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## The Regional Municipality of Durham

### MINUTES

#### DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 14, 2025

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 in Meeting Room 1-B, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

#### 1. Roll Call

Present: R. Death, Whitby  
N. Guthrie, Ajax  
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge  
D. Risebrough, Member at Large  
H. Schillings, Member at Large  
M. Shiers, Durham Region Federation of Agriculture  
B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair  
M. Somerville, Member at Large  
D. Stevenson\*, Oshawa  
N. Swain, Scugog, Vice-Chair  
G. Taylor, Pickering  
W. Wotten\*, Regional Councillor

**\* denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: T. Barrie, Clarington  
Z. Cohoon, Member at Large, Chair  
J. McKay, Durham Farm Fresh  
G. O'Connor, Member at Large  
T. Watpool, Brock

#### Staff

Present: A. De Vos\*, Program Specialist, Department of Planning and Economic Development  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development  
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
L. Talling, Acting Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Planning and Economic Development

**\* denotes staff participating electronically**

## **2. Election of Officers for 2025**

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by G. Taylor,  
That Zac Cohoon be nominated for the position of Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

In Z. Cohoon's absence, M. Scott advised that Z. Cohoon expressed his interest in the position of Chair and advised he would stand if nominated.

Moved by N. Guthrie, Seconded by N. Swain,  
That nominations be closed.  
CARRIED

Z. Cohoon was acclaimed as the Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by B. Smith,  
That Nicole Swain be nominated for the position of First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if N. Swain wished to stand. N. Swain indicated she would stand.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by H. Schillings,  
That nominations be closed.  
CARRIED

Nicole Swain was acclaimed as the First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by M. Shiers,  
That Bryan Smith be nominated for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if B. Smith wished to stand. B. Smith indicated he would stand.

Moved by G. Taylor, Seconded by H. Schillings,  
That nominations be closed.  
CARRIED

Bryan Smith was acclaimed as the Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by B. Smith,  
That Dave Risebrough be appointed as the Acting Chair for the January  
14, 2025 Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting.

CARRIED

D. Risebrough assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by B. Hulshof,  
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting  
held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, be adopted.

CARRIED

**5. Discussion Items**

**A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update**

A. De Vos provided the following update:

- The Durham Agriculture Leadership Program workshop is taking place on January 28, 2025. Registration for the first module will close on January 21, 2025 and a link to register will be provided to Committee members. Senator Robert Black will be providing opening remarks at the workshop.
- The Agriculture Equipment Technician and Mechanic Tour will include two tour stops and will be partnering with Uxbridge, Port Perry, and Brock high schools.

**B) Enabling Agricultural Related Uses & On Farm Diversified Uses Project Sub-Committee Update**

L. Talling provided a status update on the project. The consultant, WSP, provided Regional staff with updated recommendations for the north Durham Townships' Official Plan, Zoning By-Law and application processes for Agriculture-Related and On-Farm Diversified Uses in December. Regional staff provided comments, WSP completed further revisions and updated materials were circulated to Township stakeholders. There is a meeting on January 20, 2025 to review the revised recommendations, application toolkit, and planner toolkit. There will be community consultation throughout February and March to collect feedback, which will include a public open house. The recommendations will be finalized by the end of March and WSP will then provide presentations to the Committees of Council in the northern municipalities and the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee in the spring.

C) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update

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T. Barrie was not in attendance to provide the Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update.

D) Durham Farm Fresh Update

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J. McKay was not in attendance to provide the Durham Farm Fresh Update.

E) Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Update

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M. Scott advised that the meeting held on December 12, 2024 was a social event and that it was the last meeting for representatives from Halton and Peel.

A. De Vos advised there were conversations about the importance of keeping agriculture on the radar for decision makers with all the recent changes.

F) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update

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M. Shiers did not have an update for the Committee.

G) 2025 Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Area Municipality Outreach

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M. Scott advised that local Council agriculture training is part of the workplan for 2025 and asked Committee members for their feedback on how that could be done this year.

Discussion ensued with regards to tailoring presentations to be specific for the area municipality; working off a base presentation; picking one or two issues to focus on; providing presentations annually; requesting input from the local Councils prior to the presentation on specific topics they would like discussed; requesting consistency across all municipalities for decisions being downloaded to the area municipalities; and when to reach out to municipalities in order to be added to the agendas.

M. Scott advised he would begin reaching out to the area municipalities to be added to the agendas.

H) 2025 Farm Tour Discussion

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D. Risebrough suggested the formation of a subcommittee that would be responsible for arranging the farm tour for this year. It was the consensus of the committee that D. Risebrough, B. Smith, M. Sommerville, N. Swain, B. Hulshof, D. Stevenson and Z. Cohoon comprise the subcommittee.

B. Smith advised he reached out to Kubota regarding hosting the 2025 farm tour and they were very interested in hosting the event. He stated they have a cafeteria and a separate room that both hold 200 people. The only concern is timing as September is a busy time for them.

Discussion ensued with regards to potential dates for the farm tour.

D. Risebrough advised he would set up a subcommittee meeting prior to the next DAAC meeting.

## **6. Information Items**

### **A) #2024-INFO-85 – Agri-Food Gateway Program**

A copy of Information Report #2024-INFO-85 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development was provided as Attachment #2 to the agenda and received.

A. De Vos advised the report is a summary of the pilot program from June and are hopeful to run the program again if funding is received.

A. De Vos responded to a question with regards to the eight Canadian tech companies that were accepted into the program.

### **B) #2025-CG-1 – Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee 2024 Annual Report and 2025 Workplan**

A copy of Commissioner's Report #2025-CG-1 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development was provided as Attachment #3 to the agenda and received.

M. Scott advised that Z. Cohoon appeared before the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee to present DAAC's Annual Report and Workplan. He will provide a link to the presentation for Committee members to watch the presentation.

### **C) #2025-EDT-2 – Gather at the Farm 2024 Agri-Food Marketing Campaign**

A copy of Commissioner's Report #2025-EDT-2 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development was provided as Attachment #4 to the agenda and received.

L. Talling advised that the Gather at the Farm was done in partnership with Durham Farm Fresh in the month of October. It was a successful campaign and will be done again in 2025.

## **7. Other Business**

### **A) Conservation Authority Volunteer Positions**

M. Sommerville advised that the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority currently has positions open for individuals that live in the Townships of Uxbridge, Scugog and Brock areas with knowledge and experience working in the agriculture sector. He will provide a link to Committee members.

B) Planning Responsibilities

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In response to questions from Committee members regarding responsibilities of staff as it relates to Planning matters, M. Scott advised staff are currently reviewing applications but are only providing comments and acting as a liaison between the Region and local municipalities. M. Scott advised that the Planning and Economic Development Department has been renamed to the Community Growth and Economic Development Department.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2025 starting at 7:30 PM.

**9. Adjournment**

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by M. Sommerville,  
That the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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D. Risebrough, Acting Chair

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K. Smith, Committee Clerk