

Minutes of the Syndicat de l'UPA du Haut-Saint-Laurent's Annual General Assembly, taking place on February 15th, 2023 at Le Mangeoir, Saint-Anicet

40 producers participate in the meeting. Marie Daudelin, union counselor, acts as the secretary.

1. Opening of the minutes

Michel Hébert welcomes the participants. Catherine Turgeon reminds them of the regulatory changes adopted in 2020. Following these changes, the general assembly of the Syndicate now takes place every two years. Only the portion reserved for the election of the board of directors takes place annually, in order to maintain a rotation in the election of positions.

2. Adoption of the notice of meeting and Agenda of the meeting

The notice of meeting being deemed compliant, the assembly for the election of board members is therefore declared open, following a motion made by Éric Leboeuf and seconded by Alyssa Leblanc.

The draft agenda is accepted following a motion made by Linda Viaux and seconded by Sylvie Décosse. It reads as follows:

1. Opening of the assembly
2. Adoption of the notice of meeting and the agenda
3. Adoption of the minutes of the 2022 and 2023 meetings
4. Message from the president and adoption of the 2023 activity report
5. Adoption of the 2023 financial report and appointment of the external accountant
6. Election of board members
7. Open floor for producers and review of resolutions
8. Beyond zero-carbon agriculture: the why and how? by Ian Ward, board member
9. Issues of UPA Montérégie, Jérémie Letellier, president, UPA Montérégie
10. Speech by Martin Caron, president, Union of Agricultural Producers
11. Adjournment of the meeting.

3. President's Address and Adoption of the 2023 Activity Report

Catherine Turgeon summarizes the minutes of the 2022 and 2023 general assemblies. The minutes of the 2022 assembly are adopted following a motion by Éric Leboeuf, seconded by Alain Primeau. The minutes of the 2023 assembly are adopted following a motion by Mario Anderson, seconded by Éric Leboeuf.

4. Mot du président et adoption du rapport des activités 2023

Michel Hébert announces the end of his term to the members.

Catherine Turgeon summarizes the 2023 activity report.

The members also discuss the maintenance of waterways. Josiane Carrière informs the members of the progress made and their communications with the MRC and the municipalities. She informs them that they can attend the MRC councils to... Michel Hébert expands on his discussion with Pierre Caza. A member also raises the issue of excessive paperwork in the municipalities. The members do not seem to have support.

The 2023 activity report was adopted following a motion by Alyssa Leblanc, seconded by Éric Leboeuf.

5. Adoption of the 2023 Financial Report and Appointment of the External Accountant

The 2023 financial report ending on December 31, including a comparison with the 2022 figures, is presented to the members. It was adopted following a motion by Mario Anderson, seconded by Linda Viau.

The appointment of SCF Montérégie Inc. as the external accountant for the audit and preparation of financial statements was unanimously resolved. The appointment was adopted following a motion by Catherine Gruber, seconded by Karina Brown.

6. Election of Board Members

The opening of the election period for board members was proposed by Olivier Lamoureux and seconded by Alyssa Leblanc.

Following a motion by Olivier Lamoureux, seconded by Mario Anderson, Jérémie Letellier is appointed as election chair and Marie Daudelin as election secretary.

On a motion by Éric Leboeuf, seconded by Alain Primeau, Catherine Turgeon and Nancy Chatel are appointed as ballot counters.

President

Following a motion by Véronique Pinsonneault, seconded by Alyssa Leblanc, Éric Leboeuf is nominated. Following a motion by Mario Anderson, seconded by Claude Bigras, Alain Primeau is nominated.

Both Éric Leboeuf and Alain Primeau deliver speeches. After a secret ballot, the members elect Éric Leboeuf as president.

Howick – Très-Saint-Sacrement Sector

Following a motion by Laurie-Ann Prévost, seconded by Véronique Pinsonneault, Mariana Brown is nominated. With no other candidates, Mariana Brown accepts the position and is declared elected.

Saint-Anicet – Sainte-Barbe Sector

Following a motion by Maryse Labontée, seconded by Éric Leboeuf, Véronique Pinsonneault is nominated. With no other candidates, Véronique Pinsonneault accepts the position and is declared elected.

Franklin Sector

Following a motion by Josiane Carrière, seconded by Éric Leboeuf, Jamil Azzaoui is nominated. With no other candidates, Jamil Azzaoui accepts the position and is declared elected.

Other Crop Productions

Following a motion by Éric Leboeuf, seconded by Guillaume Asselin, Ian Ward is nominated. With no other candidates, Ian Ward accepts the position and is declared elected.

Small Farms

Following a motion by Éric Leboeuf, seconded by Alyssa, Guillaume Asselin is nominated. With no other candidates, Guillaume Asselin accepts the position and is declared elected.

7. Open Floor for Producers and Review of Resolutions

Upon a motion proposed by Mathieu Vincent and seconded, the following resolution was brought under consideration:

Article 40 – Right to Build on a Non-Contiguous Lot

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| CONSIDERING | Article 40 of the LPTAA may be invoked by a legal or natural person for the construction of a new residence or the replacement of a residence originally built under this article; |
| CONSIDERING | to benefit from Article 40, a natural or legal person must own the lot in question, and it must be of sufficient size to support a viable agricultural operation as well as the residence, especially if the lot is not contiguous to the rest of the farm; |
| CONSIDERING | the growth of agricultural operations can occur through the acquisition of lands that are not necessarily contiguous to the main operation site; |
| CONSIDERING | the physical and spatial conditions of a lot do not always allow for the construction of new houses on what the CPTAQ considers the "main operation site"; |
| CONSIDERING | one of the main objectives is the conservation of the most agriculturally suitable soils; |
| CONSIDERING | the construction of new houses, including wells and septic systems, on a lot considered as the "main operation site" can reduce the area available
Upon a duly proposed and seconded motion, the assembly of members of the UPA Syndicate of Haut-Saint-Laurent requests: |

To the UPA Federation of Montérégie:

- To make the necessary representations to the Union and the Government of Quebec to amend the Act respecting the protection of agricultural land and agricultural activities

(LPTAA) to allow agricultural businesses to build a house on a non-contiguous lot that meets the other criteria of Article 40.

Adopted unanimously.

On a motion duly proposed by Markus Ritter and seconded by Mathieu Vincent, the following resolution is put forward for consideration:

Financial Support for Agricultural Successors – Establishment Grant

- CONSIDERING the Financial Support Program for Agricultural Successors aims to help young farmers establish themselves on an existing farm or start a new enterprise;
- CONSIDERING the Establishment Grant is the main tool of this program;
- CONSIDERING the amount awarded currently varies based on two main criteria: the level of training and whether the establishment is full-time or part-time;
- CONSIDERING the grant can be used for equipment purchase, land improvement, modernization of facilities, etc.;
- CONSIDERING the grant amount (from \$10,000 to \$50,000) has remained unchanged for over a decade and has not kept pace with cost inflation;
- CONSIDERING establishing or starting any agricultural enterprise is a full-time commitment and investment, but working outside the farm, although not a choice, is often necessary to ensure a decent income for successor farmers' families;
- CONSIDERING as of 2024, it is no longer appropriate to define the Establishment Grant amount based on the "full-time or part-time" criterion;
- CONSIDERING there is a growing rate of farmers leaving the profession;
- CONSIDERING training, experience, and expertise should be considered as eligibility criteria, and therefore, there is no longer a need to limit eligibility for the support program to individuals under 40;
- CONSIDERING there is a need for a program that is simple and quick to administer so that successors can fully benefit from the support at the appropriate time;

Upon a duly proposed and seconded motion, the assembly of members of the UPA Syndicate of Haut-Saint-Laurent requests:

To the UPA Federation of Montérégie:

- To work in collaboration with the Union and the Fédération de la relève agricole du Québec (FRAQ) and make the necessary representations to MAPAQ and Financière agricole du Québec (FADQ), so that the Financial Support Program for Agricultural

Successors is enhanced to achieve its goal of helping young farmers establish themselves on an existing farm or start a new enterprise.

Adopted unanimously.

On a motion duly proposed by Alain Primeau and seconded by Éric Leboeuf, the following resolution is put forward for consideration:

Administrative Burden on Agricultural Businesses in Quebec

- CONSIDERING agricultural producers have been calling for a reduction in administrative burden for several years;
- CONSIDERING this burden continues to increase, and producers are already anticipating new administrative requirements, such as those stemming from the Omnibus Bill related to pesticide management and carbon neutrality objectives;
- CONSIDERING reducing the administrative burden on Quebec businesses was a commitment made by the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) from its first term;
- CONSIDERING the CAQ government has not met this promise in agriculture;
- CONSIDERING Quebec doctors have publicly released the study "Patients Before Paperwork" conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) to support their calls for a reduction in administrative burden;

Upon a duly proposed and seconded motion, the assembly of members of the UPA Syndicate of Haut-Saint-Laurent requests:

To the UPA Federation of Montérégie and the Confederation of the UPA:

- To conduct a study aimed at quantifying in detail the time and money spent by agricultural businesses on administrative tasks related to the application of laws and regulations (Environment, Animal Welfare, Foreign Workers, etc.);
- To publicize the results of this study and use them as leverage to pressure the CAQ government to fulfill its commitment;
- To partner with businesses and organizations like CFIB to increase the pressure.

Adopted unanimously.

On a motion duly proposed by Richard Renaud and seconded by Jamil Azzaoui, the following resolution is put forward for consideration: Reflection on the Dismantling of Small Lands, Especially for Successors

After discussion and a vote by show of hands, the resolution was rejected.

On a motion duly proposed by Ian Ward and seconded by Catherine Gruber, the following resolution is put forward for consideration:

Access to Psychological Health Services in English

CONSIDERING the Union of Agricultural Producers and the organization Au cœur des familles agricoles (ACFA) promote psychological health support services, notably through the new campaign "Comment ça va ?";

CONSIDERING access to psychological health services usually occurs during difficult and emotionally charged times, making it particularly important for English-speaking farmers to have access to these services in English;

Upon a duly proposed and seconded motion, the assembly of members of the UPA Syndicate of Haut-Saint-Laurent requests:

To the UPA Federation of Montérégie, the Confederation of the UPA, and the organization Au cœur des familles agricoles:

- To translate into English all information (website, references, brochures, etc.) related to psychological health intended for farmers;
- To use various media (newsletters, Quebec Farmer's Advocate, etc.) to inform English-speaking farmers about the availability of services in English.

Adopted unanimously.

8. Beyond Zero-Carbon Agriculture: The Why and How? by Ian Ward, Administrator

Ian Ward presents the following topics:

- Presentation of Agriclimat projects.
- The issue of funding from the Ministry of the Environment, including the possibility of transferring part of this funding to the Ministry of Agriculture's budget. For example, carbon taxes that should be paid to farmers.

9. Issues of UPA Montérégie, Jérémie Letellier, President, UPA de la Montérégie

Open discussion between Jérémie Letellier and members on the issues facing UPA Montérégie.

10. Speech by Martin Caron, President, Union des producteurs agricoles

Speech by Martin Caron, followed by a question period with members.

11. Meeting adjournment

The assembly is adjourned at 3:45 PM, on a motion proposed by Catherine Gruber and seconded by Véronique Pinsonneault.