



## AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 25, 2011

12:00 PM – CVRD Boardroom  
175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC V9L 1N8

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### AGENDA

	PAGES
1. <u>WELCOME &amp; INTRODUCTIONS</u>	
2. <u>APPROVAL OF AGENDA:</u>	1-2
3. <u>REPORTS</u>	
R1      Review & discuss Terms of Reference	
R2      Verbal report on Provincial AAC meeting of Feb 24, 2011	3-4
4. <u>DISCUSSION</u>	
D1      Set AAC meeting schedule and location	
D2      AAC member review of plan & approach to process	
5. <u>CORRESPONDENCE:</u>	
C1      Email from Jim (J.W.) van Barneveld dated Feb 4, 2011	5-6
6. <u>NEW BUSINESS:</u>	
7. <u>CLOSED SESSION:</u>	
Motion that the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter Part 4, Division 3, Section 90(1), subsections as noted in accordance with each agenda item.	
8. <u>ADJOURNMENT:</u>	

**Note:** A copy of the full agenda package is available at the CVRD website [www.cvrld.bc.ca](http://www.cvrld.bc.ca)

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Director Marcotte, Chair  
Director Duncan  
Director Iannidinardo  
Director Seymour

Director Giles  
Peter Keber  
Rodger Hunter  
Joanne McLeod

Ian Christison  
Rob Kline  
George Robbins  
Dan Ferguson

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DIRECTOR DOREY  
DIRECTOR KUHN  
DIRECTOR MORRISON

**AS WELL AS:**

WARREN JONES, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
MARK KUEBER, GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES  
TOM ANDERSON, GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
GEOFF MILLAR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER  
KATHY LACHMAN, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



**CVRD**

## **AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **GOAL**

The goal of the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) is to increase awareness of agricultural issues in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) and provide leadership in the promotion of agriculture as an important economic driver in the region.

#### **MANDATE**

The mandate of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is to:

1. Implement the CVRD Area Agricultural Plan and the recommendations contained in that Plan. More specifically to:
  - Review all 78 recommendations;
  - Identify those activities already underway and identify the groups and organizations undertaking those activities;
  - Ensure that sufficient resources are available to accomplish activities and if required, identify the additional resources needed;
  - Prioritize activities to be undertaken;
  - Identify the activities that have not been addressed and prioritized;
  - Identify the necessary resources to complete those activities; and
  - Make recommendations to the CVRD to allocate resources to accomplish those activities.
2. Advise the Board on issues of importance to the agricultural community, and on ALR exclusion applications as well as any other matters referred to it.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

The AAC will consist of the following representation:

- One representative from each of the three Farmers Institutes (Cedar; Cowichan Agricultural Society; Cobble Hill/Shawnigan Lake)
- Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Agrologist
- Farmers' Market representative
- Farm Credit Canada representative
- CVRD Economic Development Commission
- CVRD Environment Commission
- CVRD Chair or his/her designate
- District of North Cowichan
- Three Electoral Area Directors

## **APPOINTMENT PROCESS & TERM**

Appointments to the AAC shall be by resolution of the Regional Board.

Appointments are for a three (3) year term and shall be consistent with the terms of the elected representatives of the Regional Board.

## **REMUNERATION**

AAC members will serve without remuneration, but may be paid reasonable and necessary expenses directly arising from the performance of their duties. Reimbursement of expenses will be consistent with the policies of the Regional Board, as amended from time to time.

## **VACANCIES**

The Regional Board may, at any time, terminate the appointment of a member.

Committee members who are absent for three (3) consecutive meetings shall forfeit their appointment, unless such absences are authorized by resolution of the Committee.

A member of the Committee may resign at any time upon sending written notice to the Chair of the CVRD.

If a vacancy occurs on the AAC, the Regional Board may appoint a new Commission member to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

## **DECISION MAKING**

Committee recommendations to the Regional Board on agricultural issues will be made by consensus whenever possible. If necessary, votes may be taken and results identified within the minutes of the meeting.

AAC meetings will be open to the public as per the CVRD Board, Committee and Commission Procedures Bylaw.

## **CHAIRPERSON**

The Chair will be one of the CVRD Board members appointed to the Committee in order to provide a direct link between the AAC and the Regional Board.

## **MINUTES**

Minutes will be recorded for each meeting and a copy submitted to the Regional Board for consideration.

## Geoff Millar

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**From:** Gerry Giles [ggiles12@shaw.ca]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 14, 2011 1:01 PM  
**To:** Geoff Millar  
**Subject:** FW: OCP -Agriculture

Hi Geoff,

I provided the commentary below to Mary and hopefully she passes it along to the ag advisory committee as it does contain valuable information. Jim has given his permission to share this information with others.

Cheers

Gerry

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**From:** jimvanb@ncfarmersinst.org [mailto:jimvanb@ncfarmersinst.org]  
**Sent:** February-04-11 1:52 PM  
**To:** DNC Mark Ruttan  
**Cc:** CVRD Cobble Hill Gerry Giles; NCFI Pres Joanne McLeod; CAS John Milne  
**Subject:** Re: OCP -Agriculture

Dear Mayor and Council,

I have not yet had time to fully review the current draft of the OCP, for which you have completed first reading.

I must congratulate Council on the requirement to develop appropriate buffers around agricultural lands in the development area where land-uses, more compatible with farm activities can be allowed.

However, two instruments in the OCP have come to my attention and are of concern:

- Further subdivision of larger parcels of agricultural lands- presumably to make these more available to starting (young) farmers
- An agriculture amenity levy on developments

Agriculture in the Cowichan Valley is experiencing demise by a thousand deaths. The reduction of larger parcel sizes to smaller parcel sizes is one of those thousand deaths.

- North Cowichan has grown out of a rural agriculture community and has a long history of efforts to urbanize. Even though North Cowichan includes more than half of the farms in the Cowichan Valley Regional District, DNC has created an increasingly hostile environment for farming.
- The Cowichan Valley already has a predominance of small agriculture holdings, many of which are viable only through subsidies through part-time farming. They are lifestyle choices of their owners, but contribute little to the commercial agricultural production and economic stability in the valley. We need larger and secure parcels to attract the investment required to encourage farming that will contribute to a healthy economy.
- the reduced parcels will be "tailor-made" for estates and hobby farms, which will significantly raise the market price. This instrument will therefore be counter productive to the stated purpose of making farmland more affordable and available for starting farmers. It will raise the price and gentrify the North Cowichan lands of agricultural significance. North Cowichan needs to make an effort to consolidate some of the fragmented agricultural lands, to facilitate a viable agricultural industry to the extent that it chooses to encourage a viable agricultural industry.
- I am disappointed that the Agricultural Advisory Committee has not been able to convince Council of the counter productivity of the reduction in parcel sizes. Regardless of the rhetoric, the reduction of parcel sizes for

agricultural lands is just that: *the continuation of the trend to fragment agricultural lands*. This step will make future steps for further subdivision look less significant. In effect this feature of the OCP is hostile to agriculture, another one of the thousand deaths.

The issue of an "agricultural amenities levy" is likely, but not necessarily, a risk for agricultural development in North Cowichan and the CVRD. no gift comes without consequences. In the case of an Agricultural levy, it will blur the distinction between agricultural interests and the interests of the developers.

- Firstly, the developer will expect consideration for this levy. That expectation is clearly directed towards agriculture and its lands.
- Secondly this levy obfuscates the costs to agriculture, as it will imply a "benefit to agriculture". Under current Provincial policy direction, the ALC has used this concept to evaluate applications for developments on ALR lands. It allows the designation of an artificial dollar value to a scarce and irreplaceable good. (Most of us recognise that the Mona Lisa is priceless, because it is irreplaceable).

I recommend that:

- Council adopt a strategy for consolidation of agricultural lands to replace the policy of smaller parcel size in agricultural lands. To make lands available for starting (young) farmers, the municipality, when needed, could facilitate the lease of "starter parcels". This would ensure that the lands will be used for agriculture, without distorting the land prices. The dedication of land for agriculture needs to be unwavering, to prevent ongoing speculation and inappropriate use of the scarce resource.
- Council executes its strategy to develop a viable agricultural sector of the economy through dedicating appropriate funding in its budget for this purpose and deleting the Agricultural Amenity levy. The required funding will then derive from regular income sources, including permits, taxes etc. The development of this sector is in the interest of the community as a whole (food security, economy, jobs, environmental diversity and social stability) It must not be merely an "add-on" bonus of promoting incompatible development.

Jim (J.W.) van Barneveld

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CC: Chair CVRD G.Giles

Members and Pres. NCFI Joanne McLeod

Members and Pres. CAS John Milne