

The Agricultural Service Board of the Municipal District of Wainwright No. 61 met in the Administration Building at 1:00 a.m., Friday, December 11, 2015.

Present: Chairman – Councillor Myron Zajic
Councillor Phil Valleau

Farmer Members – Neil Pugh, Grant Rathwell and Don Jones

Agricultural Fieldman – James Schwindt

Assistant Agricultural Fieldman and A.S.B Secretary – Tanis Ponath

Pest Control Officer – Rod Gabrielson

ASB Foreman – Dennis Fuder

The Chairman Clr. Myron Zajic called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

22/15

Moved by Neil Pugh to approve the agenda as presented.

CARRIED

23/15

Moved by Grant Rathwell that the minutes from June 12, 2015 be accepted as presented. **CARRIED**

The board reviewed the September, October, November, and December monthly reports that were outlined in their packages. Clr. Zajic suggested that monthly reports be sent out to our farm members to give them insight to our monthly activities. The board was in agreement.

Correspondence was reviewed by James Schwindt and Clr. Zajic

1. (July 6, 2015) Doug Macaulay, Program Manager, Agricultural Service Board Program; letter informing that our ASB board has been approved for an allocation of \$208,359.49 for the 2015 year.
2. (September 28, 2015) Laura Nelson, Executive Director, Farm Safety Center; a letter and report outlining the delivery of the program to individuals in our area as well as across the province.
3. (October 1, 2015) Minister Oneil Carlier, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry; a letter responding to the declaration of an agricultural disaster for the M.D. of Wainwright.
4. (November 10, 2015) Glen Gateman, ASB Chairman, Vulcan County; sent a letter to the Minister of Transportation regarding their roadside mowing program. Sufficient funds should be reinstated for the 2016 season to ensure weeds are properly controlled along highways.
5. (November/December) Leduc County, M.D. of Bonnyville, County of St. Paul, Brazeau County, Westlock County, Big Lakes County, County of Wetaskiwin and AAMDC; all send letter to the Premier of Alberta outlining concerns with Bill 6 the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act.
6. (December 9, 2015) Alberta Agriculture and Forestry; send out the conference information for the Agronomy Update 2016 which is from January 19-20.

Clr. Zajic informed the board that at the AAMDC conference the Alberta Government is making additional cuts to its Vegetation Management Program and if Prohibited Noxious weeds are found a written notice must be submitted. James Schwindt stated that there is resolution coming forth to the ASB conference in January.

Information regarding the upcoming Agronomy Update 2016 has been added to the M.D. website and Facebook page for any producers who are interested in attending the event.

Accepted as Information.

24/15

Moved by Clr. Valleau to accept the correspondence. **CARRIED**

James Schwindt, Agricultural Fieldman presented his report:

James gave an update on the roadside mowing program for 2015. Overall this year's program went very well with no major issues. James asked for feedback from the board. All farm members as well as councilors were pleased with the job done in their areas but a few minor issues did come up. Farm member Don Jones asked what the width of the cut is suppose to be, James informed him that it is 8ft. Farm member Don Jones stated that in a few areas he thought the width was cut a bit short. Clr. Zajic stated that the grass could have been cut shorter in a couple of areas. James informed the board that the biggest issue that arises is producers who want to make ditch hay. We give producers till July 15 to get the hay off, and if there is a swath already cut the mowers are suppose to honor the swath. James stated that if any board members have any suggestions on this issue to share their thoughts with Clr. Valleau and Clr. Zajic and they will take them to the planning meeting. James informed the board that Round Corner Welding has 2 more years left in their contract.

James presented the board with a map of the grasshopper and clubroot surveys that were completed this year. A handout was given showing the areas that were surveyed by James and Tanis. Clr. Zajic was interested in knowing where the hot spots were in our M.D. James informed him that there are some areas in the Chauvin area that show higher numbers. Farm member Don Jones inquired what a large amount of grasshoppers looks like. James stated his and Tanis's highest numbers were between 14-20 grasshoppers per meter squared. James informed the board that an outlook for 2016 will be sent out by Alberta Agriculture in the new year. James informed the board that we still have not found any clubroot in the municipality.

James discussed the 2016 upcoming ASB conference. Registration has been sent and the agenda has been emailed to the board. James informed the board that there is going to be an additional presentation by OH&S on Wednesday Jan 20, 2015. During the first evening at the reception the Agricultural Minister Oneil Carlier is in the process of being confirmed to speak.

Tanis Ponath, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman presented her report:

Tanis informed the board that we received the results from insects surveys completed this year. Both bertha armyworms and diamondback moths presented very low numbers. Cabbage seedpod weevil surveys were carried out by Alberta Agriculture this year. Tanis's swede midge traps were clean, however in another survey conducted by Alberta Agriculture a single field near Chauvin was identified. We have not received the results from the wheat midge surveys yet.

Tanis informed the board that in the December issue of the Municipal Agricultural Connection a survey was sent out. The survey was distributed in hopes to gain feedback from producers regarding, what they would like to see more information on, workshops that interest them, and if they benefit from the work that the ASB does.

Tanis asked the board which members would like to attend FarmTech this year. The conference is from January 26-28. Clr. Zajic stated he would like to attend the conference.

Tanis updated the board on the seed cleaning plant inspections that were completed on November 19, 2015, both plants passed. There is a new safety measure that was put into place this year for insurance purposes. It requires each plant to have a fire guard blackened with 6 feet for the facility and grass cut short for 20 feet. Both plants were not in compliance and both plants inquired whether the M.D. could spray around the buildings to get rid of the vegetation. The board decided to forward any requests about this issue to council and they could decide what services would be provided to the seed cleaning plants.

Rod Gabrielson, Pest Control Officer presented his report:

Rod presented the board with the rat control inspection update. Rod stated that when he was on sick leave one of the employees in the RM of Manitou Lake stepped up and helped complete rat inspections. No rat infestations have been found this year, same as in Saskatchewan along our borders. Clr. Zajic inquired which areas of Saskatchewan we complete inspections, Rod stated that he does the RM of Manitou Lake. Rod informed the board that there might be some regulation changes in Saskatchewan regarding rat control, however, when those changes come forth he will bring them to council. Rod gave an update on the pack rats found in the town of Chauvin, he stated he caught 9 in total and there should be no more rats.

Rod updated the board on the status of the bait order. The bait order has been completed and submitted. Rod informed the board that he should receive the amount that he ordered this year.

Rod led the board in a bait station discussion. Rod informed that board that last year he only received half of the bait stations that he ordered. Rod stated that the Government of Alberta is no longer supplying funding for bait stations. Rod stated that the stations are useful to give to farmers to put bait in. To be in compliance legally all bait must be placed in a bait station. Rod brought some numbers forward to the board stating that there are 2 types of bait stations that could be purchased. A box with the weight cost \$18.10 per box and a station without the weight costs \$17.50. Rod stated that bait stations can be purchased on a pallet of 96. Rod suggested to the board that we be proactive and provide bait stations to producers. Farm member Grant Rathwell suggested to the board that we charge the producer half of the cost for the bait stations. This information will be carried forward to our budget meeting when we set out budget for 2016.

Rod informed the board that the last beaver traps were pulled from Ribstone; to date Rod has removed 165 beavers. There numbers are up from last year.

Clr. Zajic inquired if there were any other rat infestations in the province this year. Rod informed him that there was an isolated incident in Bon Accord this year, and the Province is still managing the rat infestations in Special Areas and Medicine Hat.

Dennis Fuder, ASB Foreman presented his report:

Dennis informed the board that all truck parts have been ordered. The deck has been completed and the nurse tank along with the chemical pots has been strapped down. Dennis stated that the truck is on track to be finished by the end of January. Clr. Zajic inquired if we are installing a brand new GPS, Dennis stated that we are. There are two other components that are being installed used from the old spray truck because of the costs. Dennis stated that they are however, easy to fix and accessible if need be. Clr. Valleau inquired that since we took parts off the old spray truck if we will still be able to sell it in working condition. Dennis stated we could because he replaced the parts. Farm member Grant Rathwell asked if we sold the spray truck that was replaced last year, James informed him that we did. Clr. Zajic inquired how the new boom worked on the truck built last year. Dennis stated it worked well but there were a few minor problems, and they were fixed when the new boom was made.

25/15 Moved by Clr. Valleau to recommend to council that we place unit 012 the complete spray truck which includes 2001 F-450 4X4 serial number 1FDEF47S91EC55094, deck and injection system. By placing advertising in the newspaper and sending information to industry in early February. **CARRIED**

26/15 Moved by Grant Rathwell to accept the reports. **CARRIED**

The board took a break from 2:40-2:50

The board discussed the 2016 budget and capital projects progress. James presented the board with the ASB monthly expense handout. James stated that we are anticipating being under budget this year. At our next service board meeting we will be setting our budget for 2016 and will have more concrete numbers from 2015. The handout also included the status of our accounts to date.

Clr. Valleau inquired about the status of Strychnine for 2016. James informed him that as of now Maxim is stating that they will have good supply and we should be able to get our full order when submitted.

James informed the board that we are on schedule to replace Dennis's spray truck next to stay on track with our capital budget. The board's recommendations to build a new truck will be taken to council for the budget meeting. James informed the board that another capital item was to replace the ranger. James stated that we use our ranger for spot spraying and grass seeding. It is a 2008 model but has had some hard miles put on it; the ranger has started to show wear and has needed repairs. Current models have bigger engines and a different braking system that would make grass seeding and spraying safer especially on hills. Clr. Valleau would like to see some research on costs and the pros/cons of trading in our current model or selling it.

James stated that there are no other capital items for 2016. Upcoming items could be the cattle scale. The board is unsure whether current use warrants a new scale. James stated he is not putting this item forward to council at this time. Farm member Neil Pugh inquired if there have been complaints with our current scale. James informed him that there has been a few however, we have taken the scale back and attempted to fix the problems.

James led a discussion with the board on the proposed policy changes for 2016. Below are the proposed changes that will be forwarded to the December 18, 2015 policy meeting.

Situations Where Beaver Dam Removal is Required:

5.1.7 (pg. 80) Change to – “as deemed warranted or authorized by the M.D. (Agricultural Fieldman, Director of Transportation or Director of Public Works)”.

In Culvert Dams:

5.17 (pg. 81) Change to – “Dams located inside culverts can be removed when safe to do so by hand when water depth and current do not cause excessive footing instability. Mechanical removal using push rods, posts, chains, hooks with cables and any other method may be used if it deemed safe to do so by the workers. If the worker deems the blockage to be stable, then they may enter the culvert to place the removal device.

In Stream Dams:

5.17 (pg. 81) Change “Vibrogel” to “Geogel”.

5.17 (pg. 81) Add the following first– “ The blaster will determine the minimum amount of Geogel sticks required to effectively and within the regulations open a suitable hole in the problem beaver dam to drain the flood water”.

Fire Permits:

5.3.2 (pg. 85) Change in second paragraph “Majority of Council” to “Majority of Councilors”.

Municipal Vegetation Management Program:

5.3.5 (pg. 87) First paragraph – remove “and grass seeding”. Second Paragraph last sentence changed to read as follows – “A Weed Control Application Ticket (Schedule A.S.B. 3) must be completed by the landowner or lessee for all private spraying requests. Furthermore, in the cases where the lessee is requesting the control work the actual landowner must be contacted and give verbal consent to the Weed Inspector to go ahead with the work”.

M.D. Targeted Weed Species:

5.3.7 – (pg.88) Remove Knapweed Species (PN) and Add Diffuse Knapweed (PN), Spotted Knapweed (PN), Brown Knapweed (PN), Himalayan Balsam (PN),

Tree Orders:

5.3.11 (pg. 95) – Re-word Paragraph to read as follows – “The Municipal District of Wainwright has species and tree care awareness packages as well as tree order forms for some of the bulk tree ordering locations available for landowners. The M.D. of Wainwright has a tree planter (for seedlings) available for landowners to book and borrow for planting their trees”.

27/15

Moved by Neil Pugh to forward the ASB board proposed policy changes to the upcoming policy meeting. **CARRIED**

The board discussed the Regional Resolution Response Reviews,

The board discussed the first resolution; proactive vegetation management on Alberta provincial highways.

It was with the consensus of the board that they are in favor of this resolution

The board discussed the second resolution; agricultural plastics recycling. Clr. Zajic informed the board that the AAMDC conference the new government is supportive of this topic. It was with the consensus of the board that they are in favor of this resolution.

The board discussed the third resolution; climate stations. James informed the board that a couple years ago Wainwright received 3 more weather stations in our municipality. No consensus the board, they would like to hear what is said when discussed.

The board discussed the fourth resolution; hay insurance program. Both Clr. Zajic and farm member Neil Pugh both expressed concern for the increased pressure on the adjuster. Clr. Zajic expressed that it should be up to the farmer to determine quality. No consensus with the board, they would like to hear what is said when discussed.

The board discussed the fifth resolution; reinstate provincial funding for the Canada and Alberta Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy surveillance program. James informed the board that apart of the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health) Canada has a quota to meet of 30 000 animals tested per year to keep our status as a controlled BSE risk country. No consensus with the board, they would like to hear what is said when discussed.

The board discussed the sixth resolution; agricultural opportunity fund for agricultural research and forage associations. It was the consensus of the board that they are in favor of this resolution.

The board discussed the seventh resolution; compensation for coyote depredation. James informed the board that coyote predation in the past was covered under an Alberta Agriculture program for livestock damage control. They were not covered under Fish and Wildlife as they currently are in Saskatchewan. It was the consensus of the board that they are in favor of this resolution.

The board discussed the eighth resolution; species at risk act. No consensus with the board, they would like to hear what is said when discussed.

The regional resolutions report for 2015 was presented to the board for reference.

Tanis led a discussion with board on potential workshops for 2016. Tanis provided the board with a list of workshops to consider. Battle River watershed Alliance, farm succession planning, calving workshop for ladies, tree disease, pest management, farm business management, soil, and working well were all topics brought forward for workshops.

Clr. Valleau brought forward an idea of having a backyard beekeeping workshop. Farm member Neil Pugh brought forward an idea of having a horticulture workshop, and partnering with the Ag Societies for meetings. Topics could include gardening, bees, and another other relatable topics.

The board stated that they would be in favor of hosting a calving workshop for ladies, tree disease/pest information, and a working well workshop.

James led a discussion with the board on the Town of Wainwright's Urban Weed Control 2015 summary report. James informed the board that we give them a \$4000.00 grant to assist with their weed control.

28/15

Moved by Grant Rathwell to release the funding in the amount of \$4000.00 for Town of Wainwright's 2015 Weed Control Program.
CARRIED

James inquired with the board about the possibility of getting a tablet of iPad for ASB work. The tablet would be useful to have reference and identification data for field visits. James stated that we will be conducting some research on options. The board supported this notion and to bring it forward to the budget meeting.

The board discussed Bill 6 the Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers. Bill 6 has been passed and the government will now be conducting consultations to write regulations. The board agrees that safety is very important but wants proper consultation with industry. Clr. Valleau expressed interest in how much input we could have as a service board. James stated involvement could be through commodity groups such as AADMC and the Provincial Agricultural Service Boards.

Next meeting Wednesday February 3, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.

29/15

Moved by Neil Pugh that the meeting be adjourned. (4:15 p.m.)
CARRIED.

Chairman – Clr. Zajic

Secretary – Tanis Ponath