

MINUTES
AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD Meeting
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF LESSER SLAVE RIVER NO. 124
July 9, 2020 9:00 a.m.
Zoom Video Meeting

**MEMBERS
PRESENT**

Sandra Melzer (Chair)	Flatbush (Council)
Damond Stadnyk (Vice-Chair)	Flatbush
Robert Esau	Flatbush (Council)
Jessica Mittelstadt	Flatbush

MEMBERS ABSENT

Orin Sand	Hondo
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IN ATTENDANCE

Russ Jassman	Director of Rural Services/ Agricultural Fieldman, MDLSR
Peggy Laing	Recording Secretary, MDLSR

CALL TO ORDER

S. Melzer called the meeting to order at 9:14 AM.

ADOPT AGENDA

72-20

J. Mittelstadt moved to adopt the agenda with the following addition:
7.2 Soil Erosion

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADOPT MINUTES

73-20

D. Stadnyk moved the minutes of the June 9, 2020, Agricultural Service Board meeting, be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION: DIRECTOR OF RURAL SERVICES/AGRICULTURAL FIELDMAN – Russ Jassman

Highlights:

- Despite all the rain, summer is progressing, and weeds are in full bloom
- Issued Inspector's Notices – 2 Orange Hawkweed, 3 Himalayan Balsam
- Reports of more Orange Hawkweed and Yellow Hawkweed in gravel pits will be investigated ASAP
- Contractor has completed spraying designated MD roadsides and other identified areas
- The Contractor will be available for Weed Control Act enforcement if necessary
- Submitted the ASB 2019 Grant Justification and Financial Report
- Council approved the amended Weed Control Partnership Program Policy
- Council rescinded the Fusarium graminearum Management Policy
- Rote letters to Corteva and AdvantageVM regarding herbicide packaging
- Followed up with CN Rail

Administration explained that across the MD, Prohibitive Noxious Weeds are the first priority. Weed Inspector's Notices have been issued for the Prohibitive Noxious and are being followed up on. Noxious Weeds action is dependent on many things:

social, environmental, MD available manpower and MD ability to follow through if enforcement becomes necessary. 2020 is a challenging year due to downsized manpower and that also resulted in a change in skill set. The concerns raised by the Board will be investigated but action will be prioritized to what is possible. Concentrated areas of Roadside Vegetation Control are on a 3-year basis. This year was the Southshore (north of the Athabasca River) area, 2021 Flatbush and 2022 Smith.

74-20

R. Esau moved to accept the Director of Rural Services/Agricultural Fieldman's report as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**UNFINISHED
BUSINESS**

ASB Business Plan Update

Administration presented the updates to the 2020 ASB Business Plan and asked the board for additional input.

75-20

J. Mittelstadt moved to accept the updated ASB Business Plan as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Pesticide Packaging

As discussed at the last meeting regarding packaging of herbicides in smaller quantities, Administration sent letters to Vaughn Leuschen at Corteva (Restore II, Reclaim II and Grazon) and Geoff Thompson at AdvantageVM (Navius Flex).

Administration provided the response from both parties for the Board's reference.

It was suggested that a resolution for the NW Regional ASB meeting might be a route for this issue. Administration explained this will be a very in-depth process because it will be in affect trying to direct private industry, not government. This would be a very arduous process.

It was suggested a more doable route for the MD might be to investigate how to get a vendor's license with a storage facility to meet legislation.

76-20

D. Stadnyk moved that Administration investigate a cost-effective option to store and dispense herbicide as a vendor.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CN Rail – Vegetation Management Program

Administration has reached out to CN to try and make a contact with the local Track Foreman. Although no calls were returned the individual came to the Flatbush office to enquire about beaver control. This gave us a name and contact information and the opportunity to face-to-face request a ride along for Weed Inspection. Hopefully, that will come to fruition by mid-July.

77-20

J. Mittelstadt moved to accept the interaction with CN Rail contact as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

NEW BUSINESS

Declaration of Municipal Agricultural Disaster

As the rain continues to fall and drown out crops and stifle hay production, thoughts turn to the state of agriculture in our municipality and the plight of farmers.

Administration provided several sources of information relating to the topic of Declaring a Municipal Agricultural Disaster. The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA), *A Guide for Declaring Municipal Agricultural Disasters*, document truly sets the stage for a declaration. A declaration needs to be backed up with factual information. Lamont, Athabasca, Lac la Biche, and Thorhild Counties have declared thus far. There has been inquiry through the AAAF NW region asking for input on who is thinking of making the declaration. Our process would be to make a recommendation to Council, who will make the actual decision.

78-20

R. Esau moved to table the agenda item of Declaration of Municipal Agricultural Disaster for the August 13, 2020, ASB meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Soil Erosion

Areas displaying "gullying" soil erosion in the south region of the MD have been sited. The Soil Conservation Act is under the ASB mandate. There are a few ways to address these issues including working with the landowner and extension. We also have the enforcement tool if required. It was agreed that some of this erosion is exacerbated by the change in land use from pasture and hay production to

cropping. Additionally, the total clearing of quarters often leaves no barriers in place to stop water flow. The lands in question are sloped with hills within that create a watercourse that over time becomes more and more pronounced until a "gully" forms. Once the gully forms, the water carves it wider and deeper and carries silt from the field onto other lands. This progression of silt eventually ends up in rivers. ASB members are considered stewards of the land and the Soil Conservation Act is in place as a tool to assist the Board in preventing this eventuality. First and foremost, the MDLSR's priority has always been education over enforcement, so offering to work with landowners would be a first step.

Administration will provide more information on the Soil Conservation Act at the next ASB meeting.

79-20

J. Mittelstadt moved to provide education in general to land owners in the next Newsletter regarding practices to reduce soil erosion.

J. Mittelstadt, D. Stadnyk - In Favor

R. Esau- Not in Favor

CARRIED

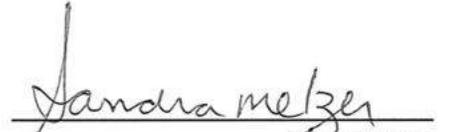
NEXT MEETING

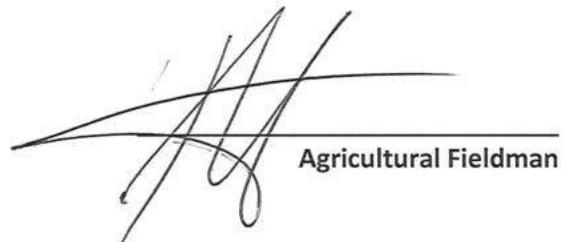
August 13, 2020

ADJOURNMENT

80-20

D. Stadnyk adjourned the meeting at 10:46 AM.


Chairperson


Agricultural Fieldman