



## Energy & Environment Advisory Committee

### MINUTES

A meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (E&E) was held on May 2, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., Stratford City Hall – Auditorium, 1 Wellington Street

**Committee Members Present:** Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach – Interim Chair Presiding, Sharon Collingwood, Craig Merkley, Ken Clarke, Anita Jacobsen, Felicity Sutcliffe, Geoff Krauter, Vanni Azzano

**Staff Present:** Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Sadaf Ghalib – Manager of Climate Change Programs, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

**Also Present:** Jane Marie Mitchell, Zach Kritzer

**Regrets:** Councillor Larry McCabe

#### 1. Interim Chair Appointment

Vicky Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator, stated that an administrative decision was made that in the interim of the Chair of E&E being on leave for an unknown amount of time, Councillor McCabe will take over chairing the meetings. As Councillor McCabe previously sent regrets for this meeting, Council Burbach will be chairing today.

#### 2. Call to Order

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

Reading of the Land Acknowledgment and a moment of silent reflection.

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Policy.

**3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

None declared.

**4. Adoption of Previous Minutes**

**Motion by** Craig Merkley

**Seconded by** Anita Jacobsen

**THAT the minutes from the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting dated March 7, 2024 be adopted as printed and the minutes from the April 4, 2024 be adopted as amended. Carried**

Sharon Collingwood requested the minutes be amended to include Councillor McCabe volunteering to research if Engage Stratford could be utilized regarding the Green Dining Guide for restaurants. This item will be added under the I.C.I. Waste Reduction update in the April 4, 2024 minutes.

Sharon Collingwood also inquired why the youth member was not listed as a committee member. Staff noted that his application has been received, however Council has not yet made appointments to fill vacancies on the committee.

\*Sharon Collingwood is no longer present at the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

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

Ecological:

Craig Merkley provided the following update from the Ecological Working Group:

- the working group participated in the Earth Day event including handing out information and talking with attendees regarding E&E initiatives;
- The Stratford Times and the City's Corporate Communication Specialist were on hand to cover the story at the first weed pull along the North Shore on April 22, 2024;
- two additional weed pulls are planned for May 10<sup>th</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup> with the intention to organize one pull a month;
- continuing to meet with Quin Malott, Cemetery Manager, Parks & Forestry Manager to keep the communication lines open on projects taking place in the City;
- signs have been received that will be used when volunteers are out in the City working on various projects and also a sign that will be located at the native grass planting;

- turtle crossing signs have been approved and are currently being designed and will be installed shortly.

I.C.I. Waste Reduction:

No new updates at this time.

Carbon Reduction:

Geoff Krauter stated the group is continuing to research partnering with a local credit union on co-hosting a presentation from the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (Western University). The first step would be having representatives come to an E&E meeting to discuss.

Councillor Burbach inquired if a representative would be interested in coming to the June E&E meeting. Mr. Krauter will discuss with the working group and contact staff prior to the meeting to make arrangements.

## **6. Climate Change Program Manager Update – Sadaf Ghalib**

The Climate Change Program Manager provided the following updates:

- a thank you was extended to Felicity Sutcliffe for all her work helping with the Green Recognition Program, organizing site visits and doing background work;
- Green Recognition Program for 2024 has concluded with (17) applications received;
- eight applications were selected covering all four categories with the recipients having been invited to the May 13, 2024 Council meeting to be presented with a certificate;
- Ken Clarke inquired about the policy on applicants applying year after year. Ms. Ghalib noted that there is no policy on how often you can apply, as long as the application is highlighting further action they have taken since their last application.
- The Community Climate Action Plan is now at a stage where staff has reviewed the baseline emissions for Stratford for 2022. They are now in a position to make informed decisions for the next few decades and work on plan development. The first baseline exercise has helped them understand what the pace needs to be moving forward and what type of emissions Stratford is emitting as a city. At this time, staff is facilitating stakeholder workshops to finalize the entire plan. The first meeting was held on April 25, 2024 and the next two meetings will be held on May 23 and June 4, 2024, 4:00-6:00 p.m. online. The June 4, 2024 meeting will be

open to the public and they hope to have a broad range of participants. Please share the information with anyone who might be interested.

Felicity Sutcliffe inquired if the presentation from the April 25, 2024 meeting could be shared with the committee. Sadaf Ghalib will forward the information onto committee members once she has received it.

- The City partnered with the UTRCA to plant various species of trees for Earth Day. The Scouts planted 250 saplings in T.J. Dolan and UTRCA planted another 250 saplings with the help of students near the Court Drain.

## **7. Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) Update – Vicky Trotter**

Vicky Trotter provided the following updates from the previous ATAC meeting:

- the Bike Event is scheduled for June 2, 2024;
- the ATAC Report Card has been finalized showing the most recent data and has been posted on the City's website;
- working on getting active movement stenciling around local school, similar to a hopscotch getting kids active on the way to and from school;
- thanked Felicity Sutcliffe for all her work on the Avon Trail signage and they have now received a proof of the first sign to be installed near the Bridge to Nowhere;
- continuing to work on art installations in the downtown core that double as bike racks with further updates to be provided.

## **8. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

### **8.1 Climate Conversations Events**

Vicky Trotter requested clarification on the details for the Climate Conversation events that were discussed at the March 7, 2024 E&E meeting and what plans have been set so far. Felicity Sutcliffe explained at the initial presentation, Sheila Clarke had asked for representation from the E&E Committee on an organizing committee for the talks. Ms. Sutcliffe attended a meeting on behalf of E&E. The date of the first event has been put on hold. Sadaf Ghalib reported the date of May 27, 2024 has been proposed.

Ms. Sutcliffe noted the presentations are meant to be a partnership between Climate Momentum, the E&E Advisory Committee and the City of Stratford. E&E

initially passed a motion to support holding the events; however, Ms. Trotter will contact Ms. Clarke and inquire if she can provide details on what sort of support they will be asking of E&E. If there will be any financial obligation, what will the topics be, who will be speaking, facility bookings, how much staff involvement is required, etc. Ms. Trotter may inquire if Sheila Clarke would like to attend E&E again to discuss the details once they are confirmed.

## **8.2 Update on New TJ Dolan Sign (Kiosk at Entrance)**

Felicity Sutcliffe reported that a rough draft of the new sign has been started. The proof will be sent to Quin Malott, Cemetery Manager, Parks & Forestry Manager to review and approve. They will also be requesting the Avon Trail members complete the map that will be included on the sign. The funds for this sign will come out of the E&E 2024 budget line allocated for Community Projects – T.J. Dolan. The goal is to have the proof to staff by June.

Councillor Burbach noted that limiting or deterring off-path bike use in T.J. Dolan is an important point that should be included on the sign. Members also discussed that in the future, the back of the sign could be an opportunity to add more information, such as invasive species information.

## **8.4 Invasive Species Management Plan – Phase 2 & 3**

Anita Jacobsen reported on the recently completed Invasive Species Management Plan for the City of Stratford. The purpose of the Plan is to spend money more effectively on controlling invasive species in the City. Prevention is the most cost-effective way of mitigating the effects of invasive species. The Plan will help City staff coordinate and document the management of the invasive species and will become a framework for control moving forward. Consultants from the Invasive Species Centre worked with City staff, UTRCA and members of E&E's ecological working group to create a plan specifically for Stratford.

Ms. Jacobsen reviewed information with the committee that is contained in the plan regarding best management practices and timing windows for all control methods, common pathways of spread for each species on the Watch List and a summary of high-level prevention and management activities for invasive species within the City.

Councillor Burbach noted possibly investigating if there would be grant funds available to hire a student to focus on the Management Plan.

Vicky Trotter will contact the Corporate Communications Specialist to inquire if they would be available to post information regarding upcoming events, such as the weed pulls. E&E members will forward the information they would like posted. Members of the ecological working group will put in a request to be a delegation at an upcoming Council meeting when the recommendation goes forward to Council.

**Motion by** Anita Jacobsen

**Seconded by** Ken Clarke

**THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee recommends that Stratford City Council adopt the Stratford Invasive Species Plant Plan and for City staff to follow its recommendations. Carried**

**Motion by** Craig Merkley

**Seconded by** Vanni Azzano

**THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee spends \$9,322.50 from their 2024 Budget for payment of the Invasive Species Centre invoice for completion of Phase 2 and 3 of the Invasive Species Plant Plan. Carried**

## **9. New Business**

### **9.1 Working Groups**

Vicky Trotter reviewed with members the role of working groups within Advisory Committees. This information is meant to provide all Advisory Committees with the same processes to follow when forming a working group and members can ask for any clarification on processes they might have.

The following items were addressed in the presentation:

- What is an Advisory Committee?
- What is a Working Group
- Who can be a part of a working group?
- What decisions can working groups make?
- Can we consult with experts in the community?
- Can community members still volunteer for specific events?

Members are encouraged to reach out with any questions regarding policies and procedures. Ms. Trotter is here as a resource and is willing to work with members moving forward in reaching their goals for projects.

Geoff Krauter inquired about the current working groups that E&E has established, if the way they are reporting back at the monthly E&E meetings is the procedure that should be followed. Ms. Trotter explained that the E&E Committee members who have formed working groups should not be making decisions and implementing action items outside of the Committee. They are to be gathering information and details which can be shared with the entire Committee at their monthly meetings and the committee as a whole will make a decision on recommendations to Council.

## **9.2 Council Committee Coordinator Role**

Deferred to next meeting.

## **9.3 Request for the Committee to Stand Adjourned**

Geoff Krauter addressed E&E Committee members and requested that the Committee consider a motion to stand adjourned until City Council fills the vacancies on committees. It is not his intention to stop or cancel the good work that the committee is doing, however he does not know that there is any less urgent stance to take to impress upon Council the importance of the appointments after waiting nearly six months.

Anita Jacobsen inquired with Vicky Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator, if she could estimate a date that the appointments might be completed. Ms. Trotter stated that she and the City Clerk are currently working on the appointments, that unfortunately up until this point, it has been a staffing issue that they are working through now to get it to Council. Staff would very much like to see re-appointments and vacancies filled as soon as possible.

Craig Merkley stated that he cannot support the motion, as it would put all projects that the Committee is working on currently on hold. If they want to get projects in order and completed by the end of the year, they need to continue to meet.

Felicity Sutcliffe stated she also does not support the motion, as the Committee already breaks for the summer and there will not be enough time to complete projects. Ms. Sutcliffe stated she is embarrassed that the youth appointment to E&E has not been completed. The Committee worked very hard to get a student who would fill the vacant youth position and they now do not feel welcome to attend the meetings. Ms. Sutcliffe was also working with the representative nominated by Avon Trail to apply to the E&E Committee who is still waiting to be appointed to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. She questioned it takes a year for someone to recognize the importance of

having these representatives on the committees. Ms. Sutcliffe stated she is embarrassed to tell people she is on the E&E committee, as people tell her that the committee is useless and do not care. Ms. Sutcliffe would like to stick up for E&E, but when she hears that people put their application in almost a year ago, she is embarrassed. Ms. Sutcliffe believes it is E&E's job is to work with the community on climate action and that is what they are trying to do, to all work together with community groups and they need to be on the committees.

Geoff Krauter does not want to see the E&E Committee hindered in any way; however, this seems like the logical next step.

Vanni Azzano stated he agrees with Geoff Krauter's frustration, however, does not support his motion, as it would mean that all the work would have to stop and they would not be able to resume Committee work until September or October. Mr. Azzano stated he agrees it has gone on too long, however also understands the staffing issues as well.

Councillor Burbach thanked members for the discussion, it is important to talk about the issues. She has been approached by members on other Committees and Boards who have also expressed their frustration with the delay in appointments. Councillor Burbach understands that staff has to prioritize items and this is one of many administrative tasks that staff are working on.

Geoff Krauter, Member, requested that the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee stand adjourned until City Council completes the member appointments to committees. There was no seconder for this motion.

## **10. Upcoming Events**

- Weed Pulls:
  - North Shore of Lake Victoria – May 10, 2024 (9-12 p.m.)
  - T.J. Dolan (across from Spruce Lodge) – May 24, 2024 (9-12 p.m.)
- ATAC Bike Event – June 2, 2024 (10-12 p.m.) – Marketplace
- Pride March & Pride in the Park – June 2, 2024 – Upper Queen's Park

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, June 6, 2024, at 4:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road, W., Stratford ON



**12. Adjournment**

**Motion by** Ken Clarke

**Seconded by** Felicity Sutcliffe

**THAT the May 2, 2024, Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried**

Meeting Start Time: 4:02 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:38 P.M.