

## RAIN Joint Advisory Committee/Research Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

24 November 2016

09:00 – 12:00

Laird Township Hall

**In attendance:** David Thompson (*RAIN Project Coordinator*), Christine O'Reilly (*RAIN Research Technician*), Melissa Watson (*RAIN Infrastructure Coordinator*), Mikala Parr (*RAIN Research Assistant*), Jessica Laidley (*RAIN CAFFE Project Coordinator*), Edith Orr (*Johnson Farmer's Market/Market Gardener, Research Steering Committee*), Gayle Broad (*NORDIK Institute/RAIN Co-Chair*), Arik Theijsmeijer (*FedNor*), Shawn Heard (*East Algoma CDFC*), Dave Trivers (*OMAFRA*), Kristen Taylor (*Beef Farmer, Research Steering Committee*), Errol Caldwell (*RAIN Co-Chair*), Judy Hughes (*Algoma Maple Syrup Producers Association*), Karen Speers (*MNDM*), Alf Roberts (*Algoma SCIA/Cash Cropper, Research Steering Committee*), Ken MacLeod (*Algoma Federation of Agriculture*)

**Regrets:** Jason Koivisto (*Algoma Federation of Agriculture*), Pedro Antunes (*External Researcher-Research Steering Committee*), Birgit Kroll (*Algoma Food Network*), Tim Kelly (*Algoma Food Network*), Darrin Bellerose (*Thessalon First Nation*)

Errol Caldwell opened the meeting.

Minutes from previous Advisory Committee meeting were read by Christine O'Reilly. Motion to accept the minutes as read made by Edith Orr, seconded by Ken MacLeod. Motion carried.

Financial report presented by David Thompson summarized RAIN's budget by project.

Christine O'Reilly announced creation of new Research Steering Committee (RSC), as action on point from previous Advisory Committee Meeting. Members of new RSC met in May to update RAIN research priorities. RSC were invited to this meeting to offer feedback on project outcomes and new ideas.

David Thompson summarized 2016 events:

- Dr. Temple Grandin talk to Algoma Cattlemen, in partnership with Algoma Autism Foundation
- Eat Algoma
- FedNor funding announcement (SNAPP, research projects)

Christine O'Reilly summarized 2016 field research projects:

- Concluded 3 multi-year projects
- Conducted 3 annual crop trials
- Assisted ASCIA with 3 of their field projects

Mikala Parr summarized RAIN's involvement in the University of Guelph's pollinator monitoring project

Melissa Watson summarized RAIN's infrastructure projects

- Manitoulin project will be closing at year end
- Algoma2 will continue into 2017

Melissa Watson introduced the new Sustainable New Agri-food Products and Productivity (SNAPP) micro-grant program. David Thompson introduced the Next Generation North workshop series and CAFFE project.

David Thompson informed the committees about upcoming changes regarding Sault Ste Marie Innovation Centre's office space.

Christine O'Reilly introduced 2017 applied research projects

- Cross-seeding Forages Project
- Economic impact of applying S fertilizer on brassica crops
- Nitrogen requirements of sorghum

Committee members provided feedback on 2016 field projects by reading results summaries and filling out ballot slips. Committee feedback on ideas for new projects was obtained via a sticker vote to help prioritize efforts for new funding.

Meeting adjourned for lunch.

### **Action Points**

- David Thompson to obtain a financial statement for RAIN
- Melissa Watson to add question to follow-up survey: Do farmers change cropping practices after installing tile drainage?
- Melissa Watson to create summary for farmers on infrastructure programs, including external financing options and example costs
- David Thompson to compile comprehensive report on RAIN's needs for new office space/location to enable all opportunities to be explored

### **Project Suggestions**

- Feasibility study on market demand for high quality horse hay
- Feasibility study on an Algoma Forage Auction
- Pulse crops/field peas