

Minutes

Agricultural Advisory Committee

March 5, 2025

1. Call to Order

The Agricultural Advisory Committee met electronically on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m. The Deputy Clerk indicated the Member Hugh Simpson had recently advised staff of his resignation and that staff will work to fill the vacancy.

Present: Chair Lorie Smith, Carrie Davenport, Simon DeBoer, Blair Freeman, Dianne Booker, Keith Reid, Warden Andrea Matrosovos, Councillors Paul McQueen, Tom Hutchinson, Shirley Keaveney

Regrets: Councillors Mackey and Milne, Member Brenda Hsueh, Member Gail Ardiel, and Member Rob Lipsett

Staff present: Randy Scherzer, Tara Warder, Robert Hatton, Scott Taylor, Sarah Johnson, and Rayburn Murray

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Member Simon DeBoer joined the meeting at 9:16 a.m.

AAC01-25

Moved by: Councillor Hutchinson

Seconded by: Councillor McQueen

That Member Lorie Smith be elected Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee for 2025.

Carried

Lorie Smith was acclaimed Chair for 2025.

On motions by Councillor Keaveney and Councillor McQueen, nominations for Chair closed.

AAC02-25

Moved by: Councillor McQueen

Seconded by: Councillor Keaveney

That Member Keith Reid be nominated Vice Chair for the Agricultural Advisory Committee for 2025.

Carried

AAC03-25

Moved By: Member Keith Reid
Seconded By: Member Lorie Smith

That Member Blair Freeman be nominated Vice Chair for the Agricultural Advisory Committee for 2025.

Carried

On motions by Councillor Hutchinson and Warden Matrosovs, nominations for Vice Chair closed.

Following receipt of two nominations for Vice-Chair of the Committee, Member Keith Reid declined the nomination for Vice Chair. As a result, Member Blair Freeman was elected Vice-Chair.

3. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Delegations

4.a Creative Polymer Solutions - Shane McKenna

Shane McKenna provided a presentation to the Committee on behalf of Switch Energy. He summarized the recycling services provided for the disposal of agricultural plastics (bale wrap). He expressed interest in working with municipalities and local farmers.

Committee members asked questions of clarification regarding the disposal process, noted the options of partnering with Cleanfarm Initiative, and highlighted the opportunity for local farms to work together. Staff thanked the Committee for their feedback and referred to discussions with lower tier municipalities on the topic of waste removal.

5. Items For Direction or Discussion

5.a Status of Forest Management By-law Review

Sarah Johnson, Trails and Forestry Coordinator, highlighted the direction received from County Council to move forward with public consultation.

5.b Status of Beaver/Coyote By-law Review

Sarah Johnson, Trails and Forestry Coordinator, highlighted the direction received from County Council to move forward with public consultation.

5.c Regional Agriculture Learning and Demonstration Site

Scott Taylor, Director of Planning and Development, provided a presentation of the Regional Agricultural Learning and Demonstration Site. At this time, the Owen Sound Agricultural Society, Chatsworth Agricultural Society, Bluewater School District, and Grey County have partnered to create a proposed site and seek support and approval from the Niagara Escarpment Commission. The proposed site is located to the west of Grey Roots Museum and would be utilized by residents of Grey County, visitors, and the Specialist High Skills Major Program. He highlighted the proposed site uses and events include, education, demonstrations, events and fairs, and more.

Committee members thanked staff for their work and highlighted the importance of partnering with neighbouring communities, providing learning opportunities, and the consideration of connections to the Bruce Trail. In response to questions of the Committee, staff indicated that the intention is for County staff to support the process and that further discussions regarding funding and fundraising will need to occur.

5.d Share the Road Campaign

Savanna Myers, Director of Development, Tourism, and Culture, highlighted the Share the Road Campaign. By the end of 2025, all cycling routes on Grey County roads will include signage and billboards, radio, and social media campaigns will continue to provide communications. She thanked the Committee for their feedback throughout.

5.e Gather Campaign

Savanna Myers, Director of Development, Tourism, and Culture, highlighted the Gather Campaign that was launched in February via social media, physical copies, and video options. She further highlighted the viewer success and indicated that the information can be found on the Grey County website.

6. Round Table Discussion

6.a Sector Trends and Challenges

Member Carrie Davenport left the meeting at 9:53 a.m.

Councillor Paul McQueen left the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Councillor Shirley Keaveney left the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Quorum was lost 10:00 a.m.

Member Dianne Booker referred to the impact that tariffs will have on the sector. Savanna Myers indicated that a business resource page has been created on the Grey County website. Chair Lorie Smith referred to the recent weather impacts on the communities. Member Keith Reid indicated that on Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority will be hosting an event for individuals to meet with tile drainage contractors in the region. He further indicated that the Youth Climate Action Fund (Town of Blue Mountains and Grey County) is open for applications. Warden Matrosovs indicated that support workshops are available and encouraged individuals to reach out if they have any questions.

Member Blair Freeman requested an update/overview on active Grey County infrastructure projects. Staff indicated that Transportation staff can attend at a future meeting to provide an overview.

7. Correspondence

None.

8. Other Business

Member Lorie Smith referred to the upcoming courses being offered by Grey Agricultural Services and encouraged individuals to register and attend.

9. Next Meeting Date

Agricultural Advisory Committee - June 4, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

10. Adjournment

On motion of Warden Matrosovs, the Agricultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:16 a.m. to the call of the Chair.