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## **The Regional Municipality of Durham**

### **MINUTES**

#### **DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**April 8, 2025**

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, April 8, 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: T. Barrie, Clarington  
R. Death, Whitby attended the meeting at 7:35 PM  
N. Guthrie, Ajax  
B. Hulshof, Uxbridge  
J. McKay\*, Durham Farm Fresh attended the meeting at 7:36 PM  
G. O'Connor, 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  
T. Watpool, Brock  
**\* denotes Members participating electronically**

Absent: Z. Cohoon, Member at Large, Chair  
D. Risebrough, Member at Large  
W. Wotten, Regional Councillor

#### **Staff**

Present: A. De Vos, Program Specialist, Department of Community Growth and Economic Development  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Community Growth and Economic Development  
L. Talling\*, Acting Manager, Agricultural & Rural Economic Development, Department of Community Growth and Economic Development  
V. Walker, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
**\* denotes staff participating electronically**

## **2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by B. Smith, Seconded by H. Schillings,  
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting  
held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, be adopted.

CARRIED

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by T. Barrie,  
That an additional 10 minutes of presentation time be added to  
Presentation Item 4. A) Fallon Hayes and Patrick Esson, Toronto and  
Region Conservation Authority, regarding the Rural Clean Water  
Program.

CARRIED

## **4. Presentations**

### **A) Fallon Hayes and Patrick Esson, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, re Rural Clean Water Program**

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Fallon Hayes and Patrick Esson, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority,  
provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the Rural Clean Water  
Program.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario
- What is a Watershed?
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) Watersheds
- What is the Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP)?
- Full List of RCWP Cost-Share Funding Categories
- Funding Categories Corresponding Benefits
- Past Project Examples
  - Erosion Control Structures
  - Livestock Fencing from Natural Features
  - Irrigation Management
  - Fuel and Chemical Storage
  - Natural Area Creation
- Funding Also Relevant to Non-Farm Properties
- We Have Completed Over 300 RCWP Projects to Protect Our Watersheds
- Summary of Some of Our Accomplishments

F. Hayes responded to questions from the Committee with regards to why  
Durham Region is not a participant of the program; whether the Region was  
approached at the outset of the program and what the response was; whether an

environmental farm plan is required in order to qualify for the program and who is the authority for determining whether such environmental farm plan is required; the amount of applications received versus the available funding in the program; how other conservation authorities in Durham with similar programs are funded; and the TRCA's position on agricultural tile drainage.

M. Scott advised that the Region is currently examining the program.

M. Scott responded to questions from the Committee with regards what the Region's financial commitment could be to enroll in the program; and whether this would be the Region's first attempt to incorporate this program into the budget.

Discussion ensued with regards to the various crop and soil programs available in the province and how they are funded; and the benefit of bringing this program to the Region.

Moved by M. Somerville, Seconded by G. Taylor,  
That we recommend to the Community Growth and Economic  
Development Committee for approval and subsequent recommendation  
to Regional Council:

That Council be advised of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee's  
(DAAC) support of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's  
Rural Clean Water Program, and support of the Region's Community  
Growth and Economic Development Department exploring the program  
further.

CARRIED

B) Robert Rappolt, WSP Canada Inc., Enabling Agricultural Related Uses & On  
Farm Diversified Uses Project

Robert Rappolt, WSP Canada Inc. provided a PowerPoint presentation with  
regards to Enabling Agricultural Related Uses & On Farm Diversified Uses  
Project.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Project Workplan
- What's Changed
  - Final Recommendations
  - Final Application Toolkit
- Next Steps

**5. Discussion Items**

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

A. De Vos provided the following update:

- Enabling Agricultural Related Uses & On Farm Diversified Uses  
Project survey responses and relevant policies have been reviewed with the northern area municipalities. Final recommendations have been determined and will be presented to the northern area municipalities. Presentations will be made to Uxbridge and Scugog on April 14 and to Brock on April 28.
- The Agricultural Leadership Program has concluded. The final module included presentations from Andrew Campbell and Angus Kelly and approximately 40 people were in attendance.
- The Agricultural Butchery and Culinary Tour for high school students has invited Clarington Central Secondary School to attend the tour. Port Perry High School had to back out due to upgrades occurring with its culinary program.
- Preparation for the Precision Agricultural Field Day is underway.
- Staff have been liaising with commodity organizations to best understand the key priorities of the agriculture industry as it relates to tariffs.

B) Agricultural Advisory Committee Clarington Update

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T. Barrie provided an update regarding the Clarington Agricultural Advisory Committee and stated the Trees for Rural Roads program is currently accepting applications, and that the Hydro One Notice of Preferred Route for Durham Kawartha Power Line Project was discussed at the meeting. He also advised that a farm tour is being planned by Committee members.

C) Durham Farm Fresh Update

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J. McKay provided the following Durham Farm Fresh update:

- The Board is currently in the process of reviewing its brochure and preparing for upcoming local fairs.
- Members' maple syrup farms are now up and running and open to the public.
- Preparation is underway for planting season that is expected to begin over the next few weeks.
- Various farmer's markets are preparing to open beginning in May and June.

D) Greater Golden Horseshoe and Farming Alliance Update

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M. Scott advised there is no update regarding the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Farming Alliance.

E) Durham Region Federation of Agriculture Update

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M. Shiers advised that there is no update regarding the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture.

F) 2025 DAAC Area Municipality Outreach – Committee

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M. Scott stated that the first two Area Municipality Outreach presentations have been made to Clarington and Pickering councils and advised that positive feedback regarding the presentations has been received.

M. Scott advised that T. Barrie delivered the presentation in Clarington which prompted discussion and questions relating to farmland trusts; backyard chickens; tariffs; and food bank donations.

M. Scott further advised that N. Swain and G. Taylor delivered the presentation in Pickering which generated questions regarding tariffs; local food sourcing; whether the number and sizes of farms in Durham is increasing or decreasing; wheat production and its connection to the food chain; and avian influenza.

G) 2025 DAAC Farm Tour Discussion – Committee

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B. Smith advised that various logistics for the farm tour are being arranged, including the location for tents on the property; and how to organize parking for attendees.

Discussion ensued with regards to speakers who may be invited to speak at the farm tour; and the relevant topics to be covered.

**6. Information Items**

A) Invitation: Lake Simcoe Watershed Farmer Focus Groups

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A copy of the Lake Simcoe Watershed Farmer Focus Groups invitation was provided as Attachment #2 to the agenda and received.

**7. Other Business**

A) Durham Farm Connections

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G. Taylor stated that the Durham Farm Connections Open House was a successful event that included farm tours for grade 3 students and a public night on April 2, 2025.

B) Community Agriculture Wellness Training

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M. Scott stated that general mental health training is being offered and encouraged Committee members to register and share the information with the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture and Durham Farm Fresh.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, May 13, 2025 starting at 7:30 PM.

**9. Adjournment**

Moved by T. Watpool, Seconded by N. Guthrie,  
That the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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N. Swain, Vice-Chair, Durham Agricultural Advisory  
Committee

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V. Walker, Committee Clerk