



Energy & Environment Advisory Committee

MINUTES

A meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (E&E) was held on March 2, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., at the Stratford Rotary Complex in the Mansbridge Room (1st Floor).

Committee Members Present: Ian Morton – Chair Presiding, Craig Merkley, Ken Clarke, Councillor Larry McCabe, Vanni Azzano, Sharon Collingwood, Anita Jacobsen, Felicity Sutcliffe, Geoff Krauter

Staff Present: Emily Skelding - Waste Reduction Coordinator, Sadaf Ghalib – Climate Change Programs Manager, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Absent: Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach

1. Call to Order

Ian Morton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

3. Adoption of Previous Minutes

Motion by Vanni Azzano

Seconded by Anita Jacobsen

THAT the minutes from the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting dated September 1, 2022, be adopted as printed. Carried

Motion by Ken Clarke

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT the minutes from the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting dated February 2, 2023, be adopted as printed. Carried

4. Working Group Updates: Carbon Reduction, Ecological and I.C.I. Waste Reduction

Ecological

Craig Merkley provided the following updates on projects the ecological working group would like to focus on in 2023

- Invasive species – the working group met with the Parks, Forestry and Cemetery Manager to discuss how best to deal with invasive species. Some of the largest problem species are Japanese knotweed, phragmites and buckthorn. The City has contracted a local company to tackle the giant hogweed. E&E still has the \$5,000.00 grant they received from the Invasive Species Council of Canada to use towards phragmites. The working group suggests that in the future the City needs to create a management plan for eradicating invasive species to address issues early before it becomes a larger problem. There are mapping resources available from the Invasive Species Council of Canada. Municipalities can also refer to the Weed Control Act as a tool. The working group will continue to work with the Manager to move this issue forward. Sharon Collingwood noted that the financial impact of not addressing the invasive species will only increase the longer it is left. Anita Jacobsen suggested that the City could be pro-active with inventory, work on creating a long-term invasive species management plan and look at amending the Noxious Weed Control By-law to include some of the invasive species that are problematic.

Councillor Larry McCabe left the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

Motion by Craig Merkley

Seconded by Ken Clarke

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee recognizes the value and recommends the development of an Invasive Species Management Plan for the City and as a first step towards the goal of reducing invasive species in the City;

AND THAT Stratford City Council consider amending the current Lot Maintenance By-law 94-2008 to include Japanese Knotweed and Phragmites in the list of noxious weeds. Carried

- Craig Merkley reported that the issue of side trails being created in the TJ Dolan Area is being reviewed by Community Services staff.
- Biodiversity was also discussed and how to promote this issue. Mr. Merkley suggested that there is opportunity in the future to promote more meadow features in the City, such as the Devon Street hydro corridor.
- Mr. Merkley reported that for the ongoing native grass planting project along the TJ Dolan Area near Centre Street, there will be additional grass plugs available for planting if the E&E Committee wishes to continue.

Motion by Anita Jacobsen

Seconded by Ken Clarke

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee spends up to a maximum of \$1,000.00 to purchase 200 native grass plugs for the

**continuation of the planting project along the TJ Dolan multi-use trail.
Carried**

- Craig Merkley reported that they are temporarily putting shoreline work on hold due to weather and not being able to access the shoreline with equipment.

I.C.I. Waste Reduction

- Sharon Collingwood inquired what stage the E&E Committee's previous request to be included in the Ontario Plastics Act is currently at. Felicity Sutcliffe provided an overview of the program for members. Staff will inquire with the City Clerk on the status of the recommendation.
- The working group would like to see the youth position filled on the Committee, as well as find other opportunities for youth to get involved with Energy & Environment Committee events and initiatives.

Carbon Reduction

- Sharon Collingwood reported that they are actively seeking additional people to join the carbon reduction working group.
- Dr. Collingwood provided information on grant opportunities that might be suitable for the City of Stratford, such as:
 - Deep Retrofit Accelerator Initiative (Deadline: April 28, 2023)
 - Greener Neighbourhoods Pilot Program (Deadline: April 5, 2023)

Sadaf Ghalib, Climate Change Programs Manager, reported that the City seeks funding opportunities on an ongoing basis for City facilities. Ms. Ghalib confirmed that the City has not applied to either of these grants. However, if directed, she could explore the details to see if these grants are applicable for the City. Due to the short timeline, application to these two specifically may not be possible.

Motion by Sharon Collingwood
Seconded by Geoff Krauter

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee requests that Stratford City Council consider and investigate potential applications for Federal Government funding for the Deep Retrofit Accelerator Initiative and the Greener Neighbourhoods Pilot Program. Carried

- Dr. Collingwood stated that the working group received a position paper from Save Avoncrest regarding a request to look at the carbon reduction element of demolishing the Avoncrest building. The working group is proposing that the E&E Committee request documentation from the current owners regarding

preparing a carbon audit as it relates to demolishing the building and building a new one. They would like to see a delay in the demolition approval until the carbon costs are known. Geoff Krauter stated that this information would be helpful public information. Vanni Azzano inquired if E&E passes this recommendation for a specific property, the precedent will be set to require similar information for every property being demolished in the City. Sadaf Ghalib, Climate Change Programs Manager, stated that at this time, she has not been directed by Council to look at the implications of carbon impacts of demolition in the City as a whole. The City will be looking at developing a Community Emissions Action Plan, with action items derived from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Action Plan endorsed by Council in October 2021. Currently, staff reviews municipal development through a climate lens that includes such items as materials, where materials are sourced from and elements of passive design.

Felicity Sutcliffe noted that all Council members also received a copy of this position paper.

Ian Morton suggested a well thought out measured approach of steps the Committee could take for how they could introduce to Council that there needs to be more staff devoted to these types of issues, realizing this is a huge undertaking to ask of staff. Mr. Morton inquired if the carbon audit is useful for staff. The Climate Change Programs Manager noted that while the report is informational, the property is not owned by the City, thus no action would be taken relating to it.

Motion by Sharon Collingwood
Seconded by Geoff Krauter

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee recommends Stratford City Council requests the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance provide any carbon audit that has been completed for the Avoncrest property for the information of the City of Stratford Climate Change Programs Manager for reference for future carbon reduction strategies. Carried

5. Climate Change Program Manager's Update – Sadaf Ghalib

Sadaf Ghalib, Climate Change Program Manager, provided the following updates:

- Ms. Ghalib is receiving applications online from both community members and businesses for the Green Recognition Program. She will institute a working group with E&E members to ensure that the applications are reviewed. The plan is to hold the recognition on Earth Day or Earth Week at a Council meeting.
- The Earth Day Tree Planting Event will be held on Saturday, April 22, 2023. The City is receiving approximately 250 tree/shrub saplings from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA). This event was approved by Council and

staff will now proceed with organizing with partner organizations and businesses and advertising on the City website.

- A corporate focused emissions reduction plan is underway, which will support the City advancing towards its emissions reduction goals. It will also span climate action across its operations, including City owned facilities, buildings, transportation, outdoor lighting, solid waste, water, and wastewater infrastructure. Once the plan is complete, it will be shared with staff and City Council.
- A similar approach for the community will be undertaken, primarily focusing on mitigation or reducing greenhouse gas emissions with a gradual shift towards adaptation and resilience. The largest emitters are buildings, followed by transportation and solid waste. At this time, staff are reviewing previous studies conducted for the City, including the County-wide greenhouse gas reduction plan. Staff are also identifying strategic actions for each asset class, based on the requirements of the community. Ms. Ghalib anticipates there will be both in-person and online public engagement to provide feedback. The first in-person session is planned for Earth Day, during the Climate Momentum Earth Day Street Party.

6. Update from Active Transportation Advisory Committee – Felicity Sutcliffe

Felicity Sutcliffe provided the following update:

- The Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) Report Card was published to the City's website and will be updated every two (2) years.
- ATAC will be organizing various events for Bike Month which will be held in June.

7. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

7.1 City of London – Solar Panel Program (MyHEAT Solar) – Councillor Burbach

Deferred to next meeting.

7.2 UTRCA Watershed Report Card – Vanni Azzano

Vanni Azzano reported that an UTRCA representative will be attending the April 6, 2023 E&E meeting to do a presentation on the report card and focus on the Avon watershed. The report card has now been published on the UTRCA website.

7.3 Green Bins – Anita Jacobsen

Anita Jacobson inquired if the large green bins for community events were ordered. Emily Skelding, Waste Reduction Coordinator, will research what was previously organized by the former Waste Reduction Coordinator and update the Committee.

8. New Business

8.1 Climate Momentum Representative on E&E – Ian Morton

Ian Morton proposed a suggestion from Councillor Burbach to consider adding a voting position for a representative from Climate Momentum to the E&E Committee. Members were receptive to the addition of a representative from this community group.

Motion by Felicity Sutcliffe

Seconded by Sharon Collingwood

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee requests that Stratford City Council consider amending the current Terms of Reference for the E&E Committee to add a voting representative from Climate Momentum as a permanent position on the Committee.
Carried

9. Upcoming Events

- Stratford Tree Power Event – April 1, 2023 (Pick up at Dog Park parking lot)
- Earth Day Tree Planting Event - April 22, 2023

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the E&E Committee will be held on Thursday, April 6, 2023, at 4:00 p.m., in the Falstaff Room (2nd Floor) at the City Hall Annex, 82 Erie Street, Stratford

11. Adjournment

Motion by Vanni Azzano

Seconded by Ken Clarke

THAT the March 2, 2023 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:56 P.M.