Agricultural Service Board Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 13, 2019, 9:00 AM
Council Chambers
County Administration Building

Present
Chairperson Josh Bishop
Board Member Stephan Dewald
Board Member Mike Schmidt
Board Member Lyle Seely
Board Member Bill Krahn
Board Member Ken Adair

Absent
Board Member Garth Parker

Staff Present
Jeff Chipley, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Stephen Majek, Director of Agricultural Services
Kim Barkwell, Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator
Carmen Reimer, Recording Secretary
Naomi Finseth, Municipal Intern

1. CALL TO ORDER
The Agricultural Service Board meeting for the County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 was called to order by Chairperson J. Bishop in the Council Chambers of the County of Wetaskiwin Administration Office, commencing at 9:05 a.m. on Wednesday, March 13, 2019.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Resolution AG20190313.001
MOVED: by Board Member S. Dewald
that the Agenda be accepted as presented.
Carried Unanimously

3. MINUTES APPROVAL
3.1 Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes, Friday, December 14, 2018
The Agricultural Service Board Meeting minutes of Friday, December 14, 2018 were presented to the Agricultural Service Board for approval as presented.
Resolution AG20190313.002
MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely
to approve the minutes of the Agricultural Service Board Meeting held December 14, 2019 as presented.
Carried Unanimously

4. REPORTS
4.1 Director of Agricultural Services Report from December 14, 2018 to March 13, 2019 - Report
Mr. Stephen Majek, Director of Agricultural Services, provided his Director of Agricultural Services Report from December 14, 2018 to March 13, 2019, which was as follows:
"Seasonal Staff for 2019 have been hired with several staff returning from last year. New to the County in 2019 will be three Weed Inspectors, one mower operator, and one groundskeeper. Most of the staff will start on May 1, with the exception of the Mower Operators, who start June 1, and one spray crew member, who starts on April 1."
The Service Board attended the Provincial ASB Conference in Calgary in January where the focus was on mental health, market trends, and soil health.

Strychnine has been ordered for the 2019 season, which may be the last year to get strychnine based products for ground squirrel control. Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has not provided an official position on the review and its future plans for strychnine.

Rental equipment has been serviced and is ready to be used by producers.

Administration completed the changes and updates to the Agricultural Service Board Strategic Business Plan and presented it to Council in December.

Administration has completed some Building Maintenance projects such as updating condenser coils for new air conditioning units to be installed in the spring for the Administration Building and completed construction of 30 picnic tables and 10 outhouses for Parks Department.

The Horticulturist for Leduc County is retiring effective March 29, 2019. The County of Wetaskiwin has an agreement with Leduc that expires December 31, 2020. The County of Wetaskiwin pays approximately $47,000 per year as part of the agreement. Leduc County is exploring their options for a new Horticulturist to fill the current position. They are also investigating the reorganization of the position and having someone for Leduc County only.

Administration has compiled information regarding weed notices from several municipalities which will be talked about later on the agenda. “

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board approve the Director of Agricultural Services Report as presented.

Resolution AG20190313.003

MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely

that the Agricultural Service Board approve the Director of Agricultural Services Report as presented.

Carried Unanimously

4.2 Sustainable Agriculture Report for December 14, 2018 to March 13, 2019 Meeting - Report

The Sustainable Agriculture Report was as follows:

Alberta Agriculture has requested that their programs be promoted and the following is an overview of the programs.

**Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP)**

Environmental Stewardship and Climate Change Producer Program – New Changes in Effect February 13, 2019

- Funding now available for Commercial Manure Applicators – apply for specific manure application equipment and other items related to improved land application of manure.

- Innovative category – definition clarified, new application form and eligible expenses retroactive to April 1, 2018.

- Revision to “in-kind contribution rule”: caps increased from 25% to 50% for riparian fencing and shelterbelt establishment projects.

**Farm Water Supply**

- Still seeking applications. Require an approved Long Term Water Management Plan before proceeding with project.

- Funding for new wells, dugouts, indirect watering systems on man-made structures and more.
- Special incentives for well decommissioning, well pit conversions

Producer Available Government Programs outside CAP also seeking applications:

**Farm Energy and Agri-Processing Program (FEAP)**
- Farm Energy and Agri-Processing Program (FEAP): December 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019 updated funding list with new items. Funding list subject to change after March 31, 2019.
- New items include, but not limited to: circulation pumps, grid-tied batteries, tire pressure control systems, onboard vehicle load scales.
- Program also includes insulation for new builds and existing buildings.
- This program has some retroactivity to April, 2016.

**Farm Health and Safety Producer Grant Program (2018-2021)**
- For farmers and ranchers with waged, non-family workers and a WCB account.
- 50% cost share on eligible expenses.
- Maximum of $5000 per fiscal year and $10,000 for life of program.

**On Farm Solar Photovoltaics**
- Still accepting applications.
- Grid Tied, Micro-Generation.
- Retro-active to April 15, 2017.

**Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and EFP Operations Committee**
- Committee input on modifying questions and interactive, online display.
- Update requirement, and perhaps the recent cold weather, have continued area increase in online enrollment. Environmental Farm Plan activities accounted for 10% of Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator time in 2018.

**Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) – Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC)**
- Advertised for new PAC members. Filled County of Wetaskiwin vacancy and calling potential Leduc County producers.
- Participant annual maintenance payments processed.
- Year-end reporting required by ALUS Canada completed.
- Advertisements submitted to the Leduc Representative as a Leduc County producer representative is still required for the PAC. Efforts to date highlight the need for improved ALUS brand recognition in our communities.
- At January 28, 2019 PAC meeting, the committee agreed to move ahead with a ‘Multi-Criteria Decision Mapping Process’ facilitated by the GIS department of the Environmental Stewardship Branch of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. First workshop is scheduled for the afternoon of March 13, 2019.
- Some project inquiries from recent advertising campaign.

**Activities**
- EFP reviews and support. In person, producer assistance with Long Term Water Management plans and FEAP application reviews.
- Workshop planning. Including multiple conference calls for Farm to Market to Table Conference.
- Training on BookKing Program for online workshop registration.
- Alberta Conservation Association – Conservation, Community, and Education Grant submission (to support ALUS projects).
- The Environmental Approvals System (EAS) is the Government of Alberta’s vision to manage all approvals under all the enactments in one place. The Alberta Energy Regulator developed OneStop, a technology framework for online applications. Alberta Environment and Parks has adapted OneStop to their purposes. After testing in limited regions last fall, all Water Act approvals, amendments and code of practice will be going through the OneStop, online application system starting January 18, 2019. Water licenses do not fall under the new system.
- January 19, 2019 – Beginner Bee Workshop, Nisku Recreation Centre
- January 28, 2019 – ALUS PAC meeting, County of Wetaskiwin.
- February 21, 2019 – Farm Agreements Workshop, Nisku Recreation Centre, 49 attendees.
- February 28, 2019 – March 1, 2019: Farm Market Table Conference, Nisku Inn, approximately 150 attendees.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board approve the Sustainable Agriculture Report as presented.

Resolution AG20190313.004
MOVED: by Board Member K. Adair
that the Agricultural Service Board approve the Sustainable Agriculture Report as presented.
Carried Unanimously

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Agricultural Service Board Program Review - Report

At the November 2, 2019 Agricultural Service Board meeting, the Board was advised that Agriculture and Forestry was beginning a review of the Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Program starting in the fall of 2018. The goal of the review is to verify previously identified issues, identify any new issues, and identify potential solutions to improve the effectiveness and impact of the ASB grant program. At the November 2, 2019 meeting, the Board resolved to appoint Chairperson J. Bishop and Vice-Chairperson M. Schmidt to participate in the regional sessions once the locations, dates, and times for these sessions are set. (Ref. Resolution #AS20181102.2011)

Chairperson J. Bishop and Vice-Chairperson M. Schmidt both attended a session on February 14, 2019 in Lacombe. Administration asked Chairperson J. Bishop to provide a report on the session, which was provided as follows:

"Mike and myself joined other ASB members from central region as well as A.F. staff to conduct a program review session.

The program’s mandate is to:
• support rural development
• manage risk to agriculture
• environmental stewardship
• maintain market access

There are pressures and changes stemming from:
• Social/Demographics
• Technological
• Economical/Financial
• Political

Alberta’s agricultural exports are now over $5.4 billion and market access is crucial for sustainability. Our surveillance and inspection programs are vital in maintaining market access. Businesses are attracted to our system due to its reliability and assurance checks.

There was a reoccurring theme throughout the process and that was a need for education and communication and our role as an ASB.

With the increasing use of social media we are seeing how important it is to be involved in the narrative as misinformation spreads at an astounding rate. Education will be key and we need to adopt a proactive approach rather than having to keep reacting to the negative light that is cast upon agriculture in increasing frequency.

My group focused on the Social and Demographics related pressures faced by agriculture today. At the end of the day, each group presented their findings to the whole group and we had further discussion on the top issues.

There is an increase in interest towards how our food gets to the table and there is a big push from younger, urban, consumers to have this information. Here are some efforts we can use to position ASB’s to succeed.

1. We need to be stronger advocates.

In order to compete with, and in some cases combat against, special interest groups who professionally lobby the government. Our voice can be drowned out by all the noise these groups can generate and we need to make sure we are heard.

2. Social Media/Trends

We have seen how quickly a picture can spread via social media and a narrative develops without all of the facts. The oil sands is an example for us to learn from, the oil companies were slow to react to the criticism and as a result had to spend millions to show how well they reclaim the land. The public still do not even realize that they are actually in fact cleaning up a natural oil spill and doing the environment a favour. Attacks on our industry will increase in the current culture shift that is happening.

• accusations of inhumane handling and living conditions
• safety of the food
• gmo/antibiotic/hormone
• ever-changing Canada Food Guide based on the latest social trends or loudest advocates
• Carbon tax disproportionally affecting rural, not to mention that it is entirely political and not evidence based.
• the zero cow movements.

3. Education is the key

The only way to effectively insure ourselves is to educate the public with that facts. This will include both urban and rural and there is an increasing need to educate the urban about rural sustainability because that is where all the food comes from. The graphic
about hormone levels comes to mind, most people only know the narrative provided thanks to certain fast food chains, but the majority of people do not even know the truth that hormone injected beef has less hormone on the plate than broccoli! 

So how are we to accomplish these efforts? One example is from Starland County, they are hosting a screening of the film called "Before the Plate" to help start the conversations. It will be provided free to the public. "Starland County is proud to host this event to help better connect the modern consumer with their food, and bust common myths about modern farming" 

Another avenue is our resolutions, they can be brought forward from multiple associations for maximum exposure. Council, ASB's, RMA, Societies. Policy takes time and advocacy will speed it up especially when there are many organizations attacking the same issue it will inevitably rise to the top of the priorities. Letters to MLA's and Ministers further the cause and keeps our priorities front and center. Educating the policy makers from an AG perspective can be done through simple things like farm tours.

Take action.

"Take action" is really the most important step and probably the step that has been missing. Everyone sort of knows what we need to do but for some reason we keep talking about it and not acting.

- provide funding for the education component and develop a communications strategy with our goals in mind. One county has hired a school resource officer to teach about agricultural issues.
- encourage producers to host farm tours and help organize more uptake in the communities. Expand what we are already doing.
- host events such as "before the plate" to educate the public.
- create a policy environment that is business friendly. We do not want to regulate the small operation right out of business.
- think bigger. We may look at joining with other organizations to put on a bigger and better event much like the ASB conference that anyone can come to featuring similar speakers. It has been said many times that "other people need to hear this".

Highlights from some of the other presentations:

- utilize your "key contact" - key contacts are a free resource from the department of A.F. who provide support services and expertise in various fields.
- It was noted it is a very under-utilized service and I can attest I have never seen one. There are ASB's who have their key contact come to every meeting. Some prefer to go at it alone, but why not use another expert? You can request a key contact in a specific area of expertise.
- We need to do a better job of getting the information from conference back to the public.
- telling our story accurately."

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the report from Chairperson J. Bishop on the Agricultural Service Board Program Review Session as information.

General discussion ensued on ideas on getting the information from conferences back to the public and to potentially have a Professional Development Day for teachers to learn about agricultural issues.

Board member M. Schmidt was also in attendance at the Agricultural Service Board Program review and indicated that a big take from the session was to educate the public. Another item that was discussed was that once resolutions are passed at provincial conference, additional follow-up needs to occur on the overall effect and outcome of the resolution.
Further discussion ensued on sending fewer people to the Provincial ASB Conference and using the funding saved to host a local conference in the area.

Resolution AG20190313.005
MOVED: by Board Member M. Schmidt
that Administration investigate the potential of having teachers involved in Professional Development related to agricultural issues.

\[\text{Carried Unanimously} \]

Resolution AG20190313.006
MOVED: by Board Member K. Adair
that Administration investigate the particulars, including costs, of hosting a one day Agricultural Conference in the Wetaskiwin area to be hosted by the County of Wetaskiwin.

\[\text{Carried Unanimously} \]

Resolution AG20190313.007
MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely
that the Agricultural Service Board accept the report from Chairperson J. Bishop on the Agricultural Service Board Program Review Session as information.

\[\text{Carried Unanimously} \]

7. \textit{RECESS}
The meeting recessed at 9:56 a.m.

8. \textit{RECONVENED}
The meeting reconvened at 9:59 a.m.

5. \textbf{DELEGATION - 10:00 A.M. - Doug Macaulay, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry}

A delegation consisting of Doug Macaulay, Agriculture and Forestry and Gayah Sieusahai, Plant and Bee Health Policy Section entered the meeting at 9:59 a.m.

5.1 \textit{Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Presentation \\& Discussion with Agricultural Service Board - Report}

At the August 22, 2018 Agricultural Service Board (ASB) meeting, the Agricultural Service Board resolved that a meeting be set up with Doug Macaulay, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, at the 2019 Provincial ASB Conference to discuss the von Arx weed issue and other ASB topics of concern. (Ref. Resolution #AS20190822.1003)

Administration decided it would be more beneficial to invite Mr. Macaulay to an Agricultural Service Board meeting due to the hectic schedule of Mr. Mcaulay at the 2019 Provincial ASB Conference and that having him at a meeting will allow for more fruitful discussion to occur. Mr. Macaulay will be in attendance to provide information regarding the \textit{Weed Control Act} and to answer any questions that the Board may have.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the presentation made by Mr. Doug Macaulay on behalf of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry as information.

Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Sieusahai provided a presentation. A review of the process and steps that are required were given.

9. \textit{RECESS}
The meeting recessed at 11:25 a.m. and the delegation left at this time.

10. \textit{RECONVENED}
The meeting reconvened at 11:31 a.m.
11. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Presentation & Discussion with Agricultural Service Board - Report

General discussion ensued on the von Arx property and what the next steps should be.

Resolution AG20190313.009

MOVED: by Board Member B. Krahn

that Administration investigate and proceed with the potential of the supervision of the von Arx property.

Carried Unanimously

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.1 Weed Notice Process - Report

Through previous discussions by the Agricultural Service Board, Administration was requested to complete research on the Weed Notice process and timelines/deadlines utilized by other rural municipalities. Administration has contacted surrounding municipalities and the following information was obtained:

Strathcona County
- Issue weed notices in the growing season, but wait for plants to be growing prior to issuing a notice.
- Work with landowner to prevent having to issue a notice.
- Issued 1,000 notices per year.
- Had one (1) notice appealed in the past decade with no court appearances.

Sturgeon County
- Issue weed notices in the growing season.
- Work with landowners to prevent having to issue a notice.
- Seventy-nine (79) weed notices issued in 2018 and 130 friendly letters.
- No appeals with no court appearances as well.

Leduc County
- Issue weed notices in the growing season.
- Weed notice issued after two (2) or three (3) years of trying to work with the landowners.
- No appeals with no court appearances as well.

Camrose County
- Issue weed notices during the growing season.
- Work with landowners prior to issuing a notice.
- Perform custom spraying at a reduced cost for herbicide.
- No appeals with no court appearances as well.

Ponoka County
- Issue weed notices during the growing season.
- Work with landowners prior to issuing a notice.
- No appeals with no court appearances as well.
Red Deer County
- Issue weed notices during the growing season.
- Will send letters in the fall to producers stating that they are going to be weed noticed in the following year.
- No appeals have been made.

Parkland County
- Issue weed notices during the growing season.
- Will send a reminder letter to producers who have an enforcement date upcoming.
- No appeals have been made, but one (1) court case has occurred.

Brazeau County
- Issue weed notices during the growing season.
- Issued fifteen (15) weed notices in 2018 with only one (1) actually enforced.
- No appeals with no court appearances as well.
- Rebate program is moving from thirty percent (30%) to sixty percent (60%) coverage in 2019 with no maximum amount.

In respect of the information acquired from neighbouring municipalities, Administration is concerned about issuing notices during the non-growing season (winter) due to the following reasons:
- Potential for more appeals as producers could state no weeds are currently growing in the winter.
- The difficulty in determining whether a producer sprayed for weeds prior to the onset of winter.
- The difficulty in determining whether the producer worked (broke) the pasture or hay meadow as winter makes it difficult to determine with snow on the field.
- Difficulty in guaranteeing that weeds are on the property during the conditions of winter.

Alternatives
Options for consideration by the Agricultural Service Board include:
1. That the Agricultural Service Board accept the details outlining the process neighbouring municipalities utilize for weed notices as information.
2. That the Agricultural Service Board direct Administration to issue Weed Notices to property owners during the month of January of each year.
3. That the Agricultural Service Board provide Administration with direction on how to move forward with the Weed Notice process.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the details outlining the process neighbouring municipalities utilize for weed notices as information. General discussion ensued on the weed process.

Resolution AG20190313.010
MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely
that the Agricultural Service Board accept the details outlining the process neighbouring municipalities utilize for weed notices as information.

Carried Unanimously

12.2 2019 Farm Family Awards - Report

Correspondence was received from Northlands Agriculture dated March 1, 2019 regarding the 2019 Farm Family Awards.

Northlands is proud to once again partner with BMO for the 2019 BMO Farm Family Awards. Since 1969, farm families from Northern and Central Alberta have been recognized by Northlands with this prestigious honour. The County of Wetaskiwin is eligible to nominate a family in 2019.

The Agriculture Industry is an essential industry in Alberta and Northlands recognizes outstanding farm families with the Farm Family Awards, presented by Alberta Motor Association.

The objective of the Farm Family Awards is to recognize outstanding farm families in an area north of Township 34 (Red Deer). The Farm Family Awards honour those who best exemplify the value of the family farm to our rural communities and society by being leaders in the industry. When nominating a Farm Family, municipalities are encouraged to equally consider farming business practices and community involvement. As a note, a Farm Family is considered to be the immediate family currently involved in the family farm operation.

Families are hosted at a gala dinner at Northlands and are recognized for their contributions to the farming community and the agricultural industry. This year, The BMO Farm Family Awards Ceremony will take place during Farmfair International on November 9, 2019 at the Edmonton Expo Centre.

At the March 6, 2007 Council General meeting, Council approved that the rotation system for recognizing future farm families. (Ref. Page #2007/80C)

The rotation system the County of Wetaskiwin follows for recognizing farm families is as follows for the next three (3) years:

2019 - Division 3
2021 - Division 6
2023 - Division 1

This year, the rotation falls for Division 3 to nominate a family for the Farm Family award.

The Submission deadline is May 31, 2019.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board direct Administration and the Division 3 Councillor to discuss potential candidates to be nominated for the 2019 Farm Family Awards and that the candidate is selected from Division 3 in accordance with the rotation set out by Council in 2007.

Resolution AG20190313.011

MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely

that Administration and the Division 3 Councillor discuss potential candidates to be nominated for the 2019 Farm Family Awards and that the candidate be selected from Division 3 in accordance with the rotation set out by Council in 2007.

Carried Unanimously

12.3 Class 1 Driver Requirements for Farmers – Letter from Brazeau County - Report

The County of Wetaskiwin received a letter from Brazeau County Agricultural Service Board Chairperson Sara Wheale dated February 20, 2019 regarding Class 1 Driver Training Requirements for Farmers that was addressed to the Honourable Brian Mason, Minster of Transportation.
The letter read as follows:

"On behalf of the Brazeau County Agricultural Service Board (ASB), we are writing to request that agricultural producers be exempt from the Class 1 commercial driver training requirements.

Agriculture is one of Brazeau County’s key industries with 655 farm operators reported in the 2016 census. The ability to get their products to market is essential for all 57,605 of Alberta’s producers. The new Class 1 driver training requirements are an added cost and time commitment for producers looking to obtain their class 1 license. Margins and time are already tight for agricultural producers.

We understand and agree that the safety requirement for Class 1 drivers licensing is of utmost importance for all of our citizens, however, we feel the requirement should not be the same for commercial drivers compared to agricultural producers due to the distance and frequency differences in the industries.

Saskatchewan has provided an "F" exemption for farmers on their Class 1 licenses. Brazeau County’s ASB encourages the Ministry of Transportation to implement a similar exemption for Alberta’s agricultural producers.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions."

Options for consideration by the Agricultural Service Board include:

1. That the Agricultural Service Board accept the letter received from Brazeau County addressed to the Minister of Transportation regarding Class 1 Driver Training Requirements for Farmers as information.

2. That the Agricultural Service Board approve writing a letter to the Minister of Transportation regarding Class 1 Driver Training Requirements for Farmers.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the letter received from Brazeau County addressed to the Minister of Transportation regarding Class 1 Driver Training Requirements for Farmers as information.

Administration found the following article in an Agriweek of March 11, 2019: "The Alberta government, in a rare positive response to a concern of agriculture organizations, extended the March 1 deadline by which farm workers were to receive mandatory semi-trailer truck driver training and testing. The new date is March 1 2020. Farm groups pointed out there was not enough time before the start of the peak spring season."

Resolution AG20190313.012

MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely

that the Agricultural Service Board accept the letter received from Brazeau County addressed to the Minister of Transportation regarding Class 1 Driver Training Requirements for Farmers as information.

Carried Unanimously

12.4 Farm Safety Centre – Funding for 2019 - Report

Correspondence was received on January 9, 2019 from the Farm Safety Centre regarding funding for 2019.

During 2018, a total of 52,007 children in the rural and remote regions of Alberta received in-class Safety Smarts messages. The generosity of many Albertans continued to make this unique extension effort possible. In 2018, more than 290 entities made cash contributions to support this historically successful farm safety initiative and the Farm Safety Centre is grateful for each and every dollar donated. Fifty-nine (59) of these contributions came from Alberta’s Counties and Municipal Districts (MD’s).

2018 was not an easy year, with the tightening economy impacting both corporate and government contributions. The Farm Safety Centre acknowledged with sadness that was necessary to contract delivery efforts in 2018 to match funds available, so some children were missed. The Farm Safety Centre followed the motto taught by many grandparents “Use it up – Wear it Out – Make it do – Or do without. Farm Safety
anticipates renewed reach (60,000+) in 2019 as a long awaited source of grant funding is expected soon.

The continued commitment of Counties and MD’s across Alberta kept the Safety Smarts program viable this last year. The Farm Safety Centre requests that sincere thanks be given to each Agricultural Service Board. The Farm Safety Centre’s budget realities make it impossible for Farm Safety to support all requests, and therefore are hopeful that the County of Wetaskiwin may again have funds available to support program delivery in 2019.

The Farm Safety Centre’s 2019 request, based on 2018 delivery to 2,224 children at $3.50 per student, is $7,784.00.

Each contribution, of any amount, is greatly appreciated and the Farm Safety Centre acknowledges the generous contributions received from the County of Wetaskiwin in previous years.

The power of the Safety Smarts program comes from consistent, reinforced, face to face sharing. Hundreds of rural schools allow time for this program each year because they hear of the close calls and near misses and recognize the importance of their students receiving consistent best practice safety messaging.

The Farm Safety Centre indicated that investing in our children now is a wise investment in the future. Influencing their personal attitudes and actions as they grow and mature will pay significant dividends as they move forward and become the decision makers of tomorrow.

Regarding the request made by the Farm Safety Centre, Administration notes that funding to the organization is already covered under the Grants to Organizations Policy #12.3.2 of the County of Wetaskiwin. As per Policy #12.3.2, the Farm Safety Centre Safety is currently provided $2,600.00 annually for the Safety Smarts Program.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the request for funding from the Farm Safety Centre as information as funding for the Farm Safety Centre is already covered under the Grants to Organizations Policy #12.3.2 of the County of Wetaskiwin.

General discussion ensued on whether the County of Wetaskiwin is providing enough funding for this program.

Resolution AG20190313.013
MOVED: by Board Member M. Schmidt
that Council approve the Agricultural Service Board accept the request for funding from the Farm Safety Centre as information as funding for the Farm Safety Centre is already covered under the Grants to Organizations Policy #12.3.2 of the County of Wetaskiwin.

Carried Unanimously

13. INFORMATION ITEMS

13.1 Recycling Pilot Tackles Agricultural Waste - Report

On January 21, 2019, a media release was received from the Government of Alberta regarding a recycling pilot regarding agricultural waste. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry is helping fund a three-year pilot program that will recycle agricultural plastics.

The Alberta Beef Producers will use the $750,000 grant to coordinate the recycling program on behalf of the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group (APRG) – Twenty (20) stakeholder organizations ranging from commodity associations and rural municipalities to retailers.

The Alberta Agricultural Plastics Recycling Pilot Program is aimed at:

- Recycling grain bags and twine
- Researching markets for other agricultural plastics not included in the pilot program
- Conducting a waste characterization study to determine agricultural plastic volumes
- Surveying producers to get feedback
Educating producers on the program and how to recycle their plastics

Oniel Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, was stated as saying that “Making agriculture more efficient and environmentally sustainable is a win for everyone. Not only are we tackling the longstanding problem of wasted twine and agricultural plastics, we’re working with partners to find policy solutions that really work. This pilot program is shaping a move toward an environmentally sustainable future for our province.”

The pilot will determine the financials, logistics, and operations of recycling agricultural plastics that could help inform a future policy solution to the issue.

Al Kemmere, Chairman, Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group, stated that “The Alberta government’s commitment to the pilot program is a welcome announcement. The APRG will explore an on-the-ground assessment of ag plastics on the provincial landscape to support the environmentally sound end use of these materials.”

Assare Grinde, Director, Alberta Beef Producers, and executive member, Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group, stated that “We would like to thank the Alberta government for supporting the agricultural industry in our efforts to recycle our waste plastics. We are excited to start working out the details of the program and will send more information to producers as soon as possible.”

Neil Gorda, director, Region Four, Alberta Barley, and executive member, Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group states: “There is strong support for this program from the agriculture sectors in Alberta. We look forward the rollout of this much-needed initiative and appreciate and speedy response and support from the Alberta government.”

A Government of Alberta study in 2012 revealed that around fifty percent (50%) of agricultural producers were burning their agricultural plastics on-farm. Sending plastics to a landfill was also a common method of disposing of agricultural plastics.

Saskatchewan ran a pilot program from 2011 to 2017 and is now operating the first regulated recycling program in Canada for grain bags. Alberta’s pilot program includes both grain bags and twine.

On January 22, 2019, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) released a Bulletin titled: “Funding for Agricultural Plastics Recycling Pilot Project Announced”.

The bulletin advised that moving forward, the APRG will hire a program operator to collect and recycle the grain bags and twine. Municipalities interested in hosting collection sites are encouraged to watch for future announcements.

On February 13, 2019, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) released a Bulletin titled: “Agricultural Plastics Recycling Pilot Program Updates”.

The bulletin advised that those interested in becoming the program operator for the three-year agricultural plastics recycling pilot program were encouraged to submit an expression of interest through Alberta Purchasing Connection.

The bulletin also advised that in response large amount of interest in the program, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry announced an additional $250,000 in funding on February 6, 2019, bringing the total to $1 million for the pilot program. These funds will allow for additional collection sites to be included in the pilot program.

On February 13, 2019, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) released a Bulletin titled: “Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group Website Launched”.

The bulletin advised that the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group (APRG) is responsible for implementing the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Pilot Program (APRPP). The APRG launched its own website where information on APRPP will be shared, including updates on program implementation.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the correspondence on the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Pilot Program as information.

Discussion ensued on the West Dried Meat Lake Landfill Authority and whether the Authority would consider taking agricultural plastics.

Resolution AG20190313.014
MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely
that the Agricultural Service Board send a letter to West Dried Meat Lake Regional Landfill Authority encouraging them to participate in the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Pilot Program in the collection of plastics.

Carried Unanimously

13.2 Agricultural Bursary Thank You Correspondence - Report

On November 2, 2018, the Agricultural Service Board resolved to award six (6) Agricultural Bursaries, to Wilson Schulz, Jesse Senz, Laura Haenni, Anne Germain, Hasse van der Kamp and Cole Schwengler, who have not previously received the Agricultural Bursary. (Ref. Resolution #AS20181102.2009)

Administration has received the following thank you correspondence from Ms. Haenni, Ms. Germain, and Mr. Schulz, which were as follows:

“I’d like to thank you for awarding me with the Wetaskiwin County Agricultural Bursary for 2018. It is a big help and reduces some stress financially. I appreciate the time you and the department take to make this scholarship available.” - Laura Haenni

“Thank you for supporting me as I pursue a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness. It is fantastic to have the agricultural service board partnering with students to help progress agriculture and help feed the world. Thank you for your generosity through the giving of the bursary.” - Anne Germain

“Thank you so much for the Agricultural Bursary. I appreciate the help funding my studies, and am deeply grateful. I hope 2019 is a great year for you and the county.” - Wilson Schulz

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the thank you correspondence from Ms. Haenni, Ms. Germain, and Mr. Schulz regarding their selection as a 2018 Agricultural Bursary recipient as information.

Resolution AG20190313.015
MOVED: by Board Member M. Schmidt

that the Agricultural Service Board accept the thank you correspondence from Ms. Haenni, Ms. Germain, and Mr. Schulz regarding their selection as a 2018 Agricultural Bursary recipient as information.

Carried Unanimously

13.3 ALUS Information Item - Report

The ALUS e-newsletter titled: The Post, December 2019: Season’s Greetings! is provided for review by the Agricultural Service Board.

Administration recommended that the Agricultural Service Board accept the ALUS e-newsletter titled: The Post, December 2019: Season’s Greetings! as information.

Ms. Barkwell advised that two ALUS participants won the 2018 OTIS Awards. The OTIS award is named after the star character in the book series "Otis and Friends: Environmental Adventures". OTIS is also an acronym for OutsTanding In Stewardship.

One of the ALUS participants who won the 2018 OTIS Awards was an ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc participant. The OTIS Awards are presented annually by the Battle River Watershed Alliance to businesses, organizations, individuals and youth in Alberta’s Battle River and Sounding Creek watersheds for taking action though on-the-ground efforts, education, and the responsible overseeing and protection of the watershed’s environment as "something worth preserving".

The Farm Award went to Tin Forest Farm, where ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc participants Alana and Justin Schamber are excellent wetland caretakers who also work to raise awareness about local food and connect people to the land through farm tours and kids camps.

Resolution AG20190313.016
MOVED: by Board Member L. Seely
that the Agricultural Service Board accept the ALUS e-newsletter titled: The Post, December 2019: Season’s Greetings! as information.

Carried Unanimously

14. NEXT MEETING DATE

Resolution AG20190313.017
MOVED: by Board Member K. Adair

that the date of the next Agricultural Service Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

Carried Unanimously

15. ADJOURN

Resolution AG20190313.018
MOVED: by Board Member B. Krahn

that the meeting adjourn at 12:17 p.m.

Carried Unanimously

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CHAIRMAN

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CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER