

Terms of Reference

Agricultural Advisory Committee

MANDATE

The Agricultural Advisory Committee (Committee) will provide advice to Council and Staff on issues important to the agricultural and agri-business communities. The Committee will advise Council on land use/development, policy and economic development matters with respect to agriculture.

Review comprehensive planning documents such as the Regional Official Plan, Town Official Plan, Zoning By-laws and Secondary Plans. Recommendations will be made to Council with respect to the impact of such on agriculture and agri-business.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Members shall have access to a computer and an email address to receive meeting invitations and agenda packages with large files.
- Members shall be residents of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (Town), work in the municipality or have a place of business in the municipality.
- A demonstrated commitment to and interest in the Community.

ORGANIZATION

- The Committee is established by Council in accordance with these Terms of Reference. All members are guided by this Terms of Reference.
- The Committee will consist of no more than nine (9) members, two (2) being members of Council and seven (7) appointed by Council.
- Members will consist of the following:
 - One (1) resident of Niagara-on-the-Lake who resides in the rural agricultural community and is not involved in the agricultural industry;
 - Up to six (6) members affiliated with the following commodity groups;
 - Greenhouse and nursery products
 - Tender fruit
 - Grape
 - Wine
 - Miscellaneous agriculture/cash crops
 - Agricultural processing/agri-business
- An ad-hoc committee will be considered disbanded after its' mandate has been fulfilled.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The members elect a Chair and a Vice Chair at the first meeting.

Chair

- Chair all regular meetings of the committee and exercises authority and performs duties as required.
- Ensure that decorum is maintained at each meeting and that the rules of procedure and conduct are observed in accordance with By-law No. 4675-13 (Procedure by-law for the Town).
- Ensure that all committee members are provided an opportunity to comment.
- If applicable, assure that all applicants are provided an opportunity to present and comment.
- Provides guidance and leadership to the committee in the completion of its mandate.

Vice-Chair

Assume all functions of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

Members

- Attend meeting of the committee (if unable to attend notification should be sent the staff liaison as soon as possible prior to the meeting).
- Review agendas and reports sent prior to the meeting.
- Contribute time, knowledge, skill and expertise to the fulfillment of the committee mandate.
- Are cognizant of any conflict of interest or perceived conflict in terms of issues that may service to benefit them personally.
- Act to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information contained in reports and information circulated to the committee.
- Any committee member missing three (3) consecutive meetings without reasonable cause or explanation will be deemed to have resigned from the advisory committee, filling of vacancies for the committee will be considered by Council.
- Periodically review the committee Terms of Reference and recommend changes as required.

Quorum

- A majority of the members of any committee of Council shall constitute a quorum.
- If quorum is not attained within fifteen (15) minutes after the hour set for a meeting, the recording secretary shall call the roll and take down the names of the Members present and the meeting shall stand adjourned until the next meeting is called.

Support Staff

This committee shall be assisted by staff of Community & Development Services - Manager of Planning, who will provide expert advice, technical reports, background information and will prepare the recommendations of the committee.

Staff ensure that all correspondence that could impact the Agricultural Industry/Community be directed to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Agricultural Committee for review and input if deemed necessary and that any proposed policies from the Federal, Regional or Town Governments and any agency that could affect the Agricultural Industry/Community be directed to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Agricultural Committee for review and input if deemed necessary.

MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

Meeting Schedule

- This committee shall meet quarterly or at the call of the Chair.
- Established meeting dates and times will not be changed unless circumstances warrant special consideration.
- Meetings will be held in public in the Council Chambers unless otherwise directed by Council.
- All notices of meetings will be posted on the Town's web-calendar.
- The meeting agenda and presentation packages for each Committee meeting will be sent electronically to members one (1) week prior to each meeting.
- Members shall notify the Manager of Planning of their attendance status to ensure quorum.

Delegations

- Subject to the section immediately below, delegations will not be permitted.
- The Committee can request to receive a delegation. The request shall be voted and approved by a majority of the members.

Conflict of Interest

- Members shall avoid conflicts of interest. Members shall take proactive steps to mitigate conflicts of interest in order to maintain public confidence in the Town and its elected officials. Members are encouraged to seek guidance from the Integrity Commissioner and/or legal advice when they become aware that they may have a conflict between their responsibilities to the public as a Member and any other interest.
- All members have the duty to advise of any conflict of interest with respect to all matters before the committee. Members should decline to participate in the disposal of a matter where a real or apparent conflict is present.
- If a member has any conflict of interest on any matter and is present at a meeting at which the matter is the subject of consideration, the member:
 - Should, prior to any consideration of the matter at the meeting, disclose the interest and the general nature thereof;
 - Should not take part in the discussion of any question in respect of the matter; and
 - Should not attempt in any way whether before, during or after the meeting to influence the discussion of the application.

Reporting

- The committee may make recommendations on issues within their mandate that warrant Council's consideration.
- Minutes of this committee will be forwarded directly into the information package unless there are action items, then minutes will be forwarded directly to Council.

Remuneration

- Not applicable

Enabling Legislation

By-law No. 4675-13 (Procedure by-law for the Town)