Minutes and Impressions from the Meeting with Shirley Bond May 23 2019 11am-12:15pm

The meeting this morning with MLA Bond was informative and I think productive as it reinforced some potential action items out of our meeting on the 23rd with MLA Rustad. In terms of mood it was an easy going conversation once again. The three of us who attended, Rebecca, Crawford and myself (Rick had to be elsewhere at the last minute) all know Shirley from the past. Rebecca and Crawford know her quite well. MLA Bond had two interns in the room yet the conversation was candid and frank.

The timing was interesting in that she has recently attended meetings in McBride BC where there is a groundswell of opposition building against Carrier Lumber who recently advertised their PMP renewal which includes a portion of Bond’s electoral district.

As with other meetings of this type on this glyphosate issue it was a reconnaissance meeting as per the mandate of our committee. We were gathering and sharing information. There was more sharing from us in this case due to the Carrier situation. She was interested in hearing about and learning about the PMP Confirmation process, public involvement and IVM principals. We talked for a little over an hour.

Amongst the many things we discussed and she had questions and/or comments on were;

* Morris is supposed to be going ahead with his bill and it will be introduced next week before summer recess. The intern’s checked the agenda for the legislation session on line during the meeting and it wasn’t on there yet. It has to be put on the agenda 3 days before being introduced so ??...maybe he won’t do it…
* Just as with John Rustad she said as a private members bill its not likely to go anywhere. But the wheels are turning politically due to its content…MLA Bond said to watch what happens in the fall with the government. If the Greens press the NDP to follow up and do something with the ban then its another fight. But if we don’t see any major announcements then its likely something the NDP will move forward on as part of their election platform and we will see it in 2021.
* She wasn’t aware that MLA Rustad had possibly convinced MLA Morris to soften the bill from an outright ban. She thinks this is a good thing but it won’t make those looking for an outright ban happy which might play into the Green’s hands as above.
* Overall she heard our concerns well and understands that glyphosate is needed as a tool. She didn’t appear opposed to glyphosate use.
* We talked about IVM and how important it is to the IVMA as one of our pillars. She liked the idea of being able to “use the best tool”. We did discuss the benefits of herbicide use and it being amongst the IVM tools.
* This is where the idea of “using the best tool” came in and she liked it. We said that we could illustrate several anecdotal cases where in fact herbicide use was the best tool, environmentally, socially and economically.
* We spoke at length about the groundswell of support against herbicide use (especially in her riding). She sees it as part of the rampant ‘nimbyism’ that is spreading everywhere lately stopping all development. She empathizes with us but sees our situation as part of a much bigger movement that is problematic for the future of our province.
* We informed MLA Bond of our conversations with the Chief Forester’s office about the policy review on the use of Glyphosate and the potential input we might have there. She thought this was good and suggested that we speak with John Rustad about it as he is the forestry critic.
* We also discussed at length how IVMA might help her. Providing peer reviewed information (website etc discussed), reaching out to and informing legislators et al. She didn’t seem to be completely aware of the regulations around herbicide use so we explained it a bit. Now that she understands it better she will be using her understanding in conversations with folks in the Robson Valley who are opposing Carrier Lumber.
* She suggested going to BC Wildlife Federation meetings and doing presentations. MLA Morris has had several presenters come in and speak with the Liberal Caucus about biodiversity et al and is building support that way. Quite a bit of it.
* Similar to MLA Rustad she agrees that IVMA could help with developing some elements for the Liberal’s platform during the next election. Again this would be very high level stuff and more philosophical (read IVM principals) rather than specific (stay out of the emotional debate on herbicides).
* We explained the ‘enviro’s’ real agenda to eliminate pesticide use everywhere and our concerns about this and thus our involvement in this ‘Forestry Issue’. She gets it and was wondering if we explained that to Mike Morris. We said we had done that in our meeting with him.
* She said toward the end of our time that she will be sure to let her colleagues know that there is a great deal of concern out there about this proposed ban.

I’ll be sending along a nice thank you email to Shirley with Crawford’s, Rebecca’s and my own contact information attached. I’ll re-iterate our offer to help with information clarity and our contributions to a ‘resource management platform’ agenda.