

## **Merrickville-Wolford Agricultural Advisory Committee**

### **Minutes of Meeting Thursday, Feb 9 at 7pm**

**Present:** Don Halpenny, Tom Beach, Cesar Farhat, Kim Weedmark, Alec MacGregor, Dan Robitaille, Mayor Doug Struthers

Guest: John Woodfine

**Pecuniary Interests.** Dan Robitaille declared his connection with Drain Wolford and the Chair informed the Committee that John Woodfine was invited to attend so Dan Robitaille was not put in a conflict of interest when reporting for Drain Wolford.

### **Agenda**

The item Livestock Evaluator was added to the Agenda

M/S Cesar Farhat/Alec MacGregor, to accept the amended agenda, carried

### **Minutes**

M/S Alec MacGregor/Tom Beach, to accept the minutes of January 19, carried

### **Old Business**

1. Drain Wolford update: John Woodfine reported on Drain Wolford discussions, plans and action to date.

It was agreed by Drain Wolford that Dan Robitaille would be the main contact person with Rudy Dyck at the RVCA and to coordinate communication between RVCA and Drain Wolford.

Beaver trappers are out currently working on the major 4 dams near Pioneer Road working their way east. They had trapped 34 beavers and breached 18 dams as of December 25<sup>th</sup> and the work done has not used all the funds. Trapping and breaching dams will be continuing and is expected to utilize the rest of the funds. Drain Wolford is satisfied that Rudy Dyck is progressing on the plan and that he has chosen qualified and knowledgeable people to do the work.

Breaching the dams can be a small cut into the dam which the beavers can repair easily so Drain Wolford group has expressed the desire to remove the dams.

Drain Wolford is looking for a venue to hold a general meeting which will review the work completed and discuss next steps including seeking funds from major companies to support the work.

Drain Wolford is expecting RVCA to budget a portion of funds to support the ongoing work. This will be confirmed when the 2012 budget is passed.

RVCA staff will continue to assist property owners with information and advice on controlling and removing beavers and beaver dams. Beaver dam surveys will be done in hard to access areas and RVCA will determine problem areas and the best course of action to take.

Drain Wolford has asked RVCA to suggest to media that they also contact Drain Wolford for input to any news reports.

Drain Wolford membes will continue to discuss the purpose and objectives of Drain Wolford with Merrickville Wolford residents, interest them in participating, and increase the database of individuals affected.

Committee members commended Drain Wolford for the action to date and for developing a good working relationship with RVCA.

Mayor Struthers suggested that Drain Wolford talk to RVCA about the Otter Lake partnership and get clarification on how it works and whether Drain Wolford might wish to develop a similar partnership.

2. No update from RVCA yet.
3. The Village Garden group is meeting in March to discuss plans for the spring. Don will update the Committee after that meeting. There has been a good initial reception from the community and from the school.

## **New Business**

1. Livestock Evaluation Officer

The Committee discussed the challenge with the current position which has several responsibilities including livestock evaluation and animal control.

The Committee agreed to make a recommendation to Council

That the Agriculture Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the current position of Animal Control Officer be divided into several positions with more distinct duties; that Council should consider hiring a part time Livestock Evaluation Officer; and that the qualifications for the position should include an agricultural background to better understand the situations and value of the stock.

M/S Alec MacGregor/Dan Robitaille, carried

2. Next meeting will be March, 8<sup>th</sup> 2012.

Adjourned at 7:50 pm

Respectfully submitted by Tom Beach