



**THE CORPORATION OF  
HALDIMAND COUNTY**

**Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes**

**Date:** January 15, 2025  
**Time:** 6:00 P.M.  
**Location:** Haldimand County Administration Building - Haldimand Room  
53 Thorburn Street South, Cayuga

**Members Present**

N. Hedley, Chair  
R. Blyleven, Member  
D. Court, Member  
S. Heeg, Member  
H. Lise, Member  
C. Snyder, Member  
K. VanderSpek, Member  
C. Wilkinson, Member

**Staff Present**

J. Easson, Senior Economic Development Officer  
J. Nelson, Project Manager, Business Retention and Expansion  
L. Romanuk, Economic Development & Tourism  
C. Donaldson, Administrative Assistant

**Guests Present**

L. Heyming, Grand River Conservation Authority  
K. McNaught, Emergency Management/Fire

**A. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introduction

**B. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest**

None disclosed.

**C. Approval of Previous Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes**

1. Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes - November 20, 2024

**Recommendation 1**

Moved By: K. VanderSpek, Member

Seconded By: S. Heeg, Member

THAT the minutes of the Agricultural Advisory Committee dated November 20, 2024 be approved as presented.

**APPROVED**

**D. Delegations**

1. Chair Election

**Recommendation 2**

Moved By: D. Court, Member

Seconded By: K. VanderSpek, Member

THAT N. Hedley is hereby appointed to serve as Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee from this date until the first Committee meeting in the 2026 calendar year.

**APPROVED**

**Recommendation 3**

Moved By: C. Wilkinson, Member

Seconded By: H. Lise, Member

THAT C. Snyder is hereby appointed to serve as Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee from this date until the first Committee meeting in the 2026 calendar year.

**APPROVED**

2. RWQP Update and Proposals

L. Hemming presented a summary of the projects that the Rural Water Quality Program funded in 2024. In 2024, Haldimand County renewed their partnership to contribute \$25,000 per year to the program's grant fund.

Highlights for 2024 include:

- 8 new projects that were approved by the committee for a total of \$24,000 of grant funding;

- 6 projects were completed;
- Projects consisted of erosion control, cover crops, tree planting and well decommissioning.

1. **RWQP Tree Planting Project – File #139**

Proposal to complete a 1.6 acre block planting that consists of 875 trees, as well as a 2-row 350 meter wind break totalling 330 trees.

**Recommendation 4**

Moved By: R. Blyleven, Member

Seconded By: D. Court, Member

To approve the RWQP File #139 totalling \$1327.00.

**APPROVED**

**E. Items for Consideration**

1. **Emergency Management Services (EMS) - Farm Emergency Preparedness**

- K. McNaught introduced herself and revisited the Farm Emergency Preparedness Flyer, seeking feedback from the committee. Discussion included: Where a Farm site plan should be kept
- A concern was raised regarding the importance of the agricultural community working with Emergency Services to communicate and share site plans to minimize impacts to animals if possible during an emergency. Ensuring animal biosecurity and safety remain top priority.
- EMS recommends annual reviews of emergency plans so that if there are any changes to a farm, plans are updated and accurate
- The committee recommended adding information on Farm 911 Emily Signs in EMS flyers to educate and advise on situations involving vacant land

2. **Work Plan & Future Agenda Items Discussion**

L. Romanuk shared an update on the 2025 workplan for Economic Development and Tourism.

Highlights included:

- Business Retention and Expansion;
- Business Attraction;

- Tourism product development;
- Marketing the County; and
- Partnerships

J. Easson provided an overview of past priority items the committee has discussed to encourage the committee to prioritize workplan items for 2025 and 2026.

Initiative areas included:

- Advocacy and Advisory Supports;
- Attracting Youth to Agriculture;
- Agricultural Awareness; and
- Value Added Agriculture Opportunities

Input provided by the committee included:

- Promoting the RWQP through other farm meetings such as HFA;
- Facilitate virtual farm tours that in turn can be used as promotional materials on the tourism social media and website;
- To bring the farm industry to Council by providing a 15 minute presentation where Council can also in return ask questions;
- To attend and promote the job fair;
- Focus on other areas to attract youth to the agricultural industry, such as providing guidance councillors with information to share with interested students;
- Other ideas included incentives for co-ops and apprenticeships, as well as bringing a farmer into classrooms to discuss agricultural careers;
- Creating Agricultural Awareness toolkits;
- Awareness of Planning and Development policies; and
- Livestock emergency outbreak planning

Discussion ensued.

### 3. Economic Development & Tourism Update

J. Easson provided updates on the following items:

1. Council Presentation – was received well; thanked the Chair for presenting.
2. AgScape Event – approximately 625 kids in attendance, with all positive feedback.
3. Haldimand County Job Fair – to be held on April 24, 2025
4. Haldimand Business Symposium – to be held on May 1, 2025

5. County News

a. Haldimand County preparing for spring by-election in Wards 1 & 4 with more info to come that will be posted on the website.

b. 2025 Budget key dates:

- December 5, 2024 – Rate-Supported Budget – Council Approved
- January 30, 2025 – Capital Budget presented to Council
- February 27, 2025 – Operating Budget presented to Council

6. New building code effective January 1, 2025. Community Breakfast fundraiser - Congratulations to Mark Vaarkamp who will represent not only Haldimand County, but Canada at the upcoming 2025 World Plowing Contest in Czech Republic this fall. A fundraising breakfast will be held Saturday, March 1, 2025 from 7 am - 11 am at Kohler Ag Hall (by donation). More information is available on Facebook.

**F. New Business**

The committee discussed the following topics:

- Concern regarding a letter from the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), stating government officials can access on property gas wells at any point to cap them or take action if necessary. The MNR was requesting any feedback on the issue.
- HFA celebrating their 85th Anniversary
  - New funding initiative to give back to Haldimand community projects
  - HFA Barbeque event focusing on Farm Safety scheduled for August 13, 2025

**G. Adjournment**

**Recommendation 5**

Moved By: C. Wilkinson, Member

Seconded By: D. Court, Member

THAT this meeting is now adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

**APPROVED**