



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Agricultural Advisory Commission (AAC)

Introduction

The Agricultural Advisory Commission (AAC), established in 1994, is an Advisory Commission of the Regional Board. The Commission provides advice to the Board, other Commissions and staff regarding agricultural issues and the potential impact of planning decisions on agriculture.

Mandate

The AAC shall be consulted for its advice regarding:

- Applications initiated under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Soil Conservation Act*
- Referral applications impacting agriculture
- Assisting with comprehensive review and/or development of:
 - bylaws
 - official community plans
 - neighbourhood plans
 - agricultural plans
 - farm 'edge' policies
 - parks and recreation plans; and
 - transportation plans
- Major development proposals with potential impact on agriculture
- Irrigation, drainage and other water management issues impacting agriculture
- Effectiveness of noxious insect and weed control regulations and programs; and
- Any other matters requested by the Regional Board; or matters that the AAC believes should be brought to the attention of the Board.

Criteria

In reviewing applications, plans, proposals or issues as listed above; the AAC will consider the following:

- The effect of the proposal on agricultural potential
- The effect of the proposal on adjacent Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) properties and surrounding agricultural production;
- The effect of the proposal on water resources and transportation issues;
- A rating of the priority or impact of the application on the maintenance of the ALR;
- Where appropriate, possible alternatives to the proposal; and
- The identification of issues relating to the protection of the ALR land specific to the application, including the use of appropriate buffering techniques aimed at enhancing land use compatibility.

Agricultural Liaison and Awareness

The AAC may also make recommendations relating to:

- Raising awareness of agriculture;
- Enhancing an understanding of agriculture's role in the local and/or regional economy;

- Addressing competition for the agricultural land base;
- Examining legislation to identify improvements to support agriculture;
- Improving opportunities for joint funding of drainage and irrigation works;
- Reporting on the impacts of park and recreation proposals on agriculture; and
- Identifying and effecting change regarding the impact of transportation and utility corridors on or near agriculture.

Comments, advice and recommendations from the AAC will form part of a comprehensive report prepared by the Planning Services Department for presentation to the Regional Board on the development proposal, bylaw, or agricultural related issue.

Membership

The membership of the AAC shall be comprised of not less than three (3) or more than seven (7) volunteer individuals who reside within the Regional District of Central Okanagan. The membership will reflect a diversity of agricultural professions, practices, sectors and commodity groups and will include a designated representative of the provincial Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

Regional District Directors, officers and staff are not eligible for appointment to the AAC, but may attend any Commission meeting in a resource capacity.

Appointment Process & Term

Appointments to the AAC shall be by resolution of the Regional Board, based on recommendations from a Director, staff or the Chairperson of the AAC.

Appointments are for a three (3) year term. A member may be re-appointed to serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive three-year terms.

Remuneration

AAC members serve without remuneration, but may be paid reasonable and necessary expenses directly arising from the performance of their duties. Reimbursement of expenses will be consistent with policies of the Regional Board, as amended from time to time.

Vacancies

The Regional Board, may, at any time, terminate the appointment of a member for cause.

Commission members who are absent for three (3) consecutive meetings shall forfeit their appointment, unless such absences are authorized by resolution of the Commission.

A member of the Commission may resign at any time upon sending written notice to the Planning Services Department of the Regional District.

If a vacancy occurs on the AAC due to the above circumstances, or in the event of the death or disability of a member, the Regional Board will appoint a new Commission member to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, based on recommendations from a Director, staff or the Chairperson of the AAC.

Staff Support

The Planning Services Department will provide administrative, technical and secretarial support for the AAC. Typical support functions include:

- Organizing and preparing meeting agendas;

- Distributing the agenda, forwarding referral packages to Commission members, posting of notices of meetings at the Regional District office and contacting applicants;
- Receiving all correspondence and preparing reports on behalf of the Commission;
- Taking and preparing draft minutes, and providing final minutes to Commission members and staff;
- Managing the files of the Commission as necessary and maintaining a list of outstanding issues for Commission action;
- Assisting the Commission with special projects such as tours, educational materials and workshops; and
- Assisting the Commission with the process for new appointments including advertising for applicants, review of applications, and bringing appointment recommendations to the Board for approval.

Conflicts of Interest

If a Commission member perceives that he or she may have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter before the Commission or may, for any other reason, have a conflict of interest, the member must declare his or her interest or conflict, and its general nature.

Upon such a declaration being made, it will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and the member declaring the conflict:

- a) will not participate or vote in any discussion regarding the matter in question;
- b) will leave the meeting during consideration of and voting on the matter in question. The Chairperson or Acting Chairperson will ensure that the member is not present and the time of member's departure from (and return to, if applicable) the meeting will be recorded in the minutes;
- c) will not attempt, in any way, whether before, during or after the meeting, to influence the voting on any aspect of the matter in question.

Public Relations

Commission members should be careful when speaking in public or to the media. Opinions expressed should be clearly identified as individual opinions and not representing the Agricultural Advisory Commission or the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

Meeting Procedures

Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson

A Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission will be elected from the Commission membership at the first meeting of each year.

The Chairperson (and in his or her absence the Deputy Chairperson or other person designated as Acting Chair by those present) will preside at all meetings.

Quorums and Voting

- A quorum of the Commission is constituted by majority vote of all members present.
- The Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and/or Acting Chairperson are entitled to vote at all meetings.
- A member who abstains from voting will be deemed to have voted in the affirmative.
- In the event of a tie vote, the question will be defeated.

Frequency of Meetings

The AAC meets monthly, unless there are no particular items to be reviewed in a particular month. Additional meetings may be required for particular projects, site visits or urgent issues.

Email/Telephone Meetings

If an application is automatically supported by the Regional Board (i.e. Homesite Severance) or has minimal impact on agriculture and is consistent with other land use policies and designations, the Chairperson may, in consultation with staff, contact AAC members by telephone or email to review the application and obtain any advice or comments without the need to call a meeting.

Open and In Camera Meetings

Except as provided herein, all AAC meetings are open to the public and are held at the Regional District Office, 1450 KLO Road, Kelowna.

Applicants are entitled to attend and be heard at AAC meetings if the Commission is considering an amendment to a plan, bylaw or issue of a permit affecting the applicant.

Applicants whose matters appear on an agenda will be notified on the Friday prior to the meeting at which the Commission will consider their application. Attendance by applicants is not mandatory. However, it is recommended so that applicants have an opportunity to answer any questions, which the Commission may have.

All or part of a Commission meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered is related to one or more of the matters referred to in the *Local Government Act*.

Before all or part of a meeting is closed to the public, the Commission must state by resolution the fact that the meeting is to be closed, and the reason for closing the meeting pursuant to the *Local Government Act*.

Agendas and Information Packages

Agendas and information packages will be provided to Commission members at least 3 working days prior to the meeting date.

The order of business for the meeting shall be governed by the agenda. New agenda items may be added by a majority vote of those present.

Minutes

Minutes will be recorded by Regional District staff for all Commission meetings and shall:

- a) Record the motion and voting on all resolutions;
- b) Be secured at the Regional District office and signed by the Chairperson and recording secretary as the true record of the decisions made;
- c) Be subject to correction at the next Commission meeting; and
- d) Be available to the public upon request and on the Regional District website.

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