



**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL:  
PEEL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

**PAAWG 2025-01 Meeting Minutes**

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) met on February 20, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Peel Conference Centre located at 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite B, Brampton, Ontario. The meeting was also available through virtual participation via Microsoft Teams.

**Members Present:**

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Raphael Adegboye, Representative of the Agricultural Community  
 Tom Dolson, Peel Federation of Agriculture  
 Pat Fortini, Regional Councillor, Peel Region  
 Karen Hutchinson, Vice-Chair, Caledon Countryside Alliance  
 Dwight Matson, Peel Federation of Agriculture (Exited 8:10pm)  
 Britt McKee, EcoSource (Arrived at 7:56pm)  
 Manjari Mehta, Citizen-at-Large  
 Gary Mountain, Chair, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association  
 Ed Russell, Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association  
 Mario Russo, Regional Councillor, Peel Region  
 Brian Wannamaker, Citizen-at-Large

**Members Absent:**

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Patrick Brown, Mayor, City of Brampton  
 Mark Vanderwees, Citizen-at-Large

**Staff:**

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Tara Buonpensiero, Director, Peel Region  
 Learie Miller, Manager, Peel Region  
 Marsha Paley, Principal Planner, Peel Region  
 Melanie Williams, Advisor, Peel Region  
 Holly Shipclark, Sr, Co-Ordinator Agricultural Extension, Credit Valley Conservation  
 Patrick Esson, Sr. Project Manager, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority  
 Fallon Hayes, Project Co-Ordinator, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority  
 Jessie Spasov, Project Manager, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

**Guests:**

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Camilla Correll, Emmons & Olivier Resources (EOR) Inc.  
 Alexander Furneaux, EOR Inc.  
 Rebecca Pearce-Cameron, ALUS National  
 Ben Roberts, Senior Economic Development Officer, Town of Caledon  
 Kevin Thavarajah, City of Brampton

### 1) Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group (PAAWG) was called to order with quorum at 7:01 pm by Melanie Williams. Melanie Williams acted as Chair until the appointment of the PAAWG Chair and Vice-Chair. Attendance was called and quorum confirmed.

### 2) Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

*Melanie Williams, Peel Region*

Melanie Williams acting as Election Chair, called the election to order and opened the floor to nominations for the position of Chair. Nomination of Gary Mountain for Chair was made. No other nominations were brought forward. Gary Mountain agreed to stand for nomination.

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Ed Russell

*That Gary Mountain be appointed Chair of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group for the term ending December 31, 2025, or until a successor is appointed.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-01

The floor was opened to nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Nomination of Karen Hutchinson for Vice-Chair was made. No other nominations were brought forward. Karen Hutchinson agreed to stand for nomination.

Moved by Councillor Pat Fortini, seconded by Dwight Matson

*That Karen Hutchinson be appointed Vice-Chair of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group for the term ending December 31, 2025, or until a successor is appointed.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-02

Melanie Williams concluded the election process with testimony of the wonderful work undertaken by PAAWG. She expressed gratitude for the continued participation and dedication of PAAWG members and the newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair.

The meeting was then turned over to Gary Mountain as Chair.

### 3) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Gary Mountain declared a conflict of interest on Peel Rural Water Quality Program application 08-CVC-24 Education and on 09-CVC-24 Cover Crop. Ed Russell declared a conflict of interest on Peel Rural Water Quality Program application 08-CVC-24 Education. Dwight Matson declared a conflict of interest on Peel Rural Water Quality Program application 01-TRCA-25. No other conflicts of interest were identified by members in attendance.

#### **4) Review and Approval of February 20, 2025 Agenda**

Moved by Karen Hutchinson seconded by Raphael Adegboye.

*That the Agenda for the February 20, 2025, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be approved.*

Carried PAAWG 202-03

#### **5) Review and Approval of Minutes of November 21, 2024 Meeting**

Moved by Councillor Mario Russo, seconded by Tom Dolson.

*That the Minutes of Meeting 2024-04 of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group, held on November 21, 2024, be approved.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-04

#### **6) City of Brampton Stormwater Management Charges Review Update**

*Kevin Thavarajah, City of Brampton*

City of Brampton staff and consultants from Emmons & Olivier Resources Inc., presented an update on the City's proposed stormwater management charge relief for agricultural properties. The proposed program identifies 16 eligible agricultural practices that could qualify for a tax credit. Each practice receives a scoring based on its benefit to the City's stormwater management system. Based on the practices used, an agricultural property could be eligible for up to a 90% credit. The proposed program is set to go to public consultation April 2025, then to Brampton Council for approval, with a May 2025 launch. Consultation with the City's farm representative steering group on the proposed program will be in March.

#### **Questions/Discussion:**

PAAWG members expressed the concern that the stormwater management charge could discourage businesses from locating, investing, expanding or diversifying in Brampton. Especially those that may want to invest in greenhouse growing. PAAWG expressed that the stormwater management charge could end agriculture in Brampton.

#### **7) PAAWG Work Plan 2025**

*Melanie Williams, Peel Region*

The 2025 Work Plan was brought forward for PAAWG review and comment. It was noted the work plan is subject to modification to reflect changes to implement the direction of the *Hazel McCallion Act* (Peel Restructuring), 2023, and the previously tabled *Bill 240, Peel Transition Implementation Act, 2024*. The work plan will be provided to Regional Council in the annual PAAWG report.

**Questions/Discussion:**

Councillor Mario Russo requested work plan progress updates to PAAWG throughout the year for items, in addition to the quarterly updates on Grown in Peel, the Peel Rural Water Quality Program and the ALUS Peel Pilot.

**9) Peel Rural Water Quality Program and ALUS Peel Pilot**

*Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation*

**a) PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot 2024 Memorandum**

In 2024, the PRWQP completed its 20<sup>th</sup> program year. Twelve PRWQP projects were approved at a grant amount of \$57,389.

The ALUS Peel Pilot delivered its third year of its three-year pilot with 6 approved projects, leading to 2.9 ha (9.4 acres) approved for annual payments.

Between 2014 and 2024, a total of 247 PRWQP farm projects have been approved. Ninety-five peel farms have participated in the PRWQP and ALUS Peel Pilot programs, receiving \$1.4 million in program funding. These funds helped leverage an additional \$3.9 million from partners and landowners, bringing the total project value to \$5.3 million.

**Questions/Discussion:**

None

**b) Financial Report**

The 2025 Peel Rural Water Quality (PRWQP) program year has a budget of \$73,000.00. Additional cost-share funds of \$13,280 through Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), from other funding partners for the three projects within TRCA's jurisdiction, is also available pending the approval of the February 20, 2025, projects. As presented, pending approval, the total remaining PRWQP budget balance for 2025 is \$70,000.00.

The 2025 ALUS Peel Pilot contribution for new annual payments is still being confirmed by ALUS National as well as based on confirmation of the ALUS Peel Pilot partnership confirming ALUS Peel becoming a permanent program. Requested new annual payment grant allocation is \$232.50, with an addition \$4,635 for projects approved by PAAWG in 2024 but which are still subject to funding confirmation from ALUS National.

Chair Mountain declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting at 7:54 pm for the next two project applications. PAAWG Vice-Chair Karen Hutchinson took over as Chair at this time. At the same time, Ed Russell, who had also declared a conflict of interest on one of the same two applications, muted the meeting.

**c) Project Applications**

*Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation  
Fallon Hayes, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority*

**I. 08-CVC-24 Education (PRWQP) - Revisited**

This application was presented at the November 20, 2024, meeting of PAAWG however, quorum was not met to pass the motion. Application 08-CVC-24 proposes \$983.00 for a Peel Soil and Crop Improvement Association 10 acres (4 ha) demonstration plot of cover crops. This project helps pilot the establishment and overwintering of new varieties of cover crops, to educate the community on the benefits of different cover crops contribution to the reduction of erosion.

**Questions/Discussion:** None

Moved by Tom Dolson, seconded by Councillor Mario Russo.

*That application 08-CVC-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$983.00 under the category "Education".*

Carried PAAWG 2025-05

**II. 09-CVC-24 Cover Crop (PRWQP) - Revisited**

This application was presented at the November 20, 2024, meeting of PAAWG however, quorum was not met to pass the motion The application 09-CVC-24 proposes \$2,000.00 for 50 acres (20 ha) of cover crops. This project helps the establishment and overwintering of cover crops, contributing to the reduction of erosion, enhancement of area conditions, and reduced risks related to a highly vulnerable aquifer.

**Questions/Discussion:** None

Moved by Ed Russell, seconded by Manjari Mehta.

*That application 09-CVC-24 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$2,000.00 under the category "Cover Crops".*

Carried PAAWG 2025-06

Gary Mountain returned to the room and the role as the Chair at 8:09 pm. Dwight Matson declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting at 8:09 pm for the next project application. For technical reasons, he was unable to rejoin the meeting.

**III. 01-TRCA Cover Crop (PRWQP)**

Application 01-TRCA-25 proposes \$2,000.00 for 50 acres (20 ha) of cover crops. This project helps the establishment and overwintering of cover crops, contributing to the reduction of erosion and enhancement of area conditions.

**Questions/Discussion:** None

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Raphael Adegboye.

*That application 01-TRCA-25 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$2,000.00 under the category "Cover Crop".*

Carried PAAWG 2025-07

**IV. 02-TRCA-25 Livestock Fencing from Environmentally Sensitive Features (PRWQP & ALUS Peel Pilot)**

Application 02-TRCA-25 proposes \$1,280 from the Peel Rural Water Quality Program and \$252.50 from the ALUS Peel Pilot for the restriction of livestock from a swale connected to farm drainage and a tile outlet.

**Questions/Discussion:** None

Moved by Karen Hutchinson, seconded by Manjari Mehta.

*That application 02-TRCA-25 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$1,280.00 under the category "Livestock Fencing from Environmentally Sensitive Features" with the condition of submission of an updated, approved Environmental Farm Plan for the subject lands.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-08

Motion moved by Tom Dolson, seconded by Ed Russell.

*That application 02-TRCA-25 be approved for ALUS Peel Pilot annual payment funding in the total amount of \$46.50 per year for 5 years, for a total of \$232.50 subject to ALUS National confirming availability of the necessary funds, that the project is eligible for funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding and that the continuation of the ALUS Peel program in 2025 be confirmed.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-09

**v. 04-TRCA-25 Irrigation Management (PRWQP)**

Application 04-TRCA-25 proposes \$10,000.00 from the Peel Rural Water Quality Program to reduce overland nutrient runoff into adjacent ditches and watercourses by moving from a tanker to dripline irrigation system.

**Questions/Discussion:** None

Moved by Tom Dolson, seconded by Ed Russell.

*That application 04-TRCA-25 be approved and that Peel Rural Water Quality Program funding be provided in the amount of \$10,000.00 under the category "Irrigation Management", on the condition that the applicant provides Program Staff with an estimation of water usage pre and post installation of the drip irrigation to help provide additional quantitative analysis to inform the project category.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-10

**For Information**

*Melanie Williams, Peel Region*

1) Grown in Peel 2025 Recruitment and Reels – The Grown in Peel Local Food Guide recruitment period has closed. Program staff are following-up with any outstanding listings to update information. A second Grown in Peel reel was released in December 2024. Across the social media platforms, the reels have reached between 4,500 and 5,700 viewers.

2) Golden Horseshoe Food & Farming Alliance 2024 AGM will be held Tuesday May 28, 2025. Time and location to be confirmed.

**11) Round Table and Other Business**

- 1) Seedy Saturday – Karen Hutchinson noted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual event would be held on Saturday, March 1, 2025, at the Caledon East Community Centre from 10 am - 2 pm.
- 2) ALUS National Conference – Rebecca Pearce-Cameron encouraged members to attend ALUS National's multi-day virtual conference. Melanie Williams to share email with further information.

**12) Adjournment**

Moved by Councillor Mario Russo.

*That the February 20, 2025, meeting of the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group be adjourned.*

Carried PAAWG 2025-11

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm. The next PAAWG meeting will be held in-person at the Peel Conference and online via Microsoft Teams on May 15, 2025, at 7:00pm.