



Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee Minutes of a Special Meeting

Date: Thursday, July 15, 2021

Location: Electronic Meeting
200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria

Members Present: Peter Luckham, Chair
Laura Patrick, Local Trustee
Peter Grove, Local Trustee

Staff Present: Stefan Cermak, Regional Planning Manager (RPM)
Geordie Gordon, Planner 2
Kristine Mayes, Planner 1
Rob Pingle, Recorder

Others Present: Brent Brochu-Ingram, Agricultural Advisory Planning Committee
Theresa Duynstee, Agricultural Alliance
Jan Steinman, Agricultural Advisory Planning Committee
Anne Macey, Agricultural Alliance
Doug Pepper, Ministry of Agriculture
Conrad Pilon, Agricultural Advisory Planning Committee
Ken Byron, Agricultural Advisory Planning Committee
Nathan Roberson, Agricultural Advisory Planning Committee
Brian Webster, Agricultural Alliance
One member of the public

These minutes follow the order of the agenda although the sequence may have varied.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Luckham called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and welcomed everyone to an electronic meeting of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee. Chair Luckham introduced himself, the Trustees and staff and acknowledged that the Local Trust Committee is meeting within Coast Salish Territory. Introductions were carried out.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved with the addition of Future Meeting on Reconciliation.

3. BUSINESS ITEMS

3.1 Local Trust Committee Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chair Luckham reported this meeting is an opportunity for the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee to have a discussion with the members of the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission (AAPC) and representatives of the Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance on agriculture related issues.

3.2 Minutes from the February 11, 2021 Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee and Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission Meeting

The minutes were received for information.

3.3 SS-ALR-2021.1 – K. Tuttle – 231 Meadow Drive, SSI

Planner Gordon presented a verbal update on this application for information.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- Concern was expressed and addressed about the agricultural activity on the property.
- Question was raised about the project being in line with the new Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) directives.

3.4 ALC Information Update, dated July 12, 2021

The ALC Information Update was received.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- Concern was expressed about the relationship between the Islands Trust and the ALC with these new rules in place and RPM Cermak discussed the implications.
- A concern was addressed about the increased ability for farm worker housing to limit the amount of farm land available.
- The Area Farm Plan was discussed as a document that will help provide local guidance to the implementation of these new rules.
- A question was raised about increasing farmworker housing on non-Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land.
- A question was raised if a framework was possible for Islands Trust to limit expansion of housing on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) land unless farming was present.
- A question was raised about filing a notice of intent about soil movement in development of a residential property. Ministry staff noted that this was to ensure agricultural land was kept as undisturbed as possible; Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area Soil Removal and Deposit Regulation Bylaw No. 418 was noted as a similar local regulation.

SS-2021-140

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to prepare a report on options to amend bylaws to accommodate the Agricultural Land Commission July 12, 2021 announcement on residential flexibility in consideration of the 2020 Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan Renewal.

CARRIED

3.5 Discussion of Agricultural Priorities

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- A question was raised about the Islands Trust Council Policy Statement and how the Islands Trust perceives the importance of agriculture.
- Chair Luckham spoke to the role of staff in the advancing of applications or policies to ensure the options presented are in alignment with all rules and regulations and that Trustees have more flexibility to make decisions.
- Support was expressed for the advancement of agricultural activities in our community.
- Islands Trust Policy Statement 4.4.2 was referred to and it was suggested “food security” be changed to “local food production”.
- Encouragement was given to work towards a region wide discussion on agriculture within the Islands Trust area.
- Section 3.23.2 of Bylaw No. 355 (Composting Regulations) was referred to and it was suggested removing the words “produced onsite” would result in easier creation of composting facilities on Salt Spring Island.
- The budget cycle was referred to as something to consider when advancing ideas that are agricultural related.
- A question was raised about the possibility to map the properties that are accessing farm status through BC Assessment and staff commented that it was possible.
- It was suggested that there are land use maps available to gain a better understanding of agriculture in the Islands Trust, the agricultural land use inventory was referred to as a form of similar information and Ministry staff agreed, stating they could provide some resources.

SS-2021-141

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to bring forward to the next special business meeting with the AAPC and AG Alliance the following items: a map indicating farm status and the most recent agricultural land use inventory.

CARRIED

Discussion continued and the following comments were noted:

- A concern regarding water quality was raised as a major impact to viable agriculture with the increased impacts of climate change.
- Questions were raised about the viability of the current Ganges Fire Hall being converted into a farmers market with the current zoning. Staff explained the zoning of the hall is Commercial 1 (C1) and the parking lot in front of it is Park and Reserves variant a (PR4(a)).
- Further discussion ensued about the ability of those zones to allow for indoor and outdoor farmers markets. Staff could not provide clear advice on that and offered to provide a review of the zoning regulations to the Agricultural Alliance.
- It was noted that the Ganges Village Plan Project will be a good opportunity to address the above point.
- It was noted that the watershed issue might be a point of conflict between the general community and farmers as there is misunderstanding about the good and the bad of agriculture.
- There was an inquiry about the timeline on the watershed planning that is happening within the Islands Trust.
- Concern was raised about the issues of septic systems and drainage due to additional housing on farm land having a negative impact on the watershed and farm land.
- Feedback regarding agriculture as it relates to the Policy Statement was requested.

3.6 Future meeting regarding reconciliation

Trustee Patrick brought forward an offer from Staff Lisa Wilcox to present an education session on implementing reconciliation as it pertains to agriculture.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- A request of assistance in establishing the role of farmers in ways to improve relationships with First Nations was expressed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is scheduled on November 18, 2021.

By general consent the meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Peter Luckham, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Rob Pingle, Recorder