

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
AGRICULTURAL POLICY & ACTION COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**APAC 2-2021
Friday, April 30, 2021
Committee Room 4 / Video Conference
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON**

Committee Members Present in Committee Room 4: Councillor Witteveen (Committee Chair)

Committee Members Present via Video Conference: Councillors Disero, Easton, Steele; G. Janes, J. Kikkert, C. Mullet Koop, B. Schenck (Committee Vice Chair), J. Schonberger, L. Troup

Absent/Regrets: Bradley (Regional Chair), Councillor Jordan; A. Vaughn, K. Wiens

Staff Present in Committee Room 4: K. Lotimer, Legislative Coordinator, L. Sicoli, Economic Development Officer

Staff Present via Video Conference: E. Acs, Policy Planner, K Costantini, Senior Planner, G. Spezza, Director, Economic Development, K. Young, Planner

Others Present via Video Conference: P. Bootsma, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Sarah Caster-Kielek, Rural Planner for Niagara, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Helma Geerts, Policy Advisor, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, J. Janiec, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Nick Kinkel, Agriculture and Rural Economic Development Advisor, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, K. MacPhearson, Greenbelt Foundation, S. Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit Growers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Witteveen called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Greater Golden Horseshoe Agricultural System

Helma Geerts, Policy Advisory, and Nick Kinkel, Agriculture and Rural Economic Development Advisor, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), provided information respecting Implementing the Greater Golden Horseshoe Agricultural System. Topics of the presentation included:

- Significance of the agri-food sector and rationale for the Agricultural System approach
- Provincial Agricultural System policy
 - Greenbelt Plan, A Place to Grow, Niagara Escarpment Plan
- Agricultural Land Base mapping
- Economic development
 - Approach and resources
 - Examples
- Future steps

3.2 Food Security and Expanding Access to Nutritional Food Throughout the Niagara Region

Renee Delaney, resident, Town of Allanburg, and Steven Soos, resident, City of Welland, provided information respecting Food Security and Expanding Access to Nutritional Food Throughout the Niagara Region. Topics of the presentation included:

- The need for community supported agriculture to help address the issue of lack of nutritional food
- Petitioning the Minister of Agriculture to increase purchasing power around access to nutritional food
- The need for improved identification of local products in existing supply chains
- Encouraging the development of new markets for local food

4. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were no items for consideration.

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Moved by Councillor Steele
Seconded by Councillor Disero

That the following items **BE RECEIVED** for information:

PDS 13-2021

Municipal By-law Enforcement Appointments - Woodland Conservation By-law

CWCD 2021-92

Correspondence from The Honourable Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, to Regional Chair Bradley, dated April 14, 2021, respecting \$10 Million Investment to Extend Funding for a Re-designed Enhanced Agri-food Workplace Protection Program

APAC 1-2021

Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Meeting Minutes - February 26, 2021

Carried

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Irrigation Update

Committee members reviewed a draft motion respecting Niagara's Agriculture Sector and Access to Untreated Water for Irrigation. Councillor Witteveen, Committee Chair, advised that he would be providing notice to the Regional Clerk, to include this motion on the agenda for the Regional Council meeting being held on May 20, 2021.

Moved by Councillor Disero
Seconded by Councillor Easton

That the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee **ENDORSE** the draft resolution respecting Niagara's Agricultural Sector and Access to Untreated Water for Irrigation.

Carried

7.2 Farm Help Housing Update

Sarah Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit, requested an update respecting the request for relief from Regional Development Charges for farm help houses. Councillor Witteveen, Committee Chair, advised that he has requested that staff explore the possibility of a grant type program, using restart funds received from the province, to provide some relief from these charges and will provide an update at a future meeting.

7.3 Migrant Farm Worker Vaccinations

Linda Sicoli, Economic Development Officer, advised Committee members that a total of 3,019 migrant workers, from 171 farms across the region, were vaccinated over the past weekend. This is in addition to the 316 workers from 5 farms that had been vaccinated in early April as part of a pilot project.

7.4 Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Update

Joe Schonberger, Committee member, advised that the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Public Advisory Committee met virtually on April 29, 2021 and discussed the NPCA Strategic Plan. He noted that the Strategic Plan survey is available online until May 6, 2021, and encouraged Committee members to complete the survey or consider sending a formal submission to the NPCA. He also advised that NPCA Public Advisory Committee meetings are available to view on the NPCA website.

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Friday, September 24, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Councillor Witteveen
Committee Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Legislative Coordinator

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk