



## Energy & Environment Advisory Committee

### MINUTES

A meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (E&E) was held on January 2, 2025 at 4:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W, Stratford ON

**Committee Members Present:** Mike Sullivan – Chair Presiding, Felicity Sutcliffe, Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach, Anita Jacobsen, Zach Kritzer, Anna Stratton, Julia Schneider, Linda Wakenhut, Vanni Azzano, Craig Merkley

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

**Regrets:** Councillor Larry McCabe, Ken Clarke, Geoff Krauter, Sadaf Ghalib – Manager of Climate Change Programs, Emily Skelding – Supervisor of Waste Operations

#### 1. Call to Order

Mike Sullivan, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

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

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Policy.

#### 2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

#### 3. Adoption of the Previous Minutes

**Motion by** Anita Jacobsen

**Seconded by** Zach Kritzer

**THAT the minutes from the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting dated December 5, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried**

#### **4. Working Group Updates:**

##### **Ecological:**

Craig Merkley presented a slide show outlining the projects that the Ecological Working Group accomplished in 2024. Over the course of the seasons, community engagement, building a volunteer base and accomplishing goals were important.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Invasive species management plan written, approved by the City and currently working on an implementation plan with Quin Malott, Parks & Forestry Manager;
- Eradicating invasive species and encouraging, preserving and re-establishing native species of plants. Members created a pamphlet outlining the dos and don'ts of living alongside a nature area, such as T.J. Dolan;
- T.J. Dolan invasive species pulls - periwinkle, Himalayan balsam, European buckthorn and Norway maple seedlings. A large Norway maple will be taken down by Community Services this winter;
- Native grass plantings near T.J. Dolan and river shoreline cribs including big blue stem, little blue stem, Indian grass;
- Turtle crossing signs have been installed on John Street near T.J. Dolan. Additional signs have been ordered for the bridge on Romeo Street, which have been received and ready to be installed;
- Students at SDSS have been constructing boardwalks that will be installed in wet areas of T.J. Dolan to encourage people to stay on the trail and hopefully deter side trails. They will be installed in the spring;
- Funding for community engagement for the iNaturalist App to work with the Invasive Species Plan to identify invasive species and report where they are. There have been a couple of events held with students as well as a public meeting with a presentation from UTRCA;
- Communication is a large part of what the working group does – invite media to events, post on social media, radio interviews and local papers;

E&E members discussed having a booth at the Home & Leisure Show (April 12-13) as well as continuing to participate in Earth Day events. Vicky Trotter will inquire about

the cost to have a booth/table at the Home & Leisure Show and report back at the next meeting. If the committee decides to participate in upcoming shows/events, they will review the current inventory of resources and work on updating it and adding new information.

Members suggested highlighting residents who have done a great job of their yards as inspiration to other people. Ms. Trotter noted that the committee will need to ensure that they are promoting the correct by-law requirements, including setbacks and required encroachment agreements. For example, planting in the grass area between the road and the sidewalk is not permitted. Ms. Trotter will forward a copy of the current setback by-law and encroachment policy for members to review.

**5. Manager of Climate Change Programs Update – Written Update Provided:**

1. Climate Ready Plans and Processes- As directed by Council at the Regular meeting November 25, 2024, Staff have submitted an application for the climate ready plans and processes funding opportunity. The intent will be to apply these funds to advance adaptation related efforts.

2. An update from the Communities in Bloom National/International Symposium and Awards Ceremony in Charlottetown, PEI.

The City of Stratford received a rating of '5 Blooms' - Gold as well as a special mention for our climate action initiatives including the integration of One Planet Living Principles.

*"The beautiful City of Stratford has been working intentionally to reduce greenhouse gases and working to mitigate and adapt to climate change. They have pledged to be net-zero by 2050 and have developed a quantitative climate action plan which clearly outlines work to be done, measurable actions to take, and continual monitoring the results of these initiatives to ensure they are working as planned."*

3. Annual Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2023 – Report presented to the ITS Subcommittee November 27, 2024. It will now proceed to ITS Committee and Regular Council for information. The report is available for review on the City's [website](#).

**6. Supervisor of Waste Operations Update**

No new updates at this time.

**7. Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) Update**

No new updates at this time as ATAC does not meet in December.

**8. E&E Committee Motions Update**

Vicky Trotter stated that there are no new updates to report since the previous meeting. There was a previous inquiry regarding transit information and that will be provided to the committee at the February meeting.

Mike Sullivan inquired if he could review the Management Report regarding the take-out container levy prior to it being submitted to Sub-committee. Vicky Trotter explained that the report goes through staff and is then made public. The report consists of the exact wording of the motion that E&E passed at their October meeting regarding a container levy, with the request that staff investigate the legislative regulations of a program such as this. It will then be Council's decision if they direct staff to dedicate time to this project. Councillor Burbach suggested that at the Sub-committee meeting she will expand on other options that the committee has discussed at subsequent meetings.

The committee is awaiting on a memo that will be provided from the Director of Building and Planning regarding the use of fossil fuels in new developments. Mike Sullivan has forwarded information from CELA and a green development standard system being used by other municipalities to the Director of Building and Planning. Mr. Sullivan does have a contact that has offered to do a presentation to E&E or to Council. Mr. Sullivan will forward all this information to E&E members.

The E&E Committee has previously requested the City of Stratford adopt green development standards. Councillor Burbach noted that green development standards are included as part of the Official Plan Update.

Linda Wakenhut inquired if the City had ever considered using solar panels over parking lots to generate power. She will share an article with E&E members. Mike Sullivan noted that in France, any parking lot that holds over 40 vehicles must include solar panels.

**9. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

**9.1 Climate Conversations Update**

Felicity Sutcliffe urged E&E members to reach out to people and invite them to the upcoming Climate Conversations event on January 23, 2025. There is a

speaker attending to discuss alternative energy options. Ms. Sutcliffe has invited members of the Grant Trunk Committee to hear options that could be applied at that site. The hope of this presentation is to show people what is possible and get inspired.

The organizers and City staff would like to see more follow up from the conversations, such as workshops.

Ms. Sutcliffe has also requested if anyone has data on costs/cost savings from installing a heat pump for example, would they be willing to share that data with staff. Vanni Azzano noted that it is important to have a local champion that people can hear their experience and then relate it to themselves accomplishing it too. You will also always have people who are willing to convert no matter what the cost is. How will you show people who may not have the funds to do it, that it is a benefit in the long run.

Climate Conversation organizers and Climate Momentum are looking into holding an environmental fair.

## **10. New Business**

### **10.1 Discussion on How can the E&E Committee best support the implementation of the Community Climate Action Plan**

Deferred to next meeting.

### **10.2 Regular E&E Articles**

Linda Wakenhut inquired if the E&E Committee would be interested in putting a regular article in the local newspapers. Julia Schneider noted that it is usually the reporters who reports on items/events, not necessarily groups submitting articles. The reporters could be invited to events or meetings to do a story.

Ms. Wakenhut suggested writing a monthly article or column, having it approved by Council or staff and then have it submitted to the newspapers. Vicky Trotter stated that if the committee decides that they would like to pursue an option such as this, the process could be confirmed prior to starting.

Further discussion to take place at the next meeting.

**11. Upcoming Events**

Climate Conversations:

- Alternative Energy Options – January 23, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
- Waste Not, Want Not – February 27, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
- Natural Assets – March 27, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
- Walking the Talk of a Green City – April 24, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.
- Industry & Circular Economy – May 22, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, February 6, 2025, at 4:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road, W., Stratford ON

**13. Adjournment**

**Motion by** Vanni Azzano

**Seconded by** Zach Kritzer

**THAT the January 2, 2025 Energy & Environment Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried**

Meeting Start Time: 4:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:55 P.M.