

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
of District 'A' Farmers' Institute  
Held January 22, 2016 at Nanoose Place**

Attendees: Blaine Hardie, CAS; Janet Thony, CFI; Kathy Millar, CAS; Mayta Ryn, NCFI; Bob Crawford, CAS; Barbara Johnstone, PIFI; Martha MacMahon, PIFI; Gerry and Dorothy Sjostrom, CHFI; Alex Turner, SFI; Wayne Haddow, Min. of Ag.

Regrets: Cathy Burkosky, AFI and Alan Rebane, PRFI.

Janet took minutes in Cathy's absence.

Introductions around the table.

**Agenda Items**

1. Meeting began at 1:10.

2. and 3. Blaine read over the Agenda and asked for additional items. Agenda was adopted as amended.

4. Adoption of Minutes

RMS Kathy and Mayta, that the Minutes of the 2015 AGM be adopted as circulated. Carried. Blaine signed off, original filed in District binder and one copy sent to Cathy.

RMS Mayta and Kathy, that the Minutes of the November 7, 2015 General Meeting be adopted as circulated. Carried. Blaine signed off, original filed in District binder, one copy sent to Cathy.

5. Treasurer's Report

Kathy read the Report for January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. Our year end balance is \$8,125.59. There is some lack of record keeping from 2014 that Kathy is working on getting sorted. See attached Report for full financial details.

RMS Kathy and Mayta that the Report be adopted as read.

Kathy filled us in on her research done regarding the Act as it pertains to District 'A' s relationship with its locals. She read parts of the Act which seem to clearly state that no local need pay dues to a District and that a District automatically represents a local within its regional mandate. To this end, and to facilitate funding of District 'A', she has drawn up an invoice called "Request for Contribution", citing the pertinent clause in the Act. (See attached document)

Some discussion ensued regarding varying membership rates within locals, who may join an Institute, 'political' problems that arise when 'non-farmers' populate Institutes, how Districts are to be funded if the locals do not choose to 'contribute', the possibility of broaching with the Ministry, the old 'grant' system still enshrined in the Act.

6. Correspondence

Items will be dealt with in the body of the Meeting.

7. Presidents' Report

See attached document.

8. Old Business - Local Institute Reports

Sayward F.I. - Alex Turner. 10 members, 4 of whom are actively farming. Alex reiterated his belief that without a Strategic Plan, District 'A' can not properly conduct business. Kathy, Blaine, Mayta, Barbara and Janet offered insight re: a) the mandated role of District 'A', b) its accomplishments over the last two years, c) possible historical reasons as to its' previous 'lack of presence'. Barbara said that "she has come to see the value of District 'A'". He spoke about diminishing farmer presence in the Sayward Valley. The room agreed that this is the norm everywhere. They have significant predation by the elk herds, and submitted a report to the relevant white paper. He stated that he will no longer serve as the Delegate from Sayward.

Nanaimo Cedar F. I. - Mayta Ryn. 5 members. Their membership fee is \$5.00, which goes wholly to District 'A'. They represent various other related groups, meet monthly, but are principally "issue driven".

Coombs F.I. - Janet Thony. 48 members, a mix of large and small holders. Coombs now has a Facebook page, and a quarterly Newsletter, to augment their website. CFI has a permanent seat on the Parksville City Council EDC and sit on the RDN AAC. They are partnering with other local 'food driven' groups on multiple projects. As a result of their Dog Predation Committee, Bylaw 941, (RDN Electoral Area F) was amended to allow for the apprehension of 'dogs at large'. They will host a 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 'Farmers Feed Families' event at the 2016 Coombs Fall Fair, with five other partner groups. (Not reported...their Spring Auction will be on April 10, 2016 at the Coombs Fair Grounds.)

Cowichan Agricultural Society and F.I. - Bob Crawford. Members are broad based large to small holders. Stresses need for government to listen to farmers.

To that end, they held a 2015 Farm Tour, attended by FIRB, multiple levels of government and farmers. They regularly tour member farms, and Bob shared a story of a young aquaponics farmer. They hold a 'wind up' bar-b-que for members every year. Bob prompted us to pass the following on to all our members.

'All turkey and meat bird chicks must be ordered before January 31, 2016, regardless of when you want to take possession of them.'

Pender Island F.I.- Barbara Johnstone. 85 members. Their Institute is 90 years old. Barbara filled us in on the 'political' makeup of their membership, and the resulting challenges, their interest in the new Livestock Protection Program, and their experiences with predation on the Island. She has a PDF file she can send on to anyone interested. (Blaine passed on to them our gratitude that they attended.)

9. Election of Officers

President - Blaine nominated Janet Thony for President. No nominations from the floor. Declared by acclamation.

Vice President - Janet nominated Blaine Hardie for Vice President. No nominations from the floor. Declared by acclamation.

Secretary - Blaine had secured from Cathy Burkosky her willingness to serve another term. There were no nominations from the floor. Declared by acclamation.

Treasurer - Kathy Millar was reappointed as Treasurer.

Directors - Appointed - Barbara Johnstone, Pender Island

Mayta Ryn, Nanaimo Cedar

Gerry Sjostrom, Cobble Hill

Bob Crawford, Cowichan Ag. Society

Declined - Alex Turner, Sayward

10. New Business

- A) Responses to: “*The Livestock Consultation Paper*” and the “*Consultation: Wildlife and Agriculture Conflict Reduction*”. Following is a compilation of thoughts shared by all attendees:

PLEASE EMAIL ALL LOCAL F.I. RESPONSES TO WAYNE.

Wayne: Part IV “Dogs attacking Livestock” should be listed as a Scale of 10. Federal infrastructure dollars are on their way. We should speak to both federal and provincial levels about the work that we do with all farmers.

**Mayta:** There must be a fence building assist program. C.O.s will support hunters re: them removing crop predators. Hunting rules could be revised to accommodate farmers needs re: wildlife. Racoons have been relocated to rural areas, with no consultation. Cats are one of the worst wildlife predators. Rabbit I.D. program may help to curb domestic rabbits being released into the wild. Kathy cautioned re: the downsides of that idea for commercial rabbit outfits.

**Gerry:** Cover crops can be used in various ways to combat geese predation.

**Barbara:** Racoon relocation also an issue. Geese are constant crop predators.

Those who built ponds for water storage, found that they also ‘stored’ geese. Eagles, hawks and ravens constantly predate lambs. Number one help would be fencing assist money. The BCSF is working with the Ministry of Environment. Compensation to Livestock owners must be reinstated. She pointed out that the “RAPP” line (Report all Poachers and Polluters”) creates some confusion by lumping two disparate issues in one reporting authority.

Blaine urged all local F.I. s to submit responses through Wayne to the government.

B) Farmers and Womens' Institute Act and Regulation Questions.

**Kathy:** Discussion around "what is District 'A'?". Some history shared. Minutes of District 'A' meetings must be sent out to all locals. She requested a copy of both the Act and its Regulations from Wayne, citing the possibility of getting incomplete or out-dated copies off the Internet.

Discussion re: importance of reaching out, face-to-face, to all local F.I.s. Also, about the lack of representation we get through BCAC and the MAAC, and the reasons why.

Blaine told us that Dennis Lapierre is no longer the Community Agriculture Rep on BCAC and has moved to the Investment Agriculture Foundation.

Jen Gamble has taken the three way split seat.

We will continue to meet annually directly with government.

C) Retirement of Greg Tegart, Superintendent of F.I. s

Wayne urged us to write immediately to the Ministry, requesting that a replacement be appointed and the reasons and importance of so doing. Also mention our appreciation that the position was revived some three years ago.

D) Islands Agriculture Show

Alex asked if we would be attending any of three agriculture events featured. Janet will be attending the IAS on Friday, taking in three workshops.

Bob will attend The Water Storage Farm Tour on behalf of Dist. 'A' and report back.

E) The Water Sustainability Act. - To be implemented Spring 2016

Wayne filled us in on the importance of familiarizing ourselves with the new Water Act and the impacts it will have on those land owners who have wells and/or water licenses. At this point, registration of wells is voluntary, but may become mandatory. Water extraction rates will go up, along with water licence rates.

Motion to adjourn 4:00 Alex.

Blaine thanked Alex for serving as Sayward's delegate.

Submitted by  
Janet Thony.