



**MINUTES**  
**AUGUSTA TOWNSHIP**  
**AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.**

In Attendance: Rob Jones, Conor Cleary, Jonas Cole, Mayor Doug Malanka,  
Councillor Samantha Schapelhouman, Myron Belej, Brad Thake  
Regrets: Adrian Wynands

**1. Call to Order**

Councillor Samantha Schapelhouman called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Approved, with the following changes:

- Addition of “7.2 Crops and Drainage Near Limerick Forest”, to be discussed with “7.1 Forthcoming Changes to the Drainage Act” before “5. Business Arising from the Minutes” in order to include Augusta’s Public Works Manager at the start of the meeting.
- “7.2 Speed Limits in Augusta Township” renumbered as item 7.3.
- “7.3 Enhancing Communication with Augusta’s Farming Community” renumbered as 7.4 on the agenda.

**3. Disclosure of Interest**

None.

**4. Approval of the Previous Minutes**

Minutes approved for the December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 and January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meetings.

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**5.1 Abattoirs**

- The Committee reviewed a motion that Conor Cleary learned had been made in support of abattoirs, including mobile abattoirs, by the National Union of Farmers.
- The Committee suggested bringing it to Augusta Council for their review and consideration at the next Council meeting.
- Mayor Malanka has raised the importance of this matter with the United Counties’ Council.
- To help address significant delays local farmers are experiencing, the Committee discussed the potential for a mobile unit and a Provincial inspector to be dedicated at the County level.
- More abattoir operations will also require more refrigeration facilities. This could be an opportunity for local economic development.

## 5.2 Setbacks

- Aggregate Resources: The Planner mentioning that he discussed mineral aggregate setbacks with staff from two Provincial Ministries responsible for aggregates. A meeting still needs to be coordinated with local aggregate producers.
- Discussion on Crops Intended for Ethanol Production and Cannabis Production was deferred to the next meeting.

## 5.3 Tile Drainage Financing

- Discussion deferred to next meeting.

## 6. Planning Applications

### 6.1 Severance Application: B-147-20 (Morrison)

- In addition to reviewing the application, Committee members were read the concerns of a resident who wrote in to express a concern about drainage in the general area, to which the applicants' agent responded that fill will be required as part of the development.
- Committee Members were aware that many properties in the general area had been raised up onto higher ground with fill brought in to enable development.
- Conditions to include:
- That the balance of any outstanding taxes, including penalties and interests, (and any local improvement charges, if applicable) shall be paid to Augusta Township.
- That an acceptable reference plan, survey, or legal description of the severed lands and the deed or instrument conveying the severed lands shall be submitted to Augusta Township.
- That the road allowance of Skakum Road be widened as required to 10 metres from the centreline of the road, and that a Transfer/Deed conveying the said land to Augusta Township be prepared and executed in consideration of the payment of \$ 1.00.
- Applicant to submit a cash-in-lieu of parkland levy of \$500 to the Township.
- Applicant to demonstrate that sufficient quantity/quality of water is available for the severed parcel.
- Applicant to provide confirmation to Augusta Township that the utility agency associated with the easement running through the proposed severed lands, as identified on the site plan provided, supports the proposed severance.
- That favourable comments are received from circulated commenting agencies.

## 7. Other Business

### 7.1 Forthcoming Changes to the Drainage Act

- The Committee reviewed a summary discussion paper and chart of key differences showing changes proposed by the Provincial Government to help allow minor improvements to proceed more quickly under the Drainage Act.

- The Committee discussed how:
- Shortening the time for applications would be a good thing, and the quicker/easier such processes can be made for farmers, the better.
- It will need to be more clearly defined what “minor” is, by illustrating and simplifying this with more examples.
- Will 90 days give engineers enough time to reply on minor applications? Some engineers may be booking out that amount of time, even to make comments on a minor application.
- Education about the updated process will be very important, including about how initiators of a review process that change their minds about a project and stop the process will be responsible for the fees incurred.
- Once the proposed changes are finalized, municipalities should be provided with simplified communications materials to understand and share.
- The updated process documents should clearly lay out what municipalities will be able to and/or be expected to make determinations about. Many small rural municipalities do not have a professional engineer on staff and utilize third-party consulting engineering services.

## 7.2 Crops and Drainage Near Limerick Forest

- One of the Committee Members asked as it may be practical for the Township to advocate for any improvements to drainage in the area around Limerick Forest, including tile drainage, irrigation, or dams in the South Nation River, to make agricultural lands more productive.
- The Planner, Public Works Manager, and Committee Members discussed zoning considerations for Provincially Significant Wetlands and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest, the need to look at soil studies in the area, potential implications for ongoing maintenance for the Township, potential cost implications for surrounding property owners, concern about potential problems with beavers, and considerations of “highest and best use”.
- Additional discussion would be required, including with the South Nation Conservation Authority and area farmers/landowners, to determine if drainage improvements around Limerick Forest would be a practical or feasible idea.

## 7.3 Speed Limits in Augusta Township

- Discussion deferred to next meeting.

## 7.4 Enhancing Communication with Augusta’s Farming Community

- It was suggested that ads in the Augusta Quarterly, voluntary surveys, and visitations (likely post COVID-19) might be considered.
- The Committee reviewed a starter list of local farmers that Committee Members and staff have collaborated on to produce and mentioned some additional names to include.
- One concern, in continuing to build the list, is that the Augusta Zoning By-law’s specification of 49.42 acres for “Agricultural Use” seems to be quite high. There are many smaller-scaled agricultural operations that (can) operate successfully in the Township.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.