



**West Hants**

something inspiring awaits

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP) Committee  
September 14, 2022 – 11:00am  
Sanford Council Chambers / Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Debbie Francis, Chair  
Councillor Rupert Jannasch  
Councillor Jeff Hartt  
Sara Poirier, Planning and Development Designate  
Shelleena Thornton, Protective Services Designate  
Todd Richard, Director of Public Works  
Rob Butler, Public Works Designate  
Mark Phillips, CAO  
Diana Gibson, Financial Services Designate  
John Ogilvie, Climate Action Coordinator  
Mark Williamson, Resident Member  
Mike Campbell, Resident Member  
Julian Boyle, PACE Atlantic  
Brennan Kilfoil, PACE Atlantic  
Jordan Carrier, PACE Atlantic

**STAFF:** Alex Dunphy, Planner  
Vanessa Lake, Planning Meeting Secretary

**REGRETS:** There were no regrets.

**PUBLIC:** There were no members of the public present.

### **Call to Order and Identification of Designates**

Chair Francis called the meeting to order at 11:00am. The Committee introduced themselves and their designation. Julian Boyle, Brennan Kilfoil and Jordan Carrier from PACE Atlantic were in attendance to give a presentation.

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Approval of Agenda and Additions**

Moved by Sara Poirier and seconded by Jeff Hartt that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Jeff Hartt and seconded by Shelleena Thornton that the minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

### **New Business**

#### **PACE Atlantic Presentation (Julian Boyle, Brennan Kilfoil, Jordan Carrier)**

Members of PACE Atlantic were in attendance to give a presentation about their company. They provided the company's history, its past and current projects, and its general goals. Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs assist with local, tangible solutions to deal with energy efficiency and green power in a collaborative effort with municipalities, by providing loans to complete efficiency projects. PACE Atlantic was pioneered 12 years ago in Halifax, and has so far completed over 350 projects, with almost \$12 millions dollars committed to PACE programs. They have been able to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions by 3000 tons annually since their start. They offer end-to-end servicing and guidance. They operate on a

user-pay model, with no operating costs to the municipality. Homeowners pay a 5% administration fee, with an exception for low-income homes, and most programs operate with 0% interest. The next steps for West Hants are to create a by-law which will enable the PACE program, create a financial plan, and marketing/communications, which are all under way. Once Council approves the by-law, PACE can begin, and is hoping to launch in WHRM by mid-November. The Committee was able to ask questions.

Mark Williamson asked about the difference between PACE and the new federal Greener Homes Grant. Julian Boyle explained that the grant is a Federal program in partnership with Efficiency NS, it requires a credit check, and is relatively new while PACE is well-established. The grant forms are to be completed online, and PACE may appeal to less tech-savvy customers. One program may appeal to homeowners over the other. Shelleena noted that having both options available would be beneficial to residents. Rupert asked how much cooperation is required when municipalities submit a joint application. Julian replied that each Municipality can set their own specific by-laws that work for their region. Jeff asked how a resident would begin the process. Julian would discourage contacting the municipality first; Jordan Carrier and her team is often the first point of contact. There are many different touchpoints along the way, and PACE helps the homeowner navigate these smoothly. The goal is to keep it simple for the homeowner.

### **PACE Report (John Ogilvie)**

John's report regards the creation of the by-law to enable the PACE program. John provided some potential projects and costs and noted that these are just for reference for now. Items which the PACE program could help homeowners within the Municipality with include building envelope (windows, doors, etc.), efficiency, fuel switching, green energy, climate change adaptation, and potential funding for required health and safety measures that go along with these projects (i.e., electrical panel upgrades). It is up to the Committee to decide on individual allotment, but staff recommends a maximum of \$30k, or 25% of total home value, whichever is lower. The Committee would also decide on a loan period, noting other areas have a range of 10-20 years. Other considerations are energy poverty and an exception of the administration fee for low-income households. Financing may also be available through the Clean Foundation.

Members of PACE were still present, and CAO Phillips confirmed some things with them. The loan term corresponds to the asset life expectancy, there are separate loan periods for separate items, and though the homeowner signs the agreement, the loan is attached to the property. CAO Phillips noted the Municipality will have to look into funding of their own. Julian mentioned that federal funding for this program is available. Mark Williamson requested a formal report to compare the PACE program to the Federal programs. John Ogilvie will investigate and report back to the Committee in November. Creating the by-law does not commit the Municipality to the program but allows the opportunity. The Committee agreed to go forward with the by-law for now.

Moved by Rupert Jannasch and seconded by Jeff Hartt that the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP) Committee recommends that Council give First Reading and hold a Public Hearing to consider adopting a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) By-law in a manner substantively the same as the draft in Attachment A of the report “Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program Update, Details, and By-law” to the MCCAP Committee dated September 14, 2022. Motion carried.

### **Coastal Setback Report (Alex Dunphy)**

At the last MCCAP meeting, Alex presented a set of policies based on previous direction from the MCCAP Committee regarding new buildings, expansions, and repairs in flood-prone areas. Alex spoke with staff from HRM about these policies and the liability of allowing new buildings in flood-prone areas; the municipality could be liable for damages.

The new Coastal Protection Act has been put into effect on April 12, 2019, though no official regulations have been approved yet. This Act would render previous MCCAP policies impossible due to new setbacks. Alex asked the Committee how they would like to proceed. The Committee was content with using direction given from the Coastal Protection Act to develop a more general set of policies which can be used until the Coast Protection Act is implemented, at which point they can be refined.

### **Summer Student Reports: Building Condition Survey and Investigating Solar PV at Municipal Complexes (Sara Poirier)**

This item was deferred until the November 9, 2022 meeting.

### **Discussion: Terms of Reference (Sara Poirier)**

Based on the MCCAP Committee Workplan, the Committee is to review and update the Terms of Reference annually. Sara does not recommend any changes at this time and asked the Committee if they had any changes they would like to see. The Committee was fine with the current Terms of Reference.

Sara reminded the Committee that resident member positions required to be advertised as per the Terms of Reference. The positions are scheduled to be posted in the local paper and advertised on the “Committees Opportunity” page of the Municipal website. Current resident members are permitted to request reappointment. Anyone wishing to apply can send their intent to Deanna Snair by September 30th at [dsnair@westhants.ca](mailto:dsnair@westhants.ca).

### **Discussion: MCCAP Workplan 2023 (Sara Poirier)**

Based on the MCCAP Committee Terms of Reference, a work plan needs to be submitted to Committee of the Whole for review on an annual basis.

Sara recommends the Committee keep “working on Milestone 4 of the PCP program” and “hiring a dedicated GHG emissions reduction employee” on the “tasks to complete” portion of

the workplan as these are two necessary components required to ensure the Municipality can continue to work towards the Municipality's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Many of the tasks that were added for 2022 have been moved to the "on-going" section. These include:

- explore the potential for a small to medium scale solar energy project;
- implement an electric vehicle charging station; and
- participate in a feasibility study for electric vehicle fleet conversion.

Sara asked if the Committee had anything to add to this workplan. Rupert commented that the Committee already has its hands full. A recommendation report will be prepared based on the discussion and direction from the Committee. The recommendation report will be presented at the November MCCAP meeting. Sara noted that if there are any new ideas, they can be brought forward at this time.

## **Business Arising from the Minutes – Workplan Updates**

### **Electric Vehicle Chargers (Sara Poirier)**

The Municipality received funding support from the Government of Canada and Government of Nova Scotia through the EV Boost program for two dual-port Level 2 electric vehicle chargers. These chargers will be installed at the West Hants Sports Complex and Windsor Community Centre this month and be fully operational by October 31, 2022.

### **Feasibility Study for Electric Vehicle Fleet Conversion (Sara Poirier)**

The Planning and Development Department fleet is currently being used in an electric vehicle feasibility study through the Clean Foundation. WHRM is one of four Municipalities currently participating in this study. Data collectors were installed in the vehicles on July 27th, 2022 and will stay in the vehicles for three months to collect data on vehicle use and driver habits. Surveys have also been sent out to the vehicle drivers to fully gauge user experience and preferences. The Clean Foundation will compile all the data and report back to the Municipality.

### **GHG Emissions Reductions Employee (Alex Dunphy)**

Alex praised the work done by both Will Chapple and John Ogilvie, stating it was very valuable to have a dedicated employee to deal with these matters. It would be a great asset to make this a permanent position. Debbie asked how to proceed; the CAO suggested that MCCAP make a recommendation to Council. They are beginning early budget talks, and the sooner this is suggested, the better. Sara will bring a recommendation for a 2023-2024 GHG Emissions Reductions Employee to the November MCCAP meeting.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Sara contacted CBCL after the last MCCAP Committee meeting about the discrepancies with the National Disaster Mitigation Program: Risk Assessment Study. Victoria has sent a revised copy which Sara will be posting to the MCCAP SharePoint page later today.

Alex informed the Committee that vertical setback value indicating the Coastal Protection Zone will be set and provided by the completed Coastal Protection Act.

Todd Richard provided an update from Public Works. They have continued with lighting upgrades, and have obtained a smaller, more efficient vehicle for their workers. The next project is performing a smoke test on the inflow/infiltration systems to identify cracks in manholes and other deficiencies in the system, to increase efficiency and save energy by having the pumps run less often. More information will be provided to the public prior to the testing. Todd will bring the results back to the MCCAP.

### **Next Meeting Date / Adjournment**

The next MCCAP meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2022, at 11:00am.

Moved by Councillor Jannasch and seconded by Jeff Hartt that the meeting adjourn at 12:58pm.