

**M.D. of Bighorn**  
**Agricultural Services and Environmental Advisory Board**  
**September 16, 2011**  
**M.D. Administration Building, Council Chambers**

**In Attendance:** Jackie Gemmill – Chairman  
Bryne Weerstra  
Marla Hingley  
Penny MacMillan  
Dene Cooper  
Erik Butters

**Absent:** None

**Alberta Agriculture  
And Rural Development:** Doug Macaulay, AARD

**Staff:** Dwight Tannas, Environmental Fieldman  
Will Davies, Assistant Environmental Fieldman  
Emily Smith

***Call to Order***

Meeting called to order at 9:08 am

***1. Agenda***

**a) Additions**

Add under delegations Tracy Woitenko, Community Planner for the M.D. of Bighorn to discuss Municipal Development Plan review.

**b) Approval**

**MOTION MACMILLAN THAT: the agenda is approved with the addition of Tracy Woitenko under Delegations**

**Carried Unanimously**

***2. Adoption of Minutes***

**a) MOTION HINGLEY THAT:**

The minutes of the ASE&AB meeting May 6, 2011 are approved as revised.

**Carried Unanimously**

***3. Delegation:***

**a) Tracy Woitenko, Community Planner, M.D of Bighorn. Municipal Development Plan Review**

T. Woitenko provided a brief overview of the purpose of the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and the process that Bighorn is taking to review and update this document. Councillor E. Butters is one of the Council representatives and Dave Johnson is representing the agricultural/rural sector. Both can be contacted for more information or to discuss any issues. To date, the terms of reference have been set, the steering committee appointed and a first

round of visioning sessions have been conducted. Bighorn is now into phase II of the process, which includes a review and public input of the results of the visioning session. Bighorn is requesting responses by the end of October, so if members have any input at this point, please submit it to Tracy. T. Woitenko noted that all the relevant documents are available on Bighorn's website. T. Woitenko is also happy to provide hard copies to anyone who would like a copy.

The Municipal Government Act requires the protection of agriculture and Bighorn's MDP will reflect this direction. T. Woitenko suggested that it might be helpful to have a facilitated review of the first draft with the ASEAB sometime in early 2012. At that point, there will be a summary document that the board will use for the discussion.

#### **4. *Agricultural Fieldman's Report***

A report was included in the package. It has been a busy summer for both the fieldman and assistant fieldman. A good growing year for weeds, but also a great deal of spraying and outreach accomplished. There has also been a marked increase in requests for pest control assistance.

#### **5. *Business Arising From Minutes***

##### **a) *Living in a Natural Environment (LNE)***

The discussion centered on speakers and topics. One possibility discussed is a presentation on trapping as a means of predator control, and specifically the control of wolves and coyotes. There is a producer/trapper from northern Alberta that has been offering workshops and received a very high recommendation from the Western Stock Producers Association. The board decided that while this is an important topic, it might be too graphic and narrow for the current audience at LNE, it would be a good topic to present in a workshop directed towards the agricultural community. It was noted that the Western Stock Producers had expressed an interest in partnering on this presentation, and as adjacent municipalities have also expressed an interest in partnering in outreach, we could likely find co-hosts or partners for the presentation. It was suggested that a location in the north of Bighorn or even in a neighbouring community would be most appropriate.

Staff requested a formal endorsement from the board, which they provided, it was suggested that an information report go to Council so that they are aware of our intention to pursue this presentation.

Other Speaker Options for LNE:

Banff Bison Project

Mushroom presentation

Wildlife Corridor study

Staff will pursue these three options in an effort to secure speakers.

##### **b) *Municipal Update***

Brief update provided by E. Butters.

Bow River Basin Council

E. Butters circulated an information piece on an upcoming a conservation and stewardship tools workshop hosted by the BRBC on October 21<sup>st</sup> at the Cochrane RancheHouse.

Water Conservation Trust of Canada

The Water Conservation Trust of Canada was established as an effective water market management tool. Its mission is to improve social, economic and environmental outcomes by acquiring water entitlements for instream flow. The current activities of the Trust are focused in the water market in Southern Alberta.

Brief update provided by D. Cooper

Inter-municipal Agreements

Bighorn has inter-municipal agreements with nine jurisdictions for a variety of shared and/or provided services. A number of these are currently under negotiation for renewal.

West Jumpingpound Road

Work on this project is well underway and scheduled for completion by the end of the building season.

**c) Ladies Livestock Lessons**

While it was an excellent event with very positive feedback on the presentations, format, etc., the attendance was down slightly from 2010. The committee is looking at how to better market the event so that it appeals to a wider audience.

**d) Alberta Invasive Plant – Casino**

The Alberta Invasive Plant Council will be volunteering at a charity casino in mid-January and our Environmental Fieldman has volunteered to assist with the organization of volunteers.

**e) Workshop Update**

Staff is discussing the possibility of organizing a grazing school. This was a very popular a number of years ago and then attendance fell off. There now seems to be some interest in resurrecting.

**f) Weed Control Update**

The Assistant Fieldman has been working with Dow AgroSciences and their Southern Alberta rep., to "field test" seven different herbicides registered for use in range and pasture: there target Noxious weed is Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis*. The experimental plots are located in West Jumpingpound and have been provided by Sarcee Butte Ranches Ltd.

The Assistant Fieldman has also been working with U. Gillespie in Bighorn's Planning Department to upgrade the M.D.'s weed problem and spraying area reporting by GPS mapping them. They are using Bighorn's new Trimble GPS receiver and Arc View mapping software. Much has been accomplished in the short time since April, 2011 and the upgraded weed mapping will be included in the 2011 ASB Annual Report.

This season Bighorn has taken a more aggressive approach to spraying, providing more education and engaging new organizations to assist. Bow Valley WildSmart has been involved providing some volunteer picking.

With all the proactive work undertaken, Bighorn was only required to issue one weed notice.

**g) Predator Control**

As noted in the Fieldman's report, the requests for pest and predator control assistance is way up.

**h) Jumpingpound Water Management Plan Update**

The Fieldman has reviewed the plan with Bighorn's planning department and municipal manager. The planning department is compiling feedback to be sent to the Jumpingpound Water Management Plan steering committee. The steering committee is seeking acceptance of the plan from all three municipalities (Bighorn, Rocky View and Cochrane) and it will then be sent to Alberta Environment.

## **6. New Business**

### **a) D. Macaulay – Manger, Growing Forward Project**

D. Macaulay has moved into the grants branch of Growing Forward. There are two grants supported through Growing Forward: Agri-Business and Leadership Grants. The leadership grants will provide up to 75% of the cost of training. While his position has changed, D. Macaulay will still be attending Bighorn meetings as an AARD representative and liaison.

### **b) Advice to the Government of Alberta on the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)**

Since the last regular ASEAB meeting in early May, the board has met twice to review and provide comment on the SSRP. A final draft was circulated in the agenda package and the board made a few more final changes.

#### **MOTION MACMILLAN, SECONDED BY HINGLEY That**

ASEAB's review of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan is submitted to Council as information with revisions made at this meeting.

*Carried Unanimously*

D. Cooper circulated a half page description of the M.D. of Bighorn that he was requested to prepare by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development as part of land-use video SRD was producing. D. Cooper had originally been asked to participate in the video, but as they were unable to secure a time, the written statement was submitted instead. D. Cooper reported that only about three sentences were used in the press release associated with the video.

### **c) Calgary Regional Air Zone (CRAZ) – Proposed Air Quality Statement for the SSRP**

CRAZ represents 1.4 million Albertans and approximately 10% of land mass. Its boundary extends from Lake Louise to Brooks and Crossfield to Vulcan. CRAZ has reviewed the SSRP and prepared a submission which focuses on air quality and its importance in regional planning. The Regional Advisory Committee for the SSRP specifically requested that CRAZ make this submission.

D. Cooper circulated the CRAZ monitoring report for 35 monitoring units located arranged geospatially throughout the region. 30 monitors are permanent and 5 are mobile. The mobile units are the ones highlighted on the report in blue. The monitors are measuring ozone, sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. This is the first report and the next report will include a location map and monthly trending. Each monitor costs approximately \$3,000 per year. This translates into a cost of about 3 cents per capita annually.

### **d) Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute (ABMI)– Status Report on the South Saskatchewan Planning Region**

ABMI is a public institute that measures and reports on the state of land, water, and living resources across the province, using scientifically credible indicators of environmental health. ABMI has prepared a preliminary assessment on the status of the South Saskatchewan Planning Region which was circulated at the meeting as information.

### **e) Central Alberta ASB Conference at Clearwater County**

Proposed resolutions for the provincial conference will be reviewed at this meeting. B. Weerstra, J. Gemmill, M. Hingley and the Agriculture Fieldman will attend and any resolutions from this meeting will be circulated to the full board for comment.

### **f) Alternative Land-Use Services (ALUS)**

J. Gemmill is interested in localized funding of wetland restoration and brought forward one example that is happening in a number of provinces. Alternative Land-Use Services is a program

which compensates local producers for preserving or restoring natural habitat. J. Gemmill is continuing to research and will bring forward more information at the next meeting.

## **7. Information**

### **a) ASB Grant**

Bighorn was very fortunate to get nearly all the provincial funding we requested. The only short-fall is about \$4,000 which would have allowed for a full-time assistant fieldman. The overall funding is more than we have previously received and has already allowed us to do more outreach. It is also good to have confirmed funding for a three-year period. The province has incorporated the environmental funding stream in the agricultural stream and this funds mostly extension and outreach. It is important to note that education is only funded 40% vs. other programs which are 60%.

### **b) Ghost Watershed Alliance Society News Release**

Agrium sponsors a watershed-related contest for high school students. In order to publicize this contest, Agrium called upon watershed groups in Alberta to serve as "watershed ambassadors," going in to local schools which choose to participate in order to present regarding watershed concepts in general with a bit about the group's specific watershed. Currently, it appears that Cochrane high's grade nine science classes will host GWAS's presentations. One of the grade nine science teachers is contemplating how she might get her class out to the Ghost on a field trip at some point. GWAS anticipates a successful partnership with Cochrane High in educating grade nine science students about watershed concepts and hopes to eventually offer watershed presentations to other area schools.

## **8. Next Meeting**

Friday December 2 at 9am at the M.D. of Bighorn administration office.

## **9. Adjournment**

**MOTION HINGLEY TO ADJOURN the meeting at 1:45pm.**

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Chairman

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Designated Office