

**ROCKY VIEW COUNTY**  
**AGGREGATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Committee Meeting Summary Notes**

**October 19, 2023**

**9:00 – 4:00 pm**

**RVC Council Chamber**

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**These notes are an informal record of the meeting taken by the chair and reflect the evolving discussion of the members. These notes are not a final record or set of recommendations.**

**Attendance:**

- Gerry Bietz, Hazel George, Monty McNair, Dale Soetaert, John Weatherill. Members.
- Gerrit Scheffel. Administration
- Barbara McNeil. Chair

Regrets: Tom Foss. Member

**Agenda:** The meeting was guided by the following agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Review the September 26<sup>th</sup> summary notes.
3. A recap of what the committee observed on the October 13<sup>th</sup> aggregate tour.
4. Identify key stakeholder interests.
5. Begin to consider mutual principles to guide committee recommendations
6. Discussion on the identified ARP gaps.
7. Discuss the long-term goals for the committee's project.
8. Start on draft recommendations.
9. Next steps
10. Adjourn

**Meeting Process:**

9:00 am. The committee met in the Council chamber for the livestream portion. September 26 notes were reviewed with no changes suggested. Observations from the October 13 site tour were outlined.

The chair explained that the committee would then convene to a workshop session and report back at 1:00 pm. At 1:00 the meeting was livestreamed and the chair highlighted discussion from

the workshop. The committee went back to workshop discussions and reported back to livestream at 4:00 pm.

### 3. Committee Mandate.

Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree upon principles and approaches to guide the Aggregate Resource Plan (ARP) which reconcile the interests of residents, landowners, aggregate operators, environmental stakeholders, and the County.</li><li>• Identify gaps and suggest areas of improvement from the previous ARP draft.</li><li>• Propose desired public and stakeholder engagement methods (frequency, type, location, and timing)</li></ul>
Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the TOR, the previous Aggregate Resource plan and other related documents.</li><li>• To <del>debate</del> listen and discuss in a collaborative manner with the goal of reaching consensus on agenda items.</li><li>• To provide recommendations on agenda items.</li><li>• To establish interest-based working groups for input into the Committee recommendations.</li><li>• NOT a detailed technical review of the previous ARP draft.</li></ul>

4. In the workshop session the committee started with an open conversation that included the following topics.

- Trucking: not all trucks are registered with Alberta Sand and Gravel and can therefore be difficult to track when concerns arise.
- The group Rocky View Forward reviewed the ARP which the committee would like to see, along with the Bearspaw Community groups' comments on the Scot appeal.
- Supply and demand: it's important to have this discussion – it'll be on the agenda for a next in-person meeting.
- Discussed the County's gravel supply and the County's role in regional gravel development. The committee acknowledged that land use planning is a local decision-making task.
- Community Aggregate Payment. A levy covered in the MGA. RVC receives \$.40/ tonne which amounted to approx \$1.1 million in 2022. In Sturgeon County a local committee of residents and operators manage how these funds are used.
- Discussed the differences in the County from east to west: The east is mainly agricultural; residents are used to agricultural activity and disturbance and the population is less dense. Aggregate extraction is less industrial. The opposite is observed in the west toward Bearspaw and Springbank. Residents live on smaller parcels, the population is denser, and many residents have moved to the country for a quiet rural lifestyle.

- There is value in clearly documenting approval requirements in the ARP, this would benefit better understanding for communities, Council, and for industry.
- Look at having different standards for different areas.
- The committee discussed how direct control districts work. Direct control is the districting for aggregate development.

## 5. Identifying key stakeholder's interests.

The group was split into two groups – industry reps created a list of landowner interests and landowners created a list of industry interests. The lists were shared, added to, clarified where necessary, and discussed. The group noted where there was alignment in those interests.

Interests that Align		
Landowners	Industry	County Interests
Protecting environmentally sensitive areas for the long term i.e groundwater	Reduce time/bureaucracy for approvals	Consistency
Ensure responsible operations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Inspections</li> <li>• Oversight</li> </ul>		Certainty
Improve communications with stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A better understanding of industry</li> </ul>	Effective communication	
That standards be consistent for all pits.	Industry is willing to do better using performance standards.	Improving performance metrics
That the ARP addresses process gaps for resident's concerns – timing and technical decisions. Looking for confidence in technical decisions.	Certainty and clarity on rules for future developments (for long term investment decisions)	
Confidence that there will be compliance with conditions		
How to avoid the continuous conflict in some areas.		

Interests that are Less Aligned		
Landowners	Industry	County Interests
Protecting way of life and the quality of the community	Ability to develop close to markets to reduce trucking costs. Proximity reduces emissions and possibility for highway accidents.	Locational criteria
Move aggregate away from populated areas.	Ensure ARP doesn't restrict aggregate development	
Protection of property values	Recognition that long- term, aggregate is not a permanent land use.	
Clean air, quiet, dark skies.		

6. ARP Gaps. At the September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the committee members had outlined gaps in the ARP. Using the gap worksheet they discussed and gave more detail on those gaps.

- Landowner's Rights: When farmland is not suitable for agriculture, can the ARP recognize the ability to develop? However, see the plan policy stating that when a parcel is located in an Aggregate Deposit area, proposals for non aggregate should not be supported unless they meet criteria. Some see this is an overreach in the other direction and limits non aggregate development.  
Landowners don't always have full say over their land. Government would say that some privately owned land had public value - the public interest.
- Cost/benefit. Is there a cost to the County of developing aggregate? What is the motivation of the County to develop overall aggregate? How does the County benefit? Is there a cost/benefit analysis of aggregate development? Possible Recommendation: that

the County do a high-level assessment of economic impact to the County of aggregate development.

- ARP Tone. Should the plan be permissive or supportive? What's the balance? ARP should be careful in tone. For example 4.7 (*acknowledge that other land uses may, in some instances, take precedence over potential future extraction.*). Whis is this statement even in here? Glendale pit was discussed. The value of the land is higher because of site lines to the pit.  
Objectives in the ARP are written to protect residents and environment, but policy seems to be written to protect industry.
- Grandfathering provisions. Under the ARP, when a development permit is up for renewal, it's like a brand-new application. Why is this needed? Is it practical or necessary to do new assessments?  
Pits would have to be brought up to current standards i.e groundwater monitoring. Operating pits have to comply with Code of Practice. So, what's the common sense approach? There would be a system of complaints and audits.  
Possible Recommendation: that more discretion be given to the reviewer of existing pits, particularly in low population areas. Perhaps an ability to apply for exemptions, rather than have a two-tiered system. Or have standards that are universal, and operators can apply for exemptions.
- Location, Maps and Supply: We'll come back to this one. Gerrit will get information on how the map was prepared.
- Industry infrastructure sharing. See section 5.6 . Sharing is mainly meant for roads and air monitoring information. Locations and operations would make it difficult to share other infrastructure.
- Identity more clearly in the ARP that Council can change setbacks.  
Possible Recommendation: Identify this more clearly in a preamble, with the purpose that lay people can know that setbacks aren't 'cast in stone'. Have a second document 'ARP for Dummies' that decodes the language. Watch the the use of 'shalls, musts and maybes' in the ARP
- Using prescribed performance over setbacks. 500 meters is just a number. If performance standards were used (i.e shrouding that reduces decibel levels, or moving processing away from extraction). There is no standard way that other municipalities have handled this in the province. Away from major centres, there are fewer rules. The system could include performance standards, but the structure of setbacks is important.

We'll come back to this one.

**Next Steps:**

1. Finish working through the identified gaps. The Committee is okay with having some shorter virtual meetings to accomplish this before the next in person meeting. Barbara will contact members to find suitable times.
2. Dale and Barbara will work together to see if an informal tour/visit to a larger site can be arranged.
3. Next in person meeting: November 23: 7:30 – noon.