

Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Policy Advisory Council Meeting, Regional

April, 2019

Welcome and Introductions:

Teresa Van Raay co-chaired the Woodstock meeting
Ryan Passey co-chaired the Orangeville meeting
Pat Jilesen co-chaired the Sudbury meeting

County/Commodity concerns:

Woodstock:

1. Elgin county raised the concern of delayed police response to a protester event at a dairy farm.

Neil Currie responded that OFA has learned the police in the suspected area took the protest seriously and were prepared. Unfortunately, the police response was leaked, and the protesters moved to a different location. OFA is investigating why it took police at the new location over two hours to respond.

2. Wellington county informed the PAC of the proposed moving of the MTO inspection stations on highway 401. Barclay Nap showed a video of the land near Badenoch that Stantec is favoring over three other locations. He overviewed the potential impact to surrounding farm land, specifically water courses and drainage.
3. Teresa Van Raay from Ontario Pork updated the PAC on African Swine fever. She commented that there has been progress with additional signage and working dogs at the airports to identify passengers travelling to and from a farm.
4. Kent county asked for an update on a 2018 AGM resolution regarding well water testing. Neil Currie commented that OFA is in talks with the Ground Water Association as a potential member benefit. More updates to come on all AGM and December Board meeting resolutions.

Orangeville:

1. A concern regarding tractors hauling loads that are too heavy and equipped with insufficient braking systems travelling on township roads was mentioned. OFA should be proactive. Suggestions included, having a policy statement about maximum combination of weight and braking power, best practices course to train on transportation regulations and a round of spring reminders on social media, e-newsletter and or online poll to members.

Peter Jeffery responded that currently towed equipment behind a farm tractor does not require braking on whatever the tractor is towing (wagon or implement). MTO does not

ticket for overweight farm implements, but a township could in the case of proven damage to infrastructure.

Sudbury:

1. Can we lobby for better adherence to the slow-moving vehicle sign, and better enforcement of having people slow down when approaching farm equipment on the highways? Farmers are trying to avoid highways but can't always travel away from traffic. Drivers do not appreciate how slow farmers are traveling.

Peter Jeffery responded that it is a massive undertaking to educating the motoring public (especially those in urban areas) on the use of slow-moving vehicles and correct driving procedures. Perhaps we can lobby to emphasize it more in the young driver's curriculum?

OFA is now actively developing an information campaign on SMVs, including trying to engage other partners. The problem will be the optimum way to reach the motoring public which seems to have little patience for slow vehicles.

2. Resolution procedure: local federations do not receive a personal reply from head office regarding a resolution that was put forward.

Neil Currie responded that resolution results are reflected in the board minutes and is circulated to counties via the board reports. Once an AGM resolution is accepted it becomes the provincial board's resolution to reword or tackle. A full update will be made available following the April Board meeting.

Recommendation – board members can go back to local Federations to discuss it and bring concerns back to the provincial board.

Issue Updates:

Carbon Tax

Ian Nokes overviewed the federal carbon fuel tax. He explained that the new fuel surcharge came into effect on April 1, 2019. Farmers are eligible for fuel exemptions for fuel purchased that is delivered and stored on the farm. Fuel must be used exclusively on the farm in eligible farm machinery. To qualify for the exemption farmers must complete a Fuel Charge Exemption Certificate for farmers available through the CRA website.

Ian explained that currently fuel purchased at cardlock facilities is not eligible for the exemption but to keep records of all fuel purchases as the exemptions may be expanded in the future.

OFA continues to lobby through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture on the option for more exemptions.

Comments:

- Carbon tax is a regressive tax, lower income ends up paying a higher amount.
- There are not effective options for our equipment to explore alternatives. California subsidizes the purchase of energy efficient tractors for example.

OSPCA

Neil Currie commented that as of April 1, 2019 OSPCA will no longer enforce animal care complaints on the farm. This duty will now fall onto local police services. OFA has participated in several meetings with Farm and Food Care, Commodities and OMAFRA to address how to assist local police.

Neil commented that OFA is also working with commodities to draft principles of new legislation. Goal is to have an outline complete by the end of April.

Woodstock comments:

Grey-Bruce has already experienced the reduction in services.

Brockville comments:

What can local Federations do to prepare townships/police on activists and trespass?

- We should talk directly to the police chief. It can take too long to get the message to the right place. Not necessarily a need to use council
- Good to talk directly to police. DFO has spoken of preparing a tool box, and training staff. Once that tool box is created, the police need to understand what that tool box looks like so we are all clear what steps are being followed. The local police are going to need more than one person to lead us through these processes. We could be worse off with an untrained officer
- Beef farmers have a lot of these steps and tools in place for this, as with the OSPCA protocols before, for naming a local beef farmer as a key contact for OSPCA/Police
- Don't forget to work with local commodities on this issue
- Federation could talk to this issue on politicians' bus tours.
- Need for trespass laws that are enforced and can be enforced.
- Farm and Food Care does have an emergency livestock response. Can local police forces have a community service officer who could be trained on this issue? General rules for animal issues, protocols, biosecurity, safety
- OFA put together a trespass/animal care/OSPCA update for local federations to use in their speaking notes.
- Continue to keep making the calls, otherwise it's not recorded and difficult to get any leverage. Need to keep explaining that this is compared to a home invasion to get the issues logged.
- OFA staff in the Western end of the province have had experience working with events that attract activists. Member Service Reps have access to some step-by-step lists to help prepare event volunteers and staff for protocols to follow

Sudbury comments:

May be worth having a chat with local police offices and community liaison people as responsibility for livestock and horses will be on them. Federations could present themselves as a resource, contact for head office of commodity representatives in the case that the local police don't have the training or understanding of the new role, nor what would constitute a normal farm practice.

This would be the time to have a proactive conversation with the local chief, which is way easier and less confrontational, so the homework is done before a situation arises.

Financial Best Practices for Non-Profit Boards:

Jean Prichard, Licensed Public Account from BDO Guelph presented to the PAC in Woodstock and Jon Lazarus, Director of Finance, OFA presented at the Orangeville, Brockville and Sudbury PAC meetings.

The presentation stressed the importance of internal financial controls in County Federations. Overlooked were several day-to-day operating controls such as cheque signing procedures, handling of cash/petty cash, payroll authorization, credit cards, review and approvals of expense reports, online payments, financial reporting/budgeting and annual financial reporting.

Power point presentation will be made available to counties.

Administration/Employment Best Practices for Non-Profit Boards:

Janet Roy and Jonathan Hanian from HR Premium Solutions overviewed new legislation starting on January 1, 2019 for organizations with one employee, volunteer or contractor. It was explained that the onus will be on the County Federation to prove the administrator is an employee, volunteer or contractor. They explained how to determine the differences.

Required training and assessments for county administrative support and county Board of Directors was discussed.

Power point presentation will be made available to counties.

What's next for County Federation Support:

Janine Lunn and Paul Nairn discussed the resource of Member Service Representative to help counties through the process and devise a plan.

Do we need more information?

- Checklist and calendars as templates to support boards to implement recommendations.

Do we need training?

- We could model some training modules after Gaylea – they do web-based training courses
- We could provide video and documents for County Federations to use on various topics, as needs and interest arise
- Be sure that there is a way to get the materials to those who do not have reliable internet access as some documents and videos can be very time-consuming to download
- Could provide modules to MSR who can host/show training events at Federation meetings
- Interest in support for:

- recruiting/retention to local boards
- Governance
- Finances
- Public Speaking (this has not been done for some time in Northern Ontario – a regional training session could be valuable)
- Some do prefer in person training, so consider ways to use the videos and documents in several formats (individual on their own time, as well as regional or local board meetings)

OFA will circulate information to PAC and county federations on future training, best practices, check lists and templates.

Next Meeting: August 27 Central, Guelph