

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, September 2, 2014.

The Meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Craig Widmer, at 9:00 A.M.

*Members Present: Gerald Reimer
Chantel Timmons
Joan Hughson*

*Also Present: Dale Brown, County Administrator
Dave Matz, Agricultural Fieldman
Darrell Van Arragon, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman
Sandra Reid, Secretary to the County Administrator*

*Absent: Ronald Harty
Steven Wikkerink
Bryne Lengyel*

Minutes

MOVED approval of the Minutes of the Regular Agricultural Service Board Meeting held on June 3, 2014.

CARRIED.

Amendment to the Agenda

MOVED that the September 2, 2014 Agricultural Service Board Agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

Treasurer's Report

MOVED approval of the Treasurer's Report for the period ending August 25, 2014.

CARRIED.

STAFF REPORT

Agricultural Fieldman's Report

The Agricultural Fieldman's Report was presented by Dave Matz and attached as Addendum 'A' to the Minutes.

June

- Staff sprayed Krovar and Esplanade on road surfaces for the first two weeks of June and then began spraying with the 3-ton at the end of the month. Roadside mowing continued and the Volker contract began June 12, 2014. The Cemetery Labourers mowed hamlets, cemeteries and 40 Mile Park. The Sprayer Operators sprayed Shop yards, Landfill sites, as well as Leafy Spurge and Knapweed sites. Staff was sent home for two rain days, and a number of windy days occurred which caused problems with roadside spraying. Time was also spent repairing leaks on the Agriculture Shop roof.

July

- Roadside spraying began the second week of July with at least three trucks going steady. Trucks were changed over for Glyphosate spraying in the southeast portion of the County during windy days. Mowing on the Volker contract was completed July 24, 2014 and the first cut of the Cemeteries was completed July 15th, 2014. Drip lines were installed at the Public Works Shop, construction projects were seeded, drills were moved and repaired and mosquito control was performed in Burdett and Etzikom.

Committee Members discussed the Special Meeting held in Brooks regarding potato diseases and treatment and requested that in the future this meeting be attended due to the concern of

Bacterial Ring Rot to the potato farmers in the County. Mr. Matz explained he has attended the Meeting a number of times and received the required training and as the Agriculture Department was quite busy chose not to attend. Mr. Matz also noted considerable time is spent with the Inspections for the Potato Growers. The Committee Members suggested that Mr. Matz could contact one of the Committee Members to attend if staff is occupied.

August

- Staff concentrated on roadside spraying with the excellent weather. The Cemetery Labourers assisted Public Works with string trimming railway crossings and worked in the Cemeteries painting posts and crosses. Cemetery Labourers began a second cut on all Cemeteries and worked on the Grasshopper Survey. Roadside mowing continued, seeding was completed on construction projects, and picnic tables were repaired in Burdett. Mr. Matz completed the first round of Bacterial Ring Rot surveys, Weed Inspections, and performed some roadside spraying.

September

- Summer Staff will be finished this month with the exception of one student who will assist with roadside spraying, tree spraying in ditches, tree trimming and / or mowing. The Roadside Mower Operator will begin moving trees from the Nursery to 40 Mile Park and around the Public Works Shop as weather permits. Trees from Etzikom will also be moved to local Cemeteries. Mr. Matz will perform a second Bacterial Ring Rot Inspection and will do a partial Clubroot Survey. Fall spraying on roadsides will continue to be the top priority for the Agriculture Department.

Roadside Spraying

As the spring was wet Krovar soil sterilant did not begin until June, while this is usually completed in April. A new product, Esplanade, was trialed last year, and applied on more roads this spring. The results have been excellent with control lasting well into the second season. This product was also applied on berms at Transfer Sites and has been the only product to remain in place. The drawback is it is a barrier herbicide and once applied the ground should not be disturbed or it will be left ineffective. It is thirty per cent cheaper than Krovar and plans are to continue with Esplanade.

Another product trialed was Navius from Dupont. This product is to provide up to two-year residual on Canada Thistle, Sow Thistle, and Kochia. A trial was performed on the Nemiscam road after the grader pulled up shoulders and product was applied on bare ground. The results were excellent and therefore the three-ton was prepared to blanket spray the product along road shoulders with an eight to ten foot width. The cost is approximately \$60 per mile, however reapplication is every two to three years. Both of these products will change the Roadside Spraying Program next year as they can be applied early in the season before weed emergence which will permit concentration of Canada Thistle control in late summer and fall. This may assist with roads being left due to sensitive specialty crops growing close to the road.

Noxious Weed Sites

Leafy Spurge and Knapweed sites were completed quite early compared to previous years. Spurge Hawk Moth was used on sites at Aden as well as Beetle releases resulting in some good control. Knapweed is mostly eradicated in all sites, except for the Lane property where it has been quite difficult to regain control. A Seed Head Weevil has been released to establish some bio-control.

Bryne Lengyel present.

Grass Seeding

The wet spring, demand for the rental drills, and the tractor being used for mowing, caused a delay in completing the seeding of construction projects. A broadcast seeder was used in early May, but did not get a good start and therefore the drills were used at the end of July and found that with the steep slopes and narrow ditches, portions were missed as the drills were too wide.

Overall, equipment breakdowns were few, with weather good for the most part and no injuries or major incidents.

Roadside Spraying Map

Committee Members reviewed the Roadside Spraying Map which plotted the progress of spraying to date. Councillor Lengyel noted one area of concern which Mr. Matz explained had just been completed. Spraying was a late start due to the wet spring, and some areas had to be avoided because of specialty crops. The Agriculture Department is concentrating on completing the irrigation areas in regards to roadside spraying.

Mr. Matz also noted the Agriculture Department's focus has always been Canada Thistle and in previous years, the Public Works Department mowed Kochia, however current practice is for the Agriculture Department to spray this, increasing the spray program. Mr. Reimer noted weed growth has also increased perhaps due to the amount of rain received the past few years.

Mr. Matz explained the one ton spray trucks are used in areas where the ditches are narrower, and the three ton spray trucks are used in the irrigation areas. The one ton spray trucks which normally spot spray, have increased to more blanket spraying due to the heavy weed growth. The area sprayed by the one tons is concentrated closer to the Shop to reduce trips to re-fill.

Mr. Matz also noted the remainder of the chemical budget dollars will be used for Canada Thistle.

Weed Control

Mr. Matz presented photographs of results of new chemical trials.

Mr. Matz noted an area where a Weed Notice was issued. The landowner has agreed to address the issue.

Mr. Matz discussed areas where grass is being sprayed out in ditches by private landowners.

The Agriculture Department is demo-ing a Shulte flex-arm hitch. This permits the mower to reach fifteen feet into the ditch, however the tractor used with the mower may not provide sufficient horsepower. The flex-arm will be tried in steeper areas but would not be used when mowing on highways. The Committee requested

Mr. Matz provide a video of the flex-arm in use for review at the next Agricultural Service Board Meeting.

Project Tracking Summary

Mr. Matz presented a summary of labour hours broken down by Project and Activity as well as a list of codes used by Staff. Mr. Matz noted some information was entered under the wrong code and work performed at 40 Mile Park was not included.

Agricultural Service Board Bursary

Committee Members reviewed a draft policy regarding the Agricultural Service Board Bursary.

MOVED approval of the draft Agricultural Service Board Bursary Policy attached as Addendum 'B' to the Minutes.

CARRIED.

Bursary Applications

Mr. Matz presented four Applications received for the Agricultural Service Board Bursary.

MOVED to award the Agricultural Service Board Bursary as follows:

- Houston Boschee - \$500.00
- Lindsay Kusters - \$500.00

CARRIED.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

Letter

- The Committee reviewed a letter received from Agriculture and Rural Development regarding the approval of the Agricultural Service Board Grant.

MOVED that the Meeting adjourn at 10:35 A. M.

CARRIED.