

MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD MEETING HELD AT THE BRAZEAU COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, EOC MEETING ROOM, IN DRAYTON VALLEY, ALBERTA ON THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER Dallas Ekstrom, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

PRESENT Dallas Ekstrom, Chairperson & Member at Large
Sara Wheale, Vice Chairperson & Councillor
Cody Brooks, Member at Large
Mike Mueller, Member at Large (Via GoTo Meeting)
Matt Martinson, Agricultural Fieldman (Via GoTo Meeting)
Corbyn Pankonin, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman
Nancy Chambers, Agricultural Technician/Recording Secretary

ABSENT Donna Wiltse, Councillor
Heidi Swan, Councillor
Shawn McKerry, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

GUESTS Tom Tomson, Fire Chief and Kamil Lasek, Deputy Fire Chief of Inspections and Safety

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Additions/Deletions to and Adoption of Agenda

030/21 Moved by S. Wheale to adopt the agenda with additions:
6d) Ag Mental Health Workshop
7a) Agri-Stability
8c) Letter from Red Deer County ASB Re: Provincial ASB Conference
8d) RMA Resolution - ASB Provincial Committee Funding

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Adoption of Minutes

031/21 Moved by C. Brooks to adopt the minutes of the Agricultural Service Board meeting of February 17, 2021 as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS ARISING none

DELEGATIONS/ APPOINTMENTS

Fire Services

Fire Chief Tom Tomson and Deputy Fire Chief of Inspections and Safety Kamil Lasek, spoke about Fire Permits. A handout pertaining to Fire Permitting was distributed to members. Discussion ensued regarding the reason for fire permits, what the field officer looks at when considering the issuance of fire



permits, safety, weather conditions, risks, experience of the permittee, equipment available, and acceptable burning materials.

H. Swan entered the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Fire permitting is a free service provided to landowners in Brazeau County and is an opportunity for field officers to educate on safe burning practices. Hold over fires or carry over fires can be very costly for the municipality and the landowner when considering manpower, equipment, air suppression, and contract crews that can be called upon to fight a fire. There is legislation in place for municipalities to recover costs from landowners that are negligent in burning.

County permit guidelines follow the Provincial guidelines for factors such as height and width of piles, and spacing. The safety of the public and the residents is the priority, and they will work with the landowner to adjust guidelines as needed, based on circumstances and experience.

Members asked how many permits were issued in 2020? On average about 600 permits per year. Given the lack of snowfall and early warmth, spring conditions may come early. Fire Services looks at when the rains come and green up starts. Last year, they saw less human-caused fires, but expect more normal this year. Crews are prepping equipment and reviewing procedures.

Members asked if there is communication with West Central Airshed Society monitoring air quality, especially when burning periods are extended beyond a few days. H. Swan can help facilitate contacts for WCAS and Fire Department to get in touch with each other.

Garbage, treated lumber, and animal byproducts are some of the prohibited items that cannot be burned. That is why it is important for field officers to attend on site and see the burn materials to advise if it can be burned or not.

Recruitment process is ongoing. Always looking for more members.

Members asked if we have contact lists of companies that have available fire fighting equipment. The Fire Department has a list of certified individuals and equipment. They can also get lists from Forestry when needed. Mutual Aid Agreements for additional manpower are also in place.

Members commented about the experience of field officers issuing permits and also the experience of the landowners doing the burn. Through the process of starting with small burns, the field officers can assess the experience and success of landowners and be sure they understand the safety requirements needed and can handle the burn appropriately.



T. Thomson and K. Lasek left the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

Public Input Session

D. Ekstrom opened the Public Input Session at 10:06 a.m. No members of the public were in attendance or on the conference call. D. Ekstrom closed the Public Input Session at 10:07 a.m.

**AGRICULTURE
REPORTS**

Assistant Agricultural Fieldman Report February/March 2021

C. Pankonin provided a verbal review of the Assistant Agricultural Fieldman report. Weed program amendments refers to adjustments for spraying with one truck rather than two and also working on the emergency response plan. Members discussed the many webinars that have been available this spring.

Member Reports

Member at Large M. Mueller reported on:

- Loving the weather, itching to get out in the field, scouting wet spots.

Member at Large C. Brooks reported on:

- Attended the dugouts webinar.

Councillor S. Wheale reported on:

- Ready to start calving season. Majority are heifers.
- Shelters built.
- Prices were low in January for bred heifers. The prices are now back up.
- Waiting for frost to come out so fencing can be done and crops put in.

Councillor H. Swan reported on:

- Will re-seed pastures this year using a Timothy Fescue mix.
- Fencing to be re-done.

Member at Large D. Ekstrom reported on:

- Herbicide rebate policy discussions with residents.
- Weeds and mowing need to be taken care of on County road allowances.

032/21 Moved by S. Wheale to receive all the Ag reports and the Fire Services report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. Ekstrom called for a break at 10:25 a.m. and the meeting resumed at 10:34 a.m.



OLD BUSINESS

AG-3 Herbicide Rebate Program Policy

C. Pankonin provided a draft of the AG-3 policy with Council's requested changes. The policy will go back to Council for approval on April 6, 2021. C. Pankonin clarified that the reason for the September 30 deadline is so that an inspection can be completed to ensure the success of the treatment.

033/21 Moved by S. Wheale to receive for information.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Weed Webinar Information

C. Pankonin provided information on a Weed Webinar tentatively planned for May 13, 2021 at 4pm. S. Wheale mentioned sensitivities to Water Hemlock and Burdock and to caution residents on handling them. H. Swan asked if we can have something about weeds in the Brazeau County News Express. Advertisements regarding weeds and vegetation programs will be published on Facebook and in the newspapers.

M. Mueller asked about item (i) on the Herbicide Rebate Program Policy regarding inspection after the herbicide application is completed. C. Pankonin advised that if the inspection fails because weed control is not achieved, the rebate is not issued.

034/21 Moved by H. Swan to accept for information.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Hemp Working Group Update

Members reviewed the report provided by the Hemp Working Group.

M. Mueller commented on a news article regarding a new hemp with high CBD content. This is different from the hemp grown for the fibre or the seed, as it was developed specifically for the oil content.

035/21 Moved by H. Swan to receive the Hemp Working Group report for information.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Ag Mental Health Workshop

H. Swan attended the online Ag Mental Health Workshop hosted by Wetaskiwin on February 23, 2021. Unfortunately, it was not well attended. An entire day of the same speaker was not ideal and a full day might be too long. Additionally, the time of the webinar being during the day may have contributed to the low attendance. She noted that people in need of support may not sign on for a webinar. It's important to have additional topics to draw them in, such as Rural Crime and Fire Smart. She suggested asking Do More Ag if they can do a 20 minute presentation in the evening, and also



reaching out to Staff Sergeant Harpreet Dhaliwal who is now with the Beaumont RCMP detachment, as well as the Provincial contact for Fire Smart.

Members remarked there are many mental health webinars happening now.

036/21 Moved by H. Swan to direct Administration to reach out to the Do More Ag Foundation, the RCMP and Fire Smart for information as discussed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. Ekstrom asked that an email be sent to the board to advise of the progress and results of conversations for this workshop.

NEW BUSINESS

AgriStability

The Federal government is proposing changes to AgriStability, which should be good for farmers. The three prairie provinces have not signed on yet. He suggests sending a letter to the Ag minister and cc other Counties to encourage the Province to accept this change.

037/21 Moved by M. Mueller to direct Administration to draft a letter to the Ag Minister and cc the other Counties to encourage the Province to agree to the Federal Government AgriStability changes, with the letter coming back to the ASB for review prior to sending.

M. Martinson added that the commodity groups in Alberta have sent correspondence to encourage the Provincial Ag minister to sign on to the new AgriStability program. The letter from Brazeau County ASB does not have to go into details about the program but rather just state that we support the recommendation of the Alberta commodity groups.

IN FAVOUR:

H. Swan
D. Ekstrom
C. Brooks
M. Mueller

OPPOSED:

S. Wheale

CARRIED



**CORRESPONDENCE
/ ITEMS FOR
INFORMATION**

Farm Safety Centre Funding Request

Members discussed the funding request from the Farm Safety Centre.

038/21 Moved by S. Wheale to provide \$3776.50 to the Farm Safety Centre for the delivery of the Safety Smarts Program.

IN FAVOUR:

S. Wheale

H. Swan

C. Brooks

D. Ekstrom

OPPOSED:

M. Mueller

CARRIED

2021 ASB Meeting Schedule

039/21 Moved by S. Wheale to approve the 2021 ASB meeting schedule as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Letter from Red Deer County ASB - Provincial ASB Conference

Members discussed the letter from Red Deer County ASB regarding the resolution portion of the recent Provincial ASB Conference. Members discussed the process for ASB and RMA resolutions going to zones/regions and then to a resolution committee prior to going to the Provincial committee levels.

040/21 Moved by S. Wheale to receive the letter for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

RMA Resolution - ASB Provincial Committee Funding

H. Swan reported that Brazeau County's resolution on ASB Provincial Committee Funding passed at about 85% in favour at the RMA conference this week. She added that the Agriculture Minister and the Premier both spoke about how agriculture and food production are a large part in the economic recovery out of COVID.

041/21 Moved by H. Swan to accept the resolution that was passed at RMA for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



ADJOURNMENT

042/21

Moved by S. Wheale that the regular Agricultural Service Board meeting of March 18, 2021, adjourn at 11:39 a.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



ASB CHAIRPERSON



AG FIELDMAN

