



Energy & Environment Advisory Committee

MINUTES

A meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (E&E) was held on February 2, 2023 at 4:00 p.m., electronically.

Committee Members Present: Ian Morton, Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach, Craig Merkley, Councillor Larry McCabe, Vanni Azzano, Sharon Collingwood, Anita Jacobsen, Felicity Sutcliffe, Geoff Krauter, Ken Clarke

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

Absent: Justine Nigro

1. Call to Order

Councillor Burbach, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

3. Welcome and Introduction of New Members

New and current members introduced themselves.

Vanni Azzano now present at the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

4. Election of 2023 Chair and Vice-Chair

Staff declared nominations open for the 2023 Chair of the E&E Advisory Committee.

The following nominations were received:

- Councillor Burbach nominated Geoff Krauter
- Sharon Collingwood nominated Ian Morton
- Geoff Krauter nominated Ken Clarke

Staff asked if there were any further nominations. No further nominations were made.

Motion by Vanni Azzano

Seconded by Anita Jacobsen

THAT the nominations for the 2023 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee Chair be closed. Carried

Geoff Krauter indicated that he would not allow his nomination to stand.

Ian Morton indicated that he would allow his nomination to stand, however would like to re-open nominations to allow other members the opportunity to serve.

Ken Clarke indicated that he would not allow his nomination to stand.

Motion by Ian Morton

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the nominations for the 2023 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee Chair position be re-opened. Carried

The following nominations were received:

- Craig Merkley nominated Councillor Burbach
- Geoff Krauter nominated Sharon Collingwood
- Sharon Collingwood previously nominated Ian Morton

Motion by Felicity Sutcliffe

Seconded by Ken Clarke

THAT the additional nominations for the 2023 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee Chair be closed. Carried

Ian Morton indicated that he would allow his nomination to stand.

Councillor Burbach indicated that she would not allow her nomination to stand.

Sharon Collingwood indicated that she would allow her nomination to stand.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Vanni Azzano

THAT Ian Morton be elected as the 2023 Chair of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee. Carried

Staff declared nominations for the 2023 Vice-Chair of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee open.

The following nominations were received:

- Councillor Burbach nominated Sharon Collingwood

Staff asked if there were any further nominations. No further nominations were made.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT nominations for the 2023 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee Vice-Chair be closed. Carried

Sharon Collingwood indicated that she would allow her nomination to stand.

Motion by Felicity Sutcliffe

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Sharon Collingwood be elected as the 2023 Vice-Chair of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee. Carried

Ian Morton assumed the role of Chair.

- 5. Adoption of Previous Minutes – Deferred to next meeting**
- 6. Updates from Carbon Reduction, Ecological and I.C.I. Waste Reduction Working Groups**

Ecological

Craig Merkley reported that the Invasive Species Council of Canada grant that the Committee received is for the TJ Dolan and the Old Grove areas and is an ongoing 2-year project, possibly a 3-year project. The project will mainly target the three patches of phragmites located on the far side of the Avon River and are quickly expanding into the wetlands.

The native grasses planted at the end of Centre Street, along the TJ Dolan pathway last year is doing well. They would like to continue with addition plantings in this area with the support of the E&E Committee and close the gap along the pathway and have the entire boulevard planted in native grasses. Possibly adding signage can also be discussed.

The work around Lake Victoria erosion control and habitat enhancement has been ongoing over the last few years. They have plans to work on this further this year in partnership with the UTRCA on the engineering and design plans. Weather conditions are going to make the project complicated and not being able to get equipment down to do the work. In consultation with Quin Malott, Manager of Parks, Forestry and Cemetery for the City of Stratford, the area at the top end of Lake Victoria is being looked at as the project this year. A "hawk stick" with a nest on top for osprey may be proposed as part of the design. Some pruning of the past vegetation planted years ago will also be addressed.

Craig Merkley and Felicity Sutcliffe have been working with ReLeaf Stratford working on additional plantings along TJ Dolan.

Motion by Craig Merkley

Seconded by Felicity Sutcliffe

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee requests Stratford City Council consider carrying over the unspent \$10,000.00 from the 2022 Energy & Environment Budget line for Avon River Naturalization Projects to be included in the 2023 budget for erosion control and habitat enhancement on Lake Victoria. Carried

Sharon Collingwood inquired if the black boxes located around the Festival are dead-fall or chemical traps for rodents. Anita Jacobson advised she believes they are chemical traps and the Festival has hired a licensed pest control company to look after them.

Sharon Collingwood also inquired about a beaver who has inhabited the river and has subsequently been trapped. Craig Merkley stated that the location that the beaver is living in is actually outside the City limits. There is a network of stream gauges around the province, run by Environment Canada. They provide water quantity information to the local Conservation Authority so they can predict flooding better. In order to get proper data, they need the area of the creek to be functioning in a normal way. If there is a dam going across, it becomes a pond and the data cannot be used as a prediction tool for the function of the watershed. A pond leveler would not work well in this situation, as it is necessary for the water to go up and down to develop a rating curve. Likewise, he is unsure a beaver baffle would be more for use in a pond, as opposed to a river situation. Members are unsure of where the beaver was located and believe it may have been within the City limits.

Mr. Merkley stated that regardless of where the beaver was located, if it is ruining the Federal gauge, it is Environment Canada's jurisdiction to come in and remove it. Sharon Collingwood inquired if the gauge could be relocated. Mr. Merkley stated that it is historical data from approximately 50 years, moving its location would defeat the purpose.

Sharon Collingwood inquired what the E&E Committee's approach and philosophy is regarding wildlife. Vanni Azzano stated that in this instance, it is a Federal worksite and it supersedes any other municipal jurisdiction.

Ken Clarke inquired if the additional tree plantings in the TJ Dolan area have been successful in deterring people from straying off the marked paths. Felicity Sutcliffe stated that ReLeaf planted the trees, as requested by the Manager of Parks, Forestry and Cemetery, and it appears that it is working.

Craig Merkley, Vanni Azzano, Felicity Sutcliffe and Ken Clarke volunteered to serve as members for this working group.

Carbon Reduction

Geoff Krauter reported that the working group is looking for a new chair. Currently Mr. Krauter and Felicity Sutcliffe are in the group. As a past member, Emily Skelding explained that in the past the working group has focused on projects such as low energy efficient buildings, doing community outreach, public events, and webinars about the topic. There had been talks in the past about combining the Carbon Reduction and I.C.I. Waste Reduction working groups. Geoff Krauter added that they have also looked into both the structural building emissions and transportation emissions.

Geoff Krauter, Felicity Sutcliffe and Sharon Collingwood volunteered to serve as members for this working group.

I.C.I. Waste Reduction

Felicity Sutcliffe reported that this working group has a large group of citizen volunteers that participate. The working group has assisted in creating the new Green Recognition Program that is going to be run by the City. They will also need to set up a review committee to assist staff with the submissions for the Green Recognition Program. The ICI Waste Reduction group has also researched eliminating single-use plastics and joining the Canada Plastics Pact. A motion was passed by E&E in June 2022 requesting that Council consider joining the Canada Plastics Pact. This group is also looking for a chair.

Felicity Sutcliffe, Sharon Collingwood and Councillor Larry McCabe volunteered to serve as members for this working group.

7. Update from Active Transportation Advisory Committee – Felicity Sutcliffe

Felicity Sutcliffe updated the E&E Committee on the last ATAC meeting discussions. ATAC is working on a "Report Card" regarding active transportation. The goal is to have the report card updated every two years to measure progress. Staff provided an update on transportation projects at the meeting. Unfortunately, they were unsuccessful on three project proposals on Douro Street, Erie Street and McCarthy Road.

At the ATAC meeting, The Project Manager provided an update on the Transportation Master Plan, integrating the transportation plan and the bike and pedestrian plan. There have been two stakeholder consultations and then a summary report will be completed in February and posted on Engage Stratford. Once it goes back to Council with a 30-day review period it comes back to ATAC. Ms. Sutcliffe stated it is encouraging to see staff using the transportation master plan and noted that work is going to be done on Albert Street and they will be looking at traffic calming measures and share the road options. At the meeting, Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer, shared with the committee a speed management presentation that addresses the ongoing issue of speeding in areas. He noted that staff has requested an annual budget of

\$25,000.00 for traffic calming projects. He shared results of a speed study they conducted, and it showed that in the 40 km/hour zones, drivers are actually travelling faster than in the 50 km/hour zones. They have also chosen Shakespeare Ward as a pilot area for traffic calming. ATAC members are also beginning to work on Bike Month activities, which is in June.

Councillor Burbach inquired with the Climate Change Programs Manager if a reduction in speed limits would be a carbon-reduction strategy as well. The Climate Change Programs Manager stated that while reducing speed limits would encourage active transportation and make roads safer, she is not aware if there are any measures that can be taken to actually calculate the emissions that are reduced from slower moving vehicles.

8. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

8.1 Land Acknowledgement Update – Councillor Burbach

Councillor Burbach reported that Kevin Bonnell, Manager of Equity, Inclusion and Indigenous Initiatives, is working on finalizing the land acknowledgement.

8.2 Update on Climate Action Plan/Tax Deferral Program to Encourage Green Development in Stratford – Councillor Burbach

Councillor Burbach reported that this item would now most likely be handled by the Climate Change Programs Manager. Staff will include a section in the agenda moving forward to allow the Manager to provide updates on the projects she is working on.

8.3 Update from Council on Trow Avenue Development

Councillor Burbach reported that this project at the corner of Ontario and Trow has now been approved. Neighbours took the application to the Ontario Land Tribunal; however the development plan was approved. The province has since changed the regulations and site plans no longer come back to Councils for approval, the workplan remains with staff.

8.4 Recommendation for Municipal Green Development Standards

Councillor Burbach reported that this is being looked at by the new Climate Change Programs Manager who will be able to provide an update at the next E&E meeting. Sharon Collingwood inquired if electric charging stations will be included in this. Councillor Burbach stated that the City has received a grant to install charging stations in various locations. The Climate Change Programs Manager advised that Stratford has received funding from Natural Resources Canada and the City is also required to top up the funding to install 23 charging stations within downtown City parking lots. 22 ports would be Level 2 charging stations and one would be a Level 3 charging station. She anticipates that the project will receive funding in the next coming months and all stations would be installed by the end of 2024 to be functional by the beginning of 2025. Felicity Sutcliffe inquired if there has been any consideration given to installing some of

the charging station at the Rotary Complex and questioned whether they have to be located in the downtown core. The Climate Change Programs Manager stated that there has previously been a detailed site analysis done for available locations with the capacity for the electric chargers. She noted with possible future funding, expanding out to the Rotary Complex lots could be a consideration.

9. New Business

9.1 Green Recognition Program – Sadaf Ghalib, Climate Change Programs Manager

The Climate Change Programs Manager reported that the program is underway and the City is now accepting applications from all citizens, businesses and organizations that are making considerable effort towards integrating sustainability in their daily activities. There are three categories for participation:

- waste diversion,
- energy management and electrification, and
- energy efficient buildings.

The application form is available through the City's website. Staff has also been creating posts for social media and the program has also garnered coverage from the local newspaper. The Climate Change Programs Manager encouraged members of the E&E Committee to promote the program further and spread the word ahead of Earth Day.

Felicity Sutcliffe advised she has a list of people they would like to encourage to put their names forward and have begun contacting them. The deadline for applications is March 17, 2023. For clarification, staff is accepting applications, not nominations of other people.

9.2 Passive House Canada Webinar

Staff will follow up on this webinar to see if this webinar has already been held or if it is an event that can still be arranged for E&E Committee members.

9.3 Nomination of 2023 E&E Representative for the Active Transportation Advisory Committee

Felicity Sutcliffe expressed an interest to continue to be the E&E representative on ATAC.

Motion by Councillor Burbach
Seconded by Vanni Azzano

THAT the Energy and Environment Committee recommend Stratford City Council consider re-appointing Felicity Sutcliffe as the E&E representative on the Active Transportation Advisory Committee for a one-year term to December 31, 2023 or until another successor is appointed. Carried

9.4 Solar Power Program (London) – Councillor Burbach

Councillor Burbach will forward some information regarding a new program from London Hydro encouraging people to capture solar energy. There is an online tool designed for homeowners to decide if solar panels are a viable option for their power needs.

9.5 UTRCA Watershed Report Card – Vanni Azzano

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) puts out a watershed report card every five years. The 2023 report cards will be coming out the end of February. Mr. Azzano inquired if the Committee would like to have a representative come to E&E and do a presentation about surface water quality and forest conditions. The Committee expressed an interest in receiving this presentation and Mr. Azzano advised he would contact staff at UTRCA.

10. Upcoming Events

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

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the E&E Committee will be held on Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 4:00 p.m., in the Mansbridge Room at the Stratford Rotary Complex, 353 McCarthy Road, Stratford.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Ken Clarke

Seconded by Felicity Sutcliffe

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

Meeting Start Time: 4:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:38 P.M.