



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2023, 9:30 AM

Via Zoom

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Ann Siddall, Chairperson
Fred Boyko, Director, Electoral Area "B" (Beaufort)
Helen Zanette, SD70 Trustee
Erika Goldt, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Coastal Agricultural Roundtable,
Eat West Coast
Heather Shobe, Eden Tree Farm
Anna Lewis, Alberni Valley Food Security Society
Tanya Shannon, Shannon Farms
Lisa Aylard, Alberni Farmers' Institute, Stonehaven Farm

REGRETS:

Pat Deakin, City of Port Alberni
Helene Dufour, Island Health
Cecilia Addy, Port Alberni Port Authority
Jen Cody, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Thom O'Dell, Ministry of Agriculture
Bob Collins, Arrowvale Farm
Cathy Burkowsky, Avalon Farm
Victoria Lake, Effingham Oyster
Alex Taylor, Shelter Farm
Janette Cormier, Happy Hollow Farm
Theresa O'Neil, Spirit Square Farmers Market

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/24-10-2023/>

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:32 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.

The Chairperson provided instructions on how to communicate questions and/or comments during the meeting.

T. Shannon left at 9:33 am.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED: F. Boyko

SECONDED: A. Lewis

THAT the agenda be approved with the addition of the following late items:

Request for Decision regarding letter of support for Dock+ grant application for cooling infrastructure improvements.

Report on System Change Project – H. Shobe

CARRIED

E. Goldt left at 9:35 am.

T. Shannon joined at 9:35 am.

E. Goldt joined at 9:38 am.

3. MINUTES

a. Agricultural Development Committee Meeting held Tuesday, August 15, 2023

MOVED: F. Boyko

SECONDED: T. Shannon

THAT the minutes of the Agricultural Development Committee meeting held on August 15, 2023 be received.

CARRIED

4. CORRESPONDENCE

a. AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Adopted Terms of Reference

b. AGRISERVICE BC

- August 2023 – eBulletin
- September 2023 – eBulletin

c. AGSAFE BC

- Dirt on Agriculture – August 2023

d. INVESTMENT AGRICULTURE FOUNDATION

- Growing Today – September 2023

e. BC GOVERNMENT NEWS

- Canada, B.C. Helps Farmers Mitigate, Adapt to Climate Change

The Agricultural Development Committee received correspondence a-e.

5. REQUEST FOR DECISIONS

- a. Request for Decision regarding letter of support for Dock+ application for Cooling Infrastructure Grant.**

H. Zanette joined at 9:40 am.

MOVED: L. Aylard

SECONDED: F. Boyko

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee recommend that the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Board of Directors direct staff to draft a letter of support for the Port Alberni Port Authority's grant application to expand cooling infrastructure at the Dock+.

CARRIED

7. REPORTS

- a. Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District – A. Needham**
- Update on IAF grants in correspondence. New, since agenda went out, is the BC Climate Agri-Solutions Fund Beneficial Management Practices Grants.
 - Update on Coastal Agricultural Round Table and Agricultural Water Supply Round Table. ToR's for both working groups need to be updated to incorporate the whole ACRD region, not just Alberni area.
 - Update on NIC Meat Processing Program – Working with NIC to offer this again. NIC is looking to do a Level 2, need to have a few more Level 1 offered first.
 - Province of BC is hosting Virtual Workshops on Emergency Management Regulations.
The Provincial government is looking for feedback on post-emergency financial assistance and local authority emergency management and is hosting several public engagement sessions over November to discuss key questions and gather perspectives. These virtual workshops are being held to support BC's modernization of emergency management legislation. If you are interested in registering or would like to learn more, please visit: [Virtual Workshops - Emergency Management Regulations \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/virtual-workshops-emergency-management-regulations). If these times do not work for you, please consider providing a [written submission](#) to the

Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness by December 31, 2023 at: modernizeEM@gov.bc.ca

Public engagement sessions for small businesses/individuals for post-emergency financial assistance regulations

- **Who this is for:** Small business owners, farm operators, landlords, employees or representatives from charity or volunteer organizations, homeowners or residential tenants, including those with experience accessing the current Disaster Financial Assistance program
 - **Session date and times:**
 - Small business/individual session 1: November 1, 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
 - Small business/individual session 2: November 10, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
 - Small business/individual session 3: November 17, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
- b. School District # 70 – H. Zanette
- i. United Way Grant – Climate resiliency available to non-profits, up to 20k infrastructure based. Information at <https://uwbc.ca/program/grants/>
- c. Alberni Farmers’ Institute – L. Aylard
- i. AGM scheduled for November 15 at Beaver Creek Hall. Will be a potluck dinner with meeting to follow. Membership dues will be collected, \$25 and includes Country Life in BC magazine monthly.
- d. Alberni District Fall Fair – A. Siddall
- i. Fall Fair had over 22,000 people over the 4 days. Will be reorganizing layout of vendors to allow better access to the Agriculture Education buildings next year. Volunteers have stepped up to host Old MacDonald’s Farm petting zoo next year. Livestock entries were way down this year, due to highway closures, worries of long waits with livestock.
 - ii. Working with ACRD to review the agreement for the fairgrounds to be used as emergency facility for hobby farm livestock.
- e. Alberni Valley Food Security Society – A. Lewis
- i. AGM on Nov 8th @ Echo Field House – Dinner provided
 - ii. Organization has started for 2024 Seedy Saturday event
 - iii. Opportunity through Farm to School Program to be a host organization for students interested in food security. Would run from Sept to March. Can work on school gardens, seed starting through winter. Suggestion from H. Shobe to have students involved in committee work, grant applications, etc. not just the production side.
- f. Eat West Coast – E. Goldt
- i. New Biosphere Center on track to open in 2025. Will have office, community space, community kitchen, collaborations with Dock+.
 - ii. Coastal Agricultural RoundTable - great opportunity for producers to connect. Challenging to get support for this process this past year. Brand new CBT network of organizations and researchers, food security and sovereignty is a big part of their conversation.
 - iii. Launching new Vital Signs – semi-annual report that Clayoquot Biosphere puts out looking at indicators of regional environmental and community

- health. November 10, launch party. New expanded sections on climate change and infrastructure and sustainability. New online hub for all indicator data from Vital Signs reports
- iv. Meetings coming up with United Way to find out more about grants mentioned by H. Zanette.
- g. NTC – H. Shobe
- i. Systems Change Project had funds to support NTC food sovereignty. 2024 funds will go towards traditional food gathering event. Even will be held in Port Alberni, March 21/22, 2024. Call for proposals for coordinator for that event will be going out shortly. Can contact H. Shobe for more information.
- h. Dock+ Food Processing Hub – C. Addy e-mail read by A. Needham
- i. We have a new tenant in one of our processing spaces – Old Habits Fermentation – he is the only commercial manufacturer of traditionally made fish sauce in North America.
 - ii. We are in the process of signing on Black Jaguar Chocolate, an award winning chocolatier, who will be leasing our last available space at the Dock+
 - iii. Sutra Wholesale Foods has started operating out of the kitchen and as their business expands, so does their operational needs for cold storage and freezers.
 - iv. The Blast Freezer is now operational, and I am working with CFIA and VIHA to find ways to use this freezer for the kitchen members specifically. This will be a huge benefit to our members and for future opportunities such as the Meat Processing class.
 - v. We are working on an application for funding under the AIF to replace our aging transformer which in its current state limits our ability add more processing and /or cold storage space. We continue to look for other funding opportunities as well.
 - vi. The icehouse operation this season was a success and we sold over 600 tons of ice to the commercial, recreational and first nation fisheries as well as to processors at the Dock+.
- i. Primary Agricultural Producers
- i. H. Shobe
 - a. Systems Change Project Update
 - Network call with people from around the province regional level to support Agriculture. 3 topics –
 - A. In final year, putting together database of resources to support local agriculture. Regional focus, what info is important to include, what are the challenges, what information to include, how to keep it current.
Committee discussion on what they would like to see included in the database.
 - B. Min of Ag hosted event to bring together different Farmer’s Institutes (FI’s) in BC in 2018/19. Part of System Change Project is recognizing that FI’s are a great resource. FI’s are legislated under a Provincial Act, so can consult directly with government.

Exploring how to assist the FI's get connected, how to support and advocate to support Agriculture. Hosting a Zoom event to get the FI's connected, share what they need, what they are working on, support working together, see what comes out of potential for collaboration.

Committee discussion followed regarding whether this call should be open to people looking to support the FI, or just members of FI's to be included, and how this can best support FI's.

It was noted by H. Shobe that because FI's are legislated, the Ministry of Agriculture has Superintendent of Farmer's Institutes. Angela Boss is the new Superintendent and is quite keen on looking at how to support the FI's better.

- C. Extension and Research Support was focus of last year's project. Couple of things coming out of this now:
 - a. BC Acarn supports extension and climate adaptation research – hosting a program to share academic knowledge in a more digestible way for the community.
 - b. Regional Extension program started – website is set up now – Vancouver Island has 1 working group made of farmers engaging with regional agrologist, similar to climate program from cycle before. More directly involved with the ministry. Producers are receiving an honorarium to participate.
 - c. Jenny Horne @ VIU Continuing Education Association of BC. Grant application included financial support for a network of academic institutions working together to support Agriculture Extension services. Short courses going to be starting for agriculture. Province has a fund called StrongerBC future skills grant, offers \$3500 for every adult in BC to put towards continuing education. Specific catalogue on what the funds are used for.
- i. T. Shannon –Province of BC has passed legislation on short term rentals. Principal residence restriction has some exceptions related to AgroTourism. Looking to see if this will affect housing seasonal farm workers. More information to come on this.

MOVED: F. Boyko

SECONDED: L. Aylard

THAT the Agricultural Development Committee accept these reports a – i for information.

CARRIED

8. LATE BUSINESS

Additions to ACRD Staff Report – A. Needham

- v. Community Engagement Sessions Update
Has been a good turnout for these sessions. Utilizing the consistent topics seen from meetings and social media, have used these to create the table sessions to focus. Agriculture information will be forwarded along to the Ministry of Agriculture.
- vi. Climate Action –Climate Leadership Symposium Update
Cross ministerial communication and cooperation is a focus, ministries now have unified messaging coming down to local governments. There are a lot of cross-ministerial issues, and parallels between food and climate action, so is nice to see more collaboration.

9. 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.

10. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 am.

Certified Correct:

Ann Siddall

Ann Siddall,
Chairperson

Kristin Kerr-Donohue

Kristin Kerr-Donohue,
Administrative Assistant