



ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026, 12:45PM

Hybrid - Zoom/Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Heather Shobe, Eden Tree Farm
Ann Siddall, Alberni District Fall Fair Association
Fred Boyko, Director, Electoral Area "B" (Beaufort)
Helen Zanette, SD70 Trustee
Cecilia Addy, Port Alberni Port Authority
Stephanie Stevens, Alternate Rep/Alberni Valley Food Security Society
Joanne Priestland, Hupacasath Community Farm
Tanya Shannon, Shannon Farms
Lisa Aylard, Alberni Farmers' Institute, Stonehaven Farm
Sarah Rymer, Spirit Square Farmers' Market
Wayne Smith, Alberni Farmers' Institute
Patty Palmer, 4H
Erika Goldt, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Coastal Ag Roundtable, Eat West Coast
Ex-Officio Members
Russell Dyson, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Penny Cote, Director, ACRD, Agricultural Advisory Committee

REGRETS:

Anna Lewis, Alberni Valley Food Security Society
Bob Collins, Arrowvale Farm
Kirsten Nesbitt, SD Healthy Schools Manager
Pat Deakin, City of Port Alberni
Katie Miles, Coastal Roundtable Facilitator, Tofino Community Food Initiative
Thom O'Dell, Ministry of Agriculture & Food – Regional Agrologist
Kaley Ruel, Island Health Dietician
Larry McMahon, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Robert Haynes, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Star Miklashek, Agricultural Advisory Committee
Ray Dol, Agricultural Advisory Committee

STAFF PRESENT:

Amy Needham, Sustainability Planner
Alex Dyer, General Manager of Planning & Development
Heather Zenner, Manager of Administrative Services
Brooke Eschuk, Planner 1

The meeting can be viewed on the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District website at:
<https://www.acrd.bc.ca/events/21-4-2026/>

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Manager of Administrative Services (MAS) called the meeting to order at 12:46 pm.

The MAS recognized this meeting is being held throughout the Nuw-chah-nulth territories.

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

Introductions - Committee Members and Staff present in the Boardroom and via Zoom.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON & VICE CHAIRPERSON

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON FOR 2026

The MAS conducted the election for Chairperson of the Agricultural Development Committee for 2026.

The MAS declared Joanne Priestland the position of Chairperson of the Agricultural Development Committee for 2026.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR 2026

The MAS conducted the election for Vice-Chairperson of the Agricultural Development Committee for 2026.

The MAS declared Helen Zanette to the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Agricultural Development Committee for 2026.

Chair Priestland took over as chairperson for the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda be approved as amended to add the Alberni Valley Food Security Society update in agenda item 12.(i).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. DECLARATIONS

5. INVITED PRESENTATIONS

6. DELEGATIONS (10 minute maximum)

- a. **Brooke Eschuck, Planner 1, ACRD presenting the Sproat Lake and Area OCP Update**

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- a. **Agricultural Development Committee Meeting – February 17, 2026**

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the Agricultural Development Committee meeting held on February 17, 2026 be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. PUBLIC INPUT PERIOD

9. CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

- a. **CLEAN FARMS**
Collection Events Information
- b. **BC AGRICULTURE COUNCIL**
News Release: 2026 Provincial Budget Released
- c. **CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT**
CRD Invasive Plant Species List
- d. **BC MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD**
Knowledge and Technology Transfer Program Guide 2026-2027
- e. **CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY**
Response to Livestock Traceability Regulations Questions
- f. **BC AGRICULTURAL CLIMATE ACTION RESEARCH NETWORK**
2026 Spring Newsletter
- g. **YOUNG AGRARIANS**
March 2026 Newsletter
- h. **AGRISERVICE BC**
April Islands Edition Regional Newsletter
- i. **AGSAFE BC**
Dirt on Ag Newsletter March 2026

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10. CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION

11. REQUEST FOR DECISION REPORTS

- a. **Request for Decision regarding Food Security Emergency Plan and Agricultural Water Plan Implementation**

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee request that the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors direct staff to implement the Alberni Valley Food Security Emergency Plan, West Coast Food Security Emergency Plan, Alberni Valley Agricultural Water Plan and Alberni Valley Livestock Emergency Plan as collaborative partnerships and grant opportunities arise.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

12. REPORTS

- a. Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District – A. Needham (included in agenda)

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee request that the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors direct staff to bring forward agriculture budget at the November meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- b. Primary Agricultural Producers

- Eden Tree Farm, Heather Schobe – Farmstand open on Fridays from 10am – 1pm or by appointment (during spring time) @ 6220 Karen Place.
- VI Grain, Wayne Smith – Concerned about the haying situation. There are surplus amounts of hay due to less cattle. Concerned that this may mean that hay fields may not get cut, and end up with invasive species.
- Shannon Farms, Tanya Shannon – Will be hosting a Spring Market on Sunday May 3rd 10 – 1pm. Other farms join and host a market. Two culinary events coming up. Heifers & Hors D'Oeuvres - July 25th (tickets are online and available now) and Gather & Graze – August 8th. Working with Alberni Valley Tourism and VI Tourism. Cows are now out until October.
- Stonehaven Farm, Lisa Aylard – Beef numbers are substantially down (in US as well). Lots of farmers are getting out of the business and young people are struggling to get in the market. Traceability rules are causing a problem. Great support from the community for locally grown product.

- c. School District # 70 – H. Zanette (included in agenda)

- d. Alberni Farmers' Institute – W. Smith – Hold coffee meetings which provides an opportunity to meet with Farmers Institute. Next meeting is May 3rd 1 – 3pm at Collins Farm. Working on a major project and will provide more details at next meeting.

- e. Alberni District Fall Fair – A. Siddall (attached). Summer Market will be held on July 17th and applications are open on the Fall Fair Website. Open to Crafters and Producers.
- f. Alberni Valley Food Security Society – S. Stevens (late item posted to website).
- g. Hupacasath Community Farm – J. Priestland – Joanne will be attending the ADC meetings and runs the Hupacasath Community Farm. Started two years ago and it has been a regenerative project. In good shape this year and hoping to expand, and will be getting chickens soon. Welcomed folks to come by the farm for a visit.
- h. Eat West Coast – E. Goldt – Closure of North Island College west coast office has negative impacts on the community. Camosun College has expressed interest in running program on the west coast. Remote communities on west coast are struggling to get funding for generators to refrigerate food. Indicated that the cost of purchase of compost at the West Coast Landfill is too high and is currently higher than purchasing compost at the local Co-op store. Drought is an issue for food production and would like to explore rainwater collection programs for residential properties. Working with the District of Ucluelet and Ucluelet First Nation on policies regarding greenhouse infrastructure. ACRD staff advised that they are working on building bylaw updates, which will capture greenhouses and temporary structures.

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agriculture Development Committee recommend to the ACRD Board of Directors to introduce greenhouse building permit exemptions for residential use in the ACRD building bylaw update and request that the Board encourage surrounding local governments and First Nations to introduce greenhouse building permit exemptions.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- i. Spirit Square Farmers' Market – S. Rymer (included in agenda). Young Agrarians were at the Market to educate the public. May 2nd plant/seedling sale with the young entrepreneurs from the Heartwood Learning Community. Star from Morning Star Wollen has gone through all of the hoops to be able to sell meat at the Farmers Markets. Required to have plug in freezers and will be looking for funding for more freezers.
- j. Port Alberni Port Authority, Dock + Food Processing Hub – C. Addy (included in agenda). Very busy at the Dock +, Nova Harvest getting ready to start high pressure processor. In May will be hosting an Open House, Minister Popham has been invited. Ice machine is going to be operating soon. Less interruptions and quality product.
- k. Coastal Foods Roundtable, Tofino Community Food Initiative – Erika on behalf of Katie Miles. Seedy Sunday on May 3rd – lots of vendors with free compost and free lunch. Also held Coastal Foods Roundtable recently and had Kwantlen Polytechnic University in attendance. Great turnout, including Amy Needham.
- l. 4-H – P. Radcliffe (included in agenda). Regional public speaking event was held on April 11th. Participants from Comox to Victoria. Excellent turnout and thanked Fall Fair and Five Acre Shaker for the space. Will advertise 4-H at the

Fall Fair and through schools. Registration will be open in the fall with program starting in January. Lisa hosted a 4H participant to share knowledge on her farm.

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee receives the reports a-l.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

13. OTHER BUSINESS (including Late Items)

Kwantlen Polytechnic University is hosting workshops for their Bi-Regional Food System Project, four workshops in the Alberni Valley and four workshops on the west coast. Working their way across the island, and now in the ACRD. Amy Needham is working closely with Kwantlen as per the direction of the Board. May 7th and May 30th are the next set of workshops.

Sproat Lake Official Community Plan Open House is on May 4th.
Sproat Lake Community Association is holding a Water Fair soon (date not confirmed).

14. QUESTION PERIOD

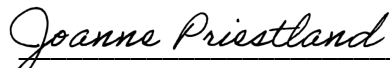
15. ADJOURN

The Motion was MOVED and SECONDED

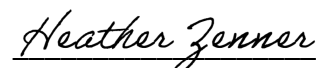
THAT this meeting be adjourned at 2:47 pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Certified Correct:



Joanne Priestland,
Chairperson



Heather Zenner,
Manager of Administrative Services