CALL TO ORDER
Chair Carl Loewith welcomed the members and expressed his gratitude as Chair to the members for their expertise and work on this committee. Carl also extended a thank you to Past Chair Roy Shuker for his years of work leading this committee. Carl also expressed his satisfaction that Sue Coverdale would still be working with this committee. Sue Coverdale explained that she was receiving tremendous support from the Clerks Department and that Ida Bedioui would be assisting with administrative support. Sue also emphasized that none of this would have been possible without the efforts made by Kevin Christianson and Neil Everson, corporately this decision was at a stand still and their efforts finally resolved the situation. Paul Mason also initiated this whole process many months ago and with the efforts of the Clerks Department and Economic Development we have a solution for the next four years.

1. **CHANGES TO AGENDA** – Add item 5.6 Community Food Security Committee under discussion items – Sarah Megens

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – none

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Minutes of April 26th, 2007. Mel Switzer moved the minutes, seconded by Roy Shuker. **CARRIED.**
4. **STAFF PRESENTATIONS** – none

5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

5.1 **Non Profit Agricultural and Rural Grant Evaluation and Distribution of Funds**

Sue Coverdale presented to the group the evaluation committee recommendations for fund disbursements. The grant applications were evaluated based on the criteria outlined and subsequent responses from the organizations. 16 groups will share $12,000. Sue identified one area of concern and opened discussion with regards to the application of the Golden Horseshoe Pork Producers. Their application was incomplete and they did not fill in half of the application or submit a financial statement. It clearly states on both the letter and application that the financials must be submitted to receive any funding. The back-up documentation however was excellent and it very clear that this group deserves funding and does an exceptional amount of educational programming benefiting youth and the agriculture industry. As a result of the incomplete information they are going to receive much less funding however, Sue is asking the committee to make a determination as to whether they should receive the recommended $250.00 or no funding at all. Mel Switzer put forward a recommendation that the committee adopt the evaluation team’s recommendation and provide this organization with some funding. The committee did request that a letter be sent to the organization clearly outlining that this would be a one time exception and unless the application was received with the correct documentation they would not receive the requested funding for future years. The committee members asked us to make sure we look into the process on how we can apply for increased funds in 2008. Sue Coverdale will ask Ida to put this on the list of future business items for later this fall so we can contact the Grant Committee on how to move forward with this recommendation and possibly request increased funding for these organizations. $12,000 seems like a very small amount of money considering the size of this industry. **Motion:** Mel Switzer put forward that the funding recommendation be approved by the committee and funds
disbursed accordingly. Seconded by Cathy McMaster. CARRIED

5.2 Final Draft Agricultural Action Plan - Review tasks identified and timelines

Sue Coverdale reviewed the process with the committee and presented the final Action Plan deliverables for immediate implementation. The recommendation outlines the actions that should be included in the first phase of the agricultural action plan. Each action identified was selected by the committee as tasks that were seen as a priority for immediate implementation. The committee discussed all 10 tasks that fall under the categories of Economic Development, Promotion, Strategic Development, Creating Partnerships and Financial Tools (details in draft document). Phil identified his concerns with regards to the task under Financial Tools. To work with the Province on changing tax policy could be risky; it is a nice simple system with Quebec being an example of a disaster application process for farmers. After much discussion it was recommended that we change the tasks under the Financial Tools as follows: \textit{Work with the City of Hamilton to create a farm friendly property tax regime by completing a Benchmarking Exercise looking into tax policies and tax rates on Farm Lands within other agricultural communities across Ontario.} Paul Mason also recommended that when the final plan is submitted to Council that all of the tasks and recommendations be given timelines and budget estimations so that members of Council have a clear vision of the expectations. Sue will make these changes and bring back a final review to committee in August. The final action plan will be presented to Council in October 2007, committee members felt this was a good time following the fall harvest and fall fairs.

5.3 Farm Fire Safety and Fire Prevention on the Farm

John Verbeek from the Hamilton Fire Department asked the committee to review two new brochures on farm fire safety and prevention. The committee felt this was good material and agreed it would be beneficial to share copies with the HWFA and CFF members from the Hamilton area. Sue Coverdale will not be back to work until mid-August due to pending sick leave. She will contact both organizations to determine if this information can be sent out as part of their quarterly newsletters and through the mail.
5.4 ARAAC Committee meeting curfew, Terms of Reference and Procedural By-laws.

Sue Coverdale handed out the Procedural By-law that governs the proceedings of Council and committees of Council. This document was distributed as more of a reference to committee members. Carl Loewith also addressed the group about keeping the agenda moving and ending at the recommended curfew of 9:30 p.m. The members did not feel it was necessary to make a formal motion but agreed we would all work together to keep the meetings moving. Especially presentations, they should be limited to a maximum of $\frac{1}{2}$ hour per presentation per meeting. The Chair will try to keep things moving and Sue will try to limit the agenda to a workable timeframe. Sue presented this committee’s Terms of Reference (TOR). Due to the change of Council term it was apparent that there would need to be some changes to this committee’s TOR. The following changes were recommended (changes bolded and underlined) Under Memberships and Terms – Three (3) councilors (non-voting) appointed by Council from Wards 11, 12, 14, 15 with a minimum of two councilors attending this monthly meeting. Page Two: Change the following sentence to: Except for the first appointments commencing in January 2002, “at large” and ward councilor members shall be appointed for the term of Council. Delete this sentence in paragraph one on page two. No member of the Agricultural Advisory Committee shall be re-appointed for a continuous term that exceeds Nine (9) years. Delete paragraph three on Page Two completely as follows. The Chair of the Agricultural Advisory Committee shall be a member of the Planning Affairs Advisory Committee panel. Alternatively, the Chair may appoint the Vice Chair, any other member of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, to service in his/her place as a member of such “Planning Affairs Advisory Committee Panel.

Motion: To make the recommended changes to the Terms of Reference as outlined in the minutes of June 21th, 2007. Motion by Roy Shuker, seconded by Dale Smith. CARRIED
5.5 **Election of Vice Chair for Term of Office 2007 – 2010**

Paul Mason agreed to be the scrutiner for this exercise. Doug Cranston was nominated for the position of Vice-Chair and through Chair Carl Loewith accepted this nomination. No other names were presented. Doug Cranston will be the Vice-Chair of this committee.

5.6 **Community Food Security Committee – Sarah Megens**

Sarah updated the committee on a recent meeting of the Board of Health – Public Health Department. A Community Food Security Committee will be formed to address food security issues. Initially the recommendation was for a staff committee but Council voted to adopt a model that includes stakeholders, staff, Council members and the general community. The composition of the committee will include representation from the agriculture industry that includes four farmers and one member of the ARAAC committee. The committee discussed possible recommendations that could be submitted to this committee as follows: Josmar Farms, Carol Puddicombe, Michele Spoelstra, John or Carol Fenema and a definite representative from a market garden operation. This is a positive step forward for this community.

6. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

6.1 **ARAAC Committee Member Update**

Councillor Mitchell discussed the current debate and changes proposed for the Hamilton Farmers Market. Currently they are looking at a $5 million investment in capital changes and improvements. Areas of concern still include that stall operators do not cover the cost of their stalls. Secondly a huge concern for the agriculture industry is that on 5 – 6 operators out of 88 are actual local farmers.

Roy updated the group on his attendance at a meeting regarding the Niagara GTA Transportation Corridor. A very broad cross section of attendees and Roy was happy to see the agriculture industry was included in these discussions. It was clearly outlined that the Regions focus is on doing a thorough Environmental Assessment and looking into improvements of all modes of transportation to resolve the issues, road, rail, shipping and transit improvements. Two
projects that are being worked on at this time are the GTA Niagara Corridor and the potential GTA West project which runs above the 407 to Guelph which is now at the beginning stages and not formally approved.

Sarah Megens advised the group that the Eat Local Project of Environment Hamilton was funded for $180,000 from the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation. The Eat Local map should be officially launched on July 13th (to be confirmed) at the Centre Mall Farmers Market. Everyone will receive an invitation to attend and this should get front page coverage through the local media resources.

Sue Coverdale advised the committee that she would be off on sick leave for the next 4 – 6 weeks having surgery/recovery. Sue will be back in time for our next meeting of August 23rd. Carl Loewith advised he will be absent for the next meeting and will transfer the meeting to the Vice-Chair in August.

7. **ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Carl Loewith moved the meeting be adjourned.