Township of Langley

Est. 1873

AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY AND ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 7:00pm
Salmon River Committee Room
4th Floor, 20338-65 Avenue, Langley, BC

M I N U T E S

Present:
J. Caldarella, Community Co-Chair
Councillor M. Pratt, Council Co-Chair
Councillor R. Rindt, Council Co-Chair

A. Cheema, B. Holmes, C. Redekop, A. Smith, T. Taylor, and U. Tayyab

Guest:
C. Paulson, Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation
R. Blackstone, Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation

Staff:
V. Gafka, Senior Manager, Economic Investment and Development
M. Gunn, Planner, Community and Policy Planning
R. Nelson, Senior Planner, Community and Policy Planning
K. Stepto, Recording Secretary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLES

J. Caldarella acknowledged the Traditional Territories of the Coast Salish Peoples.

A. APPROVAL AND RECEIPT OF AGENDA ITEMS

1. Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee - April 26, 2023

Moved by B. Holmes,
Seconded by A. Cheema,
That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee approve the agenda and receive the agenda items of the April 26, 2023 meeting.
CARRIED

B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee - March 22, 2023

Moved by U. Tayyab,
Seconded by C. Redekop,
That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee adopt the Minutes of the March 22, 2023 meeting.
CARRIED

C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation

C. Paulson provided an overview of the Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation:

What is LSAF?

- Founded in 2011 to build knowledge and capacity of agriculture in Langley;
- Volunteer board with up to 17 directors.

Current Projects:

- Langley Learning Farm;
- Grants and Scholarships – in 2022 four grants were awarded for farm projects related to environmental sustainability;
- Fall Workshops.

Past projects:

- Workshops;
- Ecological Services Initiative – payment for ecological services on farmland.

Going forward:

- The challenge of reaching small lot land owners who may not consider themselves to be involved in “agriculture” is shared by the Township, LEPS, Langley Farmers’ Institute, the Farmer’s Market, Young Agrarians, LSAF, and other.
- Is it possible to establish a communications partnership such as a “small lot joint working group”, to develop strategies together to reach landowners?

Discussion ensued and it was decided that this partnership could be rolled into the “Building Relations with the Agriculture Community” Task Force, to be discussed under item F.2

2. Agriculture Inventory and Capabilities Review

V. Gafka, Senior Manager, Economic Investment and Development provided an updated on the Agriculture Inventory and Capabilities Review.

C. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Background:

- Through contribution funding provided by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC, the Township of Langley conducted an agriculture inventory and capacity review study in 2022.
- This study was conducted as there is a significant gap at the local level in understanding the agriculture and equine sectors' true inventory, capacity, and activities.

Some key findings include:

By Activity:

- Population growth has implications on agriculture including cost of land, competition for space, zoning, and farmland protection.
- Primary agriculture is largest component of the value chain.

By Land Use:

- Majority of privately-owned, non-residential zoned land in the Township that is not subject to natural or man-made constraints to agriculture has farm status eligibility.
- Township policies and zoning appear agriculture-activity supportive.

Opportunities can include:

- Improve utilization of unused and underused lands;
- Introduce municipal-level land matching program;
- Emphasize and encourage agritourism.

Some challenges include:

- Cost of land and borrowing;
- Rising costs (farm insurance, land, equipment);
- Permit approval time.

Key Recommendations:

- Sector Engagement and relationship development;
- Planning, policy, and process review;
- Advocacy.

D. REPORTS

E. CORRESPONDENCE

F. WORK PROGRAM

1. Farm Tour Update

M. Gunn provided the following update:

F. WORK PROGRAM

- Date: June 20, 2023
- Theme: Equine
- Tour will begin in Aldergrove
- Travel to farms on a passenger bus
- Light lunch and guest speakers
- 8:30am – 3:30pm
- The Farm Tour will take the place of the June AAEEC meeting.

2. Building Relations with the Agriculture Community

The 2023 AAEEC workplan includes the following item:

> *Initiate the preparation of a workplan for building relationships with the Township Farming community to expand the promotion of agriculture.*

M. Gunn provided the draft Terms of Reference for the task force based on the feedback received at the brainstorming session at the March meeting. (See Attachment A)

J. Caldarella, B. Holmes, A. Smith, and Councillor Pratt volunteered to be on the Task Force.

MOTION
Moved by C. Redekop,
Seconded by B. Homes,
That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee receive and endorse the draft Terms of Reference for the Building Agricultural/Rural Connections Task Force, as amended.
CARRIED

COUNCIL
Moved by U. Tayyab,
Seconded by T. Taylor,
That the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee recommends that Council approve the establishment of the Building Agricultural/Rural Connections Task Force for a duration of 180 days.
CARRIED

G. COUNCIL REFERRALS

H. OTHER BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. Chamber of Commerce Update

C. Redekop reported that the Chamber has launched a “Women in Business” task force. He further noted that there was an RCMP update event in April, and that

H. OTHER BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

the key issues the Chamber is focusing on currently are the impacts of minimum wage and the Federal strike.

2. Farmer's Institute Update

A. Smith reported that the Institute is working on improving their newsletter which is highly viewed, and that communication and engagement with farmers seems to be improving.

3. BC Economic Development Association – 2023 BCEDA Award

V. Gafka reported that the Township of Langley won an award for Economic Recovery and Resiliency. This was a joint project with the City of Surrey, the City of Richmond, and the BC Tech Association. This award recognizes programs, activities, and projects that represent a successful recovery initiative from natural and man-made disasters, including Covid-19, as well as submissions that represent replicable measures undertaken to promote long term resiliency and/or sustainability from future disasters.

I. NEXT MEETING

Date: Wednesday, May 24, 2023
Location: Salmon River Committee Room
4th Floor, 20338-65 Avenue, Langley, BC
Time: 7:00 pm

J. TERMINATE

Moved by B. Holmes,
Seconded by C. Redekop,
That the meeting terminate at 8:30pm.
CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Community Representative Co-Chair

Council Representative Co-Chair

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BUILDING AGRICULTURAL/RURAL CONNECTIONS TASK FORCE

Terms of Reference

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Future of Farming Task Force provided input and feedback into the exploration of the future of farming within the context of the Council-adopted Agricultural Viability Strategy (AVS), with an overall objective to promote the business of farming in the Township of Langley (Township). The recommendations in the completed report, and presented to the Agricultural Advisory and Economic Enhancement Committee (AAEEC) at the end of 2022, suggested that the Township build relationships with the Township farming community to expand the promotion of agriculture and develop a strategy to build relationships and educate the non-farming ALR community.

The approved 2023 AAEEC Work Plan, proposes to create a strategy to build those relationships with the Township agricultural/rural community to expand the promotion of agriculture. As recommended by the Future of Farming Task Force Report, this is a key step towards improving the agricultural information, education and awareness in the Township to the rural community.

In accordance with its Terms of Reference (and the applicable sections of Council Advisory Committee Establishment Bylaw 2008 No. 4700), the AAEEC may establish a task force for a specific purpose (up to a maximum duration of 180 days) to undertake special projects which may require extended consultation, review and planning, subject to prior approval of Council.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Task Force is to assist in developing a strategy to engage with the agricultural/rural community. Specifically, the Task Force will assist in:

- Determining the current level of awareness and understanding of the Township's work in the agricultural community – both with the general public and among key stakeholder groups;
- Reviewing the existing agricultural information and communication tools and methods (including the Agricultural Viability Strategy), and assessing their effectiveness in building community awareness and understanding; and
- Providing input on:
    - Appropriate communication methods and formats;

- Relevant content for various audiences;
- Supporting and leveraging the work of partner organizations;
- Online information links; and
- Required resources for sustained education and outreach.

3.0 EXPECTED TERM OF SERVICE

It is anticipated that the work of this Task Force will require a term of 180 days.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force should include a minimum of four volunteers currently serving on the AAEEC and others with expertise or experience in the subject areas such as representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Langley Sustainable Agriculture Foundation, Langley Farmers Institute and academia.

5.0 MEETING FREQUENCY / SCHEDULING

It is anticipated that the Task Force will meet approximately six times over the length of its term, but additional meetings may be held if required.

6.0 STAFF SUPPORT

Township staff will facilitate the participation and contributions of the Task Force by:

- providing relevant background information;
- scheduling meetings and preparing agendas;
- attending all meetings to facilitate discussion, provide advice, and obtain input; and
- preparing meeting notes.