECONDED: A. Siddall

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee receive items a-f for information.

CARRIED

After the July 15th Agricultural Development Committee meeting, staff received correspondence from the Minister of Health sent to ACRD Chair Jack on July 14th, in response to the ACRD letter dated June 3, 2025, regarding the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program. The correspondence indicated that the BC Association of Farmers' Markets received \$4.25 million from the Ministry of Health to continue the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program. The correspondence will be included in the ACRD Board of Directors agenda package for July 23, 2025, for their consideration.

7. REQUEST FOR DECISIONS

- a. **Request for Decision regarding Letter of Support for Farm to School BC**

MOVED: A. Lewis
SECONDED: S. Rymer

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee request that the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors direct staff to write a letter to the Honorable Josie Osborne, Minister of Health, asking for Farm to School BC funding to be reinstated.

CARRIED

MOVED: H. Zanette
SECONDED: S. Rymer

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee request that the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors direct staff to follow up on the response to the Letter of Support for Farm to School BC and if no response is received by September that ACRD participants at UBCM bring the issue forward with representatives from the BC Ministry of Health and

THAT the Letter of Support for Farm to School BC be forwarded directly to the EA Director for UBCM.

CARRIED

8. REPORTS

- a. Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District – A. Needham
- b. City of Port Alberni – P. Deakin
 - Cascadia Seaweed has large quantities of seaweed biomass left from their liquid kelp extraction process. Anna Lewis and the Alberni Valley Food Security Society helped to distribute this for use as fertilizer in the area this spring. If anyone is interested in using this product, or have testimonials of its application, please reach out to them.
 - Funding received for Marine Life and Cellulose Innovation Centre business case.
 - Worked with Deloitte Restructuring to ensure there were successful applications for the properties owned by the San Group. One company who will be operating out of the remanufacturing plant on Stamp Ave, IGV Housing Ltd., who build modular housing, also have ties to vertical food production in the UK. Will be reaching out to this company for more information on this side of their business when they are more established in Port Alberni.
- c. School District # 70 – H. Zanette
 - Two new daycares opening at Maquinna and Wood Schools in 2025/2026
 - 2025-2026 School-Year Budget passed
 - Learning on the Land program was very successful and will continue.
 - Board of Education Trustees sent a letter to Hon. Josie Osbourne, Minister of Health requesting the Farm to School program funding be reinstated.
 - Flourish, provide lunches for students in Sooke. Will share information with other school districts and organizations who want to bring healthy lunches to students.
- d. Ministry of Agriculture & Food – A. Needham for T. O’Dell
 - Investment Agriculture Foundation has a new grant opportunity for the Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program – up to \$100,000, with no cost matching requirement. Activities eligible for this grant funding are professional consultation services for the following: facilitation, project

- management, strategic planning, conflict resolution, or general assessment of water supply and demand.
- e. Alberni Farmers' Institute – W. Smith
- Loss of Bill Thomson brings food security back into the spotlight, he had a wealth of knowledge for new farmers and was a huge advocate across the province for agriculture. Also brings into consideration the potential loss of a buyer for hay producers in the area.
 - Participated in the Water Storage Workshop/Field Day on June 22 hosted by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Gained knowledge and would like to see more events like this in the future.
- f. Alberni District Fall Fair – A. Siddall
- Working with Nancy Wilmot to create new agriculture videos to display in the agriculture building at the Fall Fair.
 - Alberni Valley Fiber Guild, Alberni Valley Food Security Society, ACRD, Alberni Farmers' Institute, and some 4-H presentations will be included in the agriculture building, more room for others if needed.
 - Looking for volunteers from the agriculture sector to assist in the agriculture building.
 - Working on brochure with the AVFSS and Dock+, ACRD will assist to update the mapping.
- g. Alberni Valley Food Security Society – A. Lewis
- Farmgate+ application fillable form available on the AVFSS website now. If there are any farmstands that are known about, please reach out to Anna with that information.
 - Family Farm Day is coming together
 - Gleaning program has picked over 400lbs of cherries this year
- h. Eat West Coast – E. Goldt
- Louise Rogers from Tofino Farms, owned and operated at Long Beach Airport (LBA) producing in greenhouses for four years, will request to present at the ACRD West Coast Committee meeting on September 3rd requesting reasonable lease costs for agriculture lands at the LBA to support agriculture and food security in the region.
- i. Spirit Square Farmers' Market – S. Rymer
- Looking for more meat producers to attend the market, only one producer currently.
 - Looking for a Market Manager to take on the duties being covered by the current president.
- j. Port Alberni Port Authority, Dock + Food Processing Hub – C. Addy
- New member at the Dock+, Munch Gelato
- k. Coastal Foods Roundtable, Tofino Community Food Initiative – Katie Miles
- Good growing season on the West Coast
 - School in Ahousaht has revitalized their garden program. They have set up a greenhouse and are growing a lot of food. Hosting workshops for the community.

- District of Tofino is running a gardening focused kids camp, which sold out very quickly, lots of participation and interest.
 - Lots of effort going into educating the west coast community members on agriculture.
- I. Primary Agricultural Producers
- Shannon Farms – T. Shannon
 - Update that the Gather and Graze dining event has been cancelled due to scheduling conflict with the chef
 - Farm is busy working on their second cut of hay
 - Stonehaven Farm – L. Aylard
 - BC Cattleman Meet a Rancher event at Save-on-Foods on June 21 had a lot of interest in supporting local producers.
 - Alberni Growers’ Collective – Anna Lewis
 - Having a lot of success with sales at the market this year, selling out on a regular basis.

MOVED: A. Siddall

SECONDED: C. Addy

THAT the verbal reports a-l be received.

CARRIED

9. LATE BUSINESS

Question regarding involvement in the 2026 Island Ag Show, A Taste of the Alberni Valley. A. Needham will be reaching out to sub-committee participants in September to discuss options and securing product to showcase.

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

11. ADJOURN

MOVED: W. Smith

SECONDED: C. Addy

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 2:25 pm.

CARRIED

Certified Correct:

Tanya Shannon,
Vice-Chairperson

Kristin Kerr-Donohue,
Administrative Assistant