

The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) of the Municipal District of Wainwright No. 61 met in the Administration Building at 1:00 a.m., Tuesday October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Present: Chairman – Councillor Bill Lawson  
Councillor Ryley Andersen  
Farmer Members – Bob Dickson, Mel Erickson and Jesse Campbell  
Agricultural Fieldman – James Schwindt  
Assistant Agricultural Fieldman and ASB Secretary – Tanis Ponath  
Pest Control Officer – Rod Gabrielson

The Chairman Clr. Lawson called the meeting to order at 12:55 p.m.

19/20 Moved by Clr. Andersen to approve the agenda as presented. CARRIED

Clr. Lawson introduced the new farm member Jesse Campbell.

20/20 Moved by Mel Erickson that the minutes from March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 be accepted as presented. CARRIED

Correspondence was reviewed by the Agricultural Fieldman, James Schwindt,

- a. (May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020) Bruce Hamblin, Director, Inspection and Investigation Section, Animal Health and Assurance Branch; sent a letter in response to the M.D. of Wainwright's concerns regarding the decrease in funding for the Rat Control Program.
- b. (May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020) Megan Evan, Executive Director, Alberta Invasive Species Council; sent a card thanking the M.D. of Wainwright for their 2020 bronze sponsorship.
- c. (May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020) Town of Wainwright; sent a copy of their projected weed control work in 2020 as required for the grant received from the M.D. of Wainwright.
- d. (June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020) Alberta Agriculture and Forestry; information regarding the committee members apart of the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee is to provide strategic advice and recommendations on opportunities to promote unbiased and science-based information about Alberta's agriculture sector.
- e. (June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020) Bruce Hamblin, Director, Inspection and Investigation Section, Animal Health and Assurance Branch; sent a letter in reference to the agreement for the Implementation of Wild Boar Containment Standards under the *Agricultural Pests Act* which came into effect on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and expires on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. The M.D. of Wainwright currently has one active wild boar farm that complies with the containment standards.
- f. (July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020) Laura Nelson, Executive Director, Alberta Farm Safety Center; sent a copy of the Alberta Farm Safety Centers annual report for 2019-2020.
- g. (July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020) Sebastien Dutrisac, President, Association of Agricultural Fieldman; sent a letter informing ASBs across the Province that due to COVID 19 and the current Alberta Health guidelines the NE hosting region has decided to move to an online platform for the upcoming 2021 Agricultural Service Board Conference in January.
- h. August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020) Jocelyn Whaley, Chief Administrative Officer, Brazeau County; sent a letter informing ASBs that

Brazeau County made the decision to cancel the 2020 Provincial Agricultural Service Board Tour.

21/20

Moved by Bob Dickson to accept the correspondence. CARRIED

The ASB agenda package included the last 5 months of ASB monthly reports. Taken as information.

James Schwindt, Agricultural Fieldman presented his report.

The Agricultural Fieldman informed the ASB the final agreement for the Agricultural Service Board grant has been signed and we are waiting for payment. The status of the Resource Management Funding is still unknown at this time.

The Agricultural Fieldman discussed the status of the Rat Control Program and grant. We are waiting for a finalized draft agreement from the Province of Alberta. Once we have the finalized agreement Administration and Council will determine how the M.D. of Wainwright will proceed with the program.

The M.D. of Wainwright has purchased additional cases of 2% liquid strychnine to have available for ratepayers to purchase. Currently there is 194 cases in stock and 379 cases on back order. The ASB will make recommendations to council on how to proceed with sales at a future meeting.

The Agricultural Fieldman updated the ASB on grass seeding. Due to weather, the Ag Services Department has been limited on how many acres they have been able to seed. Any unseeded acres will be completed in the spring.

Tanis Ponath, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman presented her report.

The Assistant Agricultural Fieldman provided a pest surveillance update to the ASB. Diamondback moth, bertha armyworm, wheat midge and grasshopper surveys were all completed in 2020. Monitoring for swede midge did not occur due to COVID-19 limitations.

The Assistant Agricultural Fieldman participated in a research project for the control of Toadflax using the biological control agent *Rhinusa pilosa*. The project is in conjunction with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

The Assistant Agricultural Fieldman organized 2 webinars in conjunction with the Grazing School for Women. The first webinar was on Pasture Rejuvenation with Grant Lastiwka and the second was with Carol Ohler on Effective Communication During Challenging Times. Both webinars were successful and we were able to reach more producers in the northeast region by switching to an online format.

The Assistant Agricultural Fieldman informed the ASB that the Edgerton Agricultural Society nominated the Zajic Family for the BMO Farm Family Award. The awards banquet, held in conjunction with Farm Fair International is postponed until further notice due to COVID-19.

Rod Gabrielson, Pest Control Officer presented his report.

The Pest Control Officer reported he has completed 447 rat checks and removed 174 beavers. A total of 8 dams were blown and 105 dams removed by hand. In addition, the Pest Control Officer has removed 16 muskrats, 8 coyotes and supplied 8 skunk traps to producers. He received an additional 9 calls from landowners concerned about Norway Rats.

Pest Control Officer Rod Gabrielson announced his retirement, effective December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. He was employed with the M.D. of Wainwright for 17 years.

22/20

Moved by Clr. Andersen to accept the reports

The ASB discussed the 2020 roadside spray program. There were some challenges with COVID-19 however; our staff was able to complete the scheduled roads.

The Ag Services Department received an increase in requests from landowners to control noxious weeds on their property. This is partly because there was a large increase in Toadflax populations.

The Agricultural Fieldman provided an update on the special use approval for control of purple loosestrife at Enstrom Pond. This was year 1 of 5 of the special use approval. A third party contractor, Cortex Vegetation was hired to complete the scheduled project in 2020.

The Agricultural Fieldman informed the ASB the Ag Services Department is currently evaluating our herbicide options for 2020.

The Agriculture Fieldman discussed working with CN Rail to control noxious weeds on their right of ways.

The Ag Services Department worked with Alberta Transportation to control Toadflax on their right of ways. Ag Services staff GPS Toadflax populations for Alberta Transportation. A total of 36.6 hectares of toadflax was sprayed on Alberta highways.

Saskatchewan Highways sprayed some areas of the Highway 17 right of way in the M.D. of Wainwright for toadflax later in the season.

The ASB discussed the 2020 clubroot surveys. There was 81 fields inspected by the Agricultural and Assistant Agricultural Fieldman. In addition, part of the survey was completed with Victor Manolli a researcher from the University of Alberta. Clubroot was positively identified by lab tests in 6 locations in the M.D of Wainwright. The landowners have been contacted and will be issued a Notice to Control Pests for Clubroot that sets out parameters the landowner must follow for the next 4 years.

The Assistant Agriculture Fieldman led a discussion with the ASB about future webinars and workshops.

Next meeting at the call of the chair.

23/20

Moved by Clr. Andersen that the meeting be adjourned. (2:58 p.m.)  
CARRIED

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Chairman – Councillor Bill Lawson

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Secretary – Tanis Ponath