



Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee

MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratford Communities in Bloom (CIB) Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 12:00 p.m., Agriplex Community Hall, 357 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

Committee Members: Councillor Brad Beatty – Chair Presiding, Kimberly Richardson, Barb Hacking, Yvonne O'Reilly, Linda Wakenhut, Cindy Carlson

Staff: Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Regrets: Carys Wyn Hughes, Mary-Anne Krutila, Councillor Bonnie Henderson

1. Call to Order

Councillor Beatty, Chair presiding, called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m.

Reading of the Land Acknowledgement and a Moment of Silent Reflection

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Conduct Statement

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

3. Adoption of the Previous Minutes

Motion by Barb Hacking

Seconded by Kimberly Richardson

THAT the minutes from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee meeting dated January 2, 2025 be adopted as printed. Carried

4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

4.1 Landscape Design Plan

Kevin Bonnell, Manager of Inclusion, Equity & Indigenous Initiatives, introduced himself to committee members.

Mr. Bonnell discussed with CIB members the plans for an Indigenous medicine wheel and fire pit in Confederation Park. In the fall, CIB purchased trees that have been planted by Community Services in a circle in anticipation of this project. Linda Wakenhut volunteered to contact the Horticultural Society to discuss the last tree to be planted, as the nursery did not have enough trees in the fall.

The purpose of this project is reconciliation and cultural education. The Indigenous medicine wheel and fire pit will serve as a permanent public space for reflection, learning and cultural celebration. The goal is to launch this project on September 30, 2025, with the following work plan:

- Recruitment for Indigenous Engagement Working Group (Feb-March 2025)
- Develop Terms of Reference and Define Scope (April-May 2025)
- Design, Educational Components and Construction (June-August 2025)
- Launch event on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 2025)

CIB members will share their Indigenous contacts with Kevin Bonnell to reach out and discuss being part of this project.

The CIB Committee has requested \$5,000.00 in their 2025 budget for special projects, which can be put towards this project. Kevin Bonnell stated that the City's DEI Department will also be contributing in some capacity and Mr. Bonnell will continue to research and apply for any funding opportunities that are available.

Councillor Beatty noted that the Stratford Rotary Club is also planning an Indigenous project, as they are hosting their regional symposium here in Stratford this year. This may be an opportunity to work together and collaborate on a project.

Kevin Bonnell will contact the Parks and Forestry Manager to discuss plans.

Motion by Kimberly Richardson
Seconded by Barb Hacking

THAT the Communities in Bloom Advisory committee, in collaboration with the City of Stratford's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division, approves in principle an Indigenous medicine wheel and fire pit project in the north end of Confederation Park;

AND THAT funding be allocated from the 2025 Communities in Bloom budget up to the amount of \$5,000.00. Carried

Kevin Bonnell no longer present at the meeting (12:43 p.m.).

4.2 Ted Blowes Garden

No new updates on the garden. Barb Hacking noted the lights are on at the bridge and look great this winter.

4.3 2025 National Symposium – Planning Update

Councillor Beatty stated that it is the committee's intent to hold all functions for the symposium at the Agriplex Community Hall, with the exception of the Thursday evening event and Friday evening dinner. Councillor Beatty will inquire about booking it from Wednesday to Sunday to allow for set-up.

Councillor Beatty will follow up with Director Tim Wolfe to confirm the use of the Agriplex Hall. CIB National will be sent the booking contract to sign and take care of applying for the liquor license as the contract is under them.

Kimberly Richardson volunteered to do a site visit at the Agriplex Hall with an audio/visual expert.

Kimberly Richardson will form a working group to create a detailed event plan with everything that needs to be accomplished, by what date and who will be doing it. Catering and potential speakers to be included in the plan.

Vicky Trotter noted a "meeting" means any regular, special or other meeting of a council, of a local board or of a committee of either of them where quorum is present and members discuss or otherwise deal with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of the council, local board or committee. Therefore, the working group meeting must be 4 or less members.

4.4 Update on Gateways Project

Deferred to next meeting.

4.5 Spring Fling Partnership Update

Linda Wakenhut reported that Garden Stratford would like to partner with Communities in Bloom for their Spring Fling event. However, their plant sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 31, 2025, the week after CIB's event. CIB members would like to move forward with the collaboration, switching the date to May 31 to align with Garden Stratford's plant sale at the Local Community Food Centre.

Ms. Wakenhut noted that if people are interested in volunteering for Garden Stratford projects, they will be required to purchase a Stratford & District Horticultural Society membership card (\$15.00).

4.6 Annual Scott's Miracle Grow Garden Contest

No update on the application forms being released.

Cindy Carlson has forwarded grant information to Stratford District Secondary School so they can apply for it.

5. New Business

5.1 2025 Gro for Good Grant Initiative

Councillor Beatty stated that this grant initiative could also be sent to secondary schools. Cindy Carlson noted that the Stratford Intermediate School may be interested in this.

Councillor Beatty stated that applications will be accepted until February 28, 2025 or when they receive the first 200 applications, whichever comes first.

6. Upcoming Events

- Spring Fling – May 31, 2025
- Scott's Miracle Grow Contest
- 2025 CIB National Symposium (Stratford, ON) – October 16-19, 2025
- Pumpkin Parade – November 1, 2025

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the CIB Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Kimberly Richardson

Seconded by Linda Wakenhut

THAT the February 6, 2025 Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Meeting Start Time: 12:11 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 1:30 P.M.