

Regular Agricultural Service Board Meeting of the County of Forty Mile No. 8 of the Province of Alberta held in the Board Room of the County Office, Foremost, Alberta on Tuesday, February 3rd, 2009.

The Meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Joan Hughson, at 9:10 A.M.

Members Present: Tom Thacker
Otto Gross
Ronald Lane
Craig Widmer
Ronald Harty
Lynden Hutchinson

Also Present: Dale Brown, County Administrator
Dave Matz, Agricultural Fieldman
Tom Simanton, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman

Minutes

Moved approval of the Minutes of the Regular Agricultural Service Board Meeting held on December 9th, 2008.

CARRIED.

Delegations

10:00 A. M. – Bob Kaufman, Conservation Co-ordinator
10:30 A. M. – Sandy Riemersma

Items Added to the Agenda

Several items were added to the Agenda by the Council Members present.

Treasurer's Report

Moved approval of the Treasurer's Report for the period ending December 31st, 2008.

CARRIED.

STAFF REPORTS

Agricultural Fieldman Activities:

- Assisted with Contract negotiations for the Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Technician for Cypress / County of Forty Mile No. 8
- Assisted with the planning and preparation of the Provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference in Medicine Hat
- Prepared a draft Clubroot Policy for the County of Forty Mile No. 8
- Assisted in preparing for the Farmstead Planning Workshop and an Alternative Energy Workshop that will be held in Bow Island and Medicine Hat
- Presently working on 2009 Budget, PFRA Tree Order, Capital Planning and preparing information for this year's newsletter

The Assistant Agricultural Fieldman's report:

- Assisted in the preparation of the Agricultural Service Board Conference in Medicine Hat
- Appointed to serve as a member on the Weed Co-ordinating Committee for the Southern Region
- Mechanical inspection has been completed on Unit 592

Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Technician's Report

- A number of meetings have been held with LEARN, Medicine Hat College Staff and County Representatives in organizing workshops of interest to rural residents.
- Two workshops, farmstead planning and Xeric Design and water conservation have been scheduled for Dunmore and Bow Island.
- A number of meetings have also been held regarding Alternate Energy Workshops
- Set up the Cypress Watershed Display at the Agricultural Service Board Conference on January 26th, 2009
- Set up the Environmental Farm Plan Display on January 28th, 2009 at the Agricultural Service Board Conference
- The first quarter newsletter has been prepared and will be in the February 11th, 2009 County Commentator / Courier

Planned Activities / Tours / Workshops:

- February 3, 2009 - Agricultural Service Board Meeting
- Forty Mile / Milk River Update – February 4, 2009
- Energy Smart Canada Conservation Seminar – Medicine Hat – February 17th and 18th, 2009
- Grazing Mentorship Program, Green Cover – Airdrie, AB – February 24th, 2009
- Cypress County Agricultural Service Board Meeting – February 27th, 2009
- Alternate Energy Workshop – Bow Island – February 28th, 2009
- Alternate Energy Workshop – Medicine Hat College – March 5th, 2009
- Ag Expo – Lethbridge – March 11, 2009
- SARA Annual Meeting – Taber – March 21, 2009
- Xeriscaps - Medicine Hat College

Clubroot Survey Results

Staff from the Crop Diversification Centre South surveyed over one hundred canola, mustard and cole crop vegetation fields for Clubroot Disease in southern Alberta in 2008. Ten canola fields were visited in the County of Forty Mile No. 8 in which no Clubroot was found.

Clubroot Policy

A draft Clubroot Policy was presented to the Agricultural Service Board. The objective of the Policy is to prevent the establishment and spread of Clubroot within the County of Forty Mile No. 8 and to provide guidelines for enforcement as required by the Agricultural Pest Act.

Service Board Members requested that further research be done on the enforcement section of the Policy prior to taking any further action.

Milk River Watershed Council

Milk River Watershed Council Project Co-ordinator, Sandi Riemersma, attended the Meeting to highlight some of the activities of the Watershed Council.

State of the Watershed

The state of the Watershed Report for the Milk River was released in 2008. The report identifies what is currently known about the key indicators of the watershed health, highlights of the areas where the Council lacks good understanding of watershed resources and provides recommendations for future work. The report also provides an interesting history of the watershed. It will be used as a tool to help develop and integrate a water management plan for the Milk River.

Water Supply and Management

Prairie Farm and Rehabilitation Administration provided funding and assistance to investigate supplemental water supply projects. A consultant was hired to investigate several routes to conduct ridge reservoir water to the Milk River to alleviate drought induced low flow problems for the towns and irrigators and some ten thousand acres of irrigation expansion. The object of the investigation is to find a feasible route with associated costs.

Additional storage construction and canal enlargement downstream of St. Marys' Reservoir was also reviewed.

Erosion on the Milk River

Amec Earth and Environmental has prepared a study on the erosion and sedimentation on the Milk River. The study illustrates how the Milk River has migrated during the past ninety years. Since the diversion began, the Milk River has increased an average width of 10.5 to 21 metres. The Research and Monitoring Team is also continuing with water quality monitoring that was established in 2006 in collaboration with the County of Forty Mile No. 8, County of Warner No. 5, Cardston County and Alberta Environment. In stream phosphorus concentrations tend to increase during periods of water diversion, while nitrogen and salt concentrations tend to decrease. The research and monitoring team will be collecting sediment samples to identify potential sources of nutrients and other water quality parameters.

A boat trip down the Milk River has been scheduled for June 27th, 2009 from the Coffin Bridge to the Weir Bridge.

Sandi Riemersma left the Meeting.

Seed Lab Accreditation for Clubroot Testing

The Municipal District of Taber has forwarded a letter to Assistant Deputy Minister, Jason Krips, regarding present Clubroot testing and enforceability of the testing under the Agricultural Pest Act.

Alberta Livestock and Meat Strategy

Response from Mr. George Groeneveld regarding the County's concern regarding Alberta's Livestock and Meat Strategy was presented to the Board.

2% Liquid Strychnine

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency has extended the emergency registration of 2% Liquid Strychnine for 2009.

Alberta Tag Reader Program

Alberta Agriculture has agreed to fund the purchase of Tag Readers for Agricultural Service Boards to assist producers.

Moved Ronald Harty approval for the Agricultural Service Board to purchase a Tag Reader at a cost of \$1,450.00.

CARRIED.

Agriculture Summer Tour

The 2009 Agriculture Summer Tour will be hosted by Lacombe County July 6th – 9th, 2009.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development Extension Model

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development has provided a set of guidelines in which Rural Development Staff will use in providing Agricultural Service Board support.

Alberta Rat Control Program

Regulatory Service Division has provided posters and DVDs regarding information on the Rat Program.

The 2008 Rabies Control Report was presented to the Board.

Moved that the Meeting adjourn at 12:15 P. M. CARRIED.