



**Northumberland County
Agriculture Advisory Group Meeting
Minutes
September 27, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.**

Present:

A. Carruthers, D. Gray, Deputy Warden M. Martin, L. Meekes, M. Opsteen.

Staff Present:

G. Dees, D. Marshall, T. Mellor, J. Moore, C. Sanders.

Regrets:

P. Burnham, B. Buttar, K. Stubbings.

1) Welcome

- Chair Allan Carruthers called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and welcomed Brian Crews, Director of Northumberland Federation of Agriculture.

2) Approval of the September 27, 2022 Agenda / Additional Items

- Agenda accepted as presented.

3) Approval of the June 28, 2022 Minutes

- Minutes approved as presented.

4) Action Items and Follow Up from Previous Meeting

a) Municipal Drainage

- **Action:** Once the draft Tile Drainage policy is finalized, Denise will circulate to the Agriculture Advisory Group.
 - First draft of the policy is complete. Once vetted further, Denise will circulate for review and feedback from the group.
- Denise provided a high-level overview of the draft Tile Drain Policy to the group.
- The County's Tile Drainage policy will encompass a three phased approach as follows:

- i) Discharge of tile drains on property, when possible, to an existing outlet (i.e., watercourse).
 - ii) Mutual Agreement Drain – Outlet to ROW using the standard mutual agreement drain form that outlines responsibilities and costs for property owner and County/municipality.
 - iii) Petition Drain (Municipal Drain) – These will be for large or multiple drainage areas that are more complex.
- Mutual Agreement Drain's would be used the most. They are the most expedient, less costly, and simplest. A Petition Drain would only be used when working in a complicated or large area.
 - Would like to have all municipalities onboard for consistency.
 - Denise noted that a workshop that was held on October 21st, 2021, through GRCA / OMAFRA. Tim Brook, M.Sc., P. Eng., Drainage Program Coordinator provided an overview of the Drainage Act, municipal drainage, various options for an outlet and examples of what other municipalities do throughout Ontario. It was noted that there is one municipal drain in Northumberland County.
 - Brian commented that most of the province does not have a municipal drain network, and that a natural watercourse may be just as effective as a municipal drain.
 - Brian further commented that a Mutual Drain Agreement may be most practical in terms of simplicity between two parties, satisfying requirements to outlet a tile drain into a County drain.

5) Communications

a) County Council Representative Participation

- Jennifer provided an overview of the correspondence to the group.
- Letter provides notification that the 2018-2022 Municipal Council term ends on November 14, 2022, therefore County Council memberships on several Committees end on the same date. This includes the Agriculture Advisory Committee.
- New County Council representatives will be selected with the new term of Council.

b) Letter from the Chief Veterinarian for Ontario

- Jennifer provided an overview of the correspondence to the group.
- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has confirmed cases of avian influenza (H5N1) in Ontario domestic poultry.
- A Ministers Order has been issued for the purpose of limiting the commingling of birds from different locations in Ontario to reduce the likelihood of disease transmission.

6) New/Other Business

a) Virtual vs. In-person meetings

- Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of in person meetings vs. virtual.
- Several members supported transitioning to a hybrid meeting format.
- Lisa suggested arranging in person meetings during the winter and Zoom meetings during the busier summer months.
- Jennifer commented that Council Chambers is equipped for hybrid meetings, however it is a very large space for a small group. May need to look at other meeting rooms that will accommodate a smaller group.

b) Debrief on Poli-Ag Tour

- Jennifer commented that she would like attendance to include more senior staff at the next Poli-Ag Tour. County will work with the agriculture group to extend invitations.
- Jennifer further suggested that the Agricultural group and County discuss tour locations and topics for discussion during the planning phase of the event, prior to sending invitations out.
- Suggestion was made to promote the event through the CAO's group to connect to member municipalities.
- Mandy commented that this year's Poli Ag Tour held on August 11th was fantastic and well organized.

c) Membership Review

- Discussed and updated the Agricultural Advisory Group membership list.
- Suggestion was made to continue to invite staff to meetings as agenda items arise for discussion.
- **ACTION**: Jennifer requested that a representative from the County Forestry team be invited to the next Agriculture Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the invasive species known as hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), which was recently discovered in several hemlock trees in Northumberland County.

d) Promoting Agriculture to Newcomers

- Jennifer highlighted that the County often uses social media to send out communications to the public. Jennifer further noted that the County is happy to share information through social media if the agricultural group wishes to do so.
- Anyone who would like tickets to the Ontario Agriculture Annual General Meeting (AGM), please contact Allan.

7) Agenda Items for Next Meeting

N/A

8) Next Meeting

- Tuesday January 24, 2023
7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Location: TBD