



West Hants

something inspiring awaits

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Municipal Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP) Committee
April 12, 2023 – 11:00am
Sanford Council Chambers / Zoom**

- PRESENT:** Rupert Jannasch, Councillor (Chair)
Debbie Francis, Councillor
Scott McLean, Councillor
Mark Phillips, CAO
Sara Poirier, Director of Planning and Development
Carmen DeWar-Miller, Financial Services Designate
VanEssa Roberts, Community Services Designate
Todd Richard, Director of Public Works
Mark Williamson, Resident Member
Peter Moore, Resident Member
- STAFF:** John Ogilvie, Climate Action Coordinator
Alex Dunphy, Planner
Kristyn Remme, Waste Services / Public Works Safety Coordinator
Vanessa Lake, Planning Assistant
- REGRETS:** Shelleena Thornton, Protective Services Designate

Call to Order and Identification of Designates

Chair Jannasch called the meeting to order at 11:02am. Committee members stated their name and designation. Shelleena Thornton had sent regrets. Kristyn Remme from Waste Services was in attendance to make a presentation and recommendation.

Approval of Agenda and Additions

Moved by Debbie Francis and seconded by Scott McLean that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Debbie Francis and seconded by Todd Richard that the minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

New Business

Recommendation: Federation of Canadian Municipalities Community Building Retrofit (John Ogilvie)

John provided an overview of his report regarding the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Community Building Retrofits funding program, which can be used to perform feasibility studies and capital upgrades. The available funding from the FCM covers up to 80% of the eligible costs. The first step is to conduct a feasibility study which can then be used to further apply for capital funding for the upgrades.

John used the Windsor Community Centre as an example to show what this kind of funding could achieve. This building would make a good centerpiece for the application as it uses both oil-fired boilers for heat and consumes a large amount of electricity. The Brooklyn Fire and Civic Centre was also mentioned in John's report and the Committee questioned whether this building would be able to meet the 80% reduction requirement as it is a newer building. John replied that while this building may not be able to reduce its emissions by that much, solar panels can be used to offset the emissions by generating electricity. This is the case for the water/wastewater facilities as well. It was noted that this could meet or exceed the MCCAP's goal of a small-scale solar project. Since a portfolio of buildings can be submitted, the Committee believed it would be best to include as many as possible. The completed feasibility study can be used as a reference point for other buildings and capital upgrades in the future.

Moved by Debbie Francis and seconded by Mark Williamson that the MCCAP Committee recommend to Committee of the Whole to recommend that Council approve in principle funding 20% as the Municipal contribution of an application to the FCM Community Building

Retrofit Initiative to support a feasibility study, up to a maximum Council contribution of \$40,000, to be funded through the Regional Operating Reserve. Motion carried.

Recommendation: Council Declaration of International Compost Awareness Week (Kristyn Remme)

Kristyn Remme attended the meeting to give a presentation about International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW). Composting is an essential part of the circular economy and deals directly with food and waste reduction. ICAW is the largest and most comprehensive education initiative in the compost industry. The goal is to build public awareness around the benefits of composting and compost use for effective resource management, soil health, plant growth, and climate change mitigation. The Municipality could use their community platforms to spread the word.

The Committee discussed the issue of transporting composted material, which may negate any positive emissions reductions. ICAW can help to promote backyard composting, which reduces the amount of transport. John also noted that by keeping organic materials out of landfills it reduces leachate production. Leachate must be transported to wastewater treatment facilities, where processing further increases electricity consumption. The Committee commented that composting facilities are a boost to our GDP and create a superb product.

Moved by Debbie Francis and seconded by Todd Richard that the MCCAP Committee recommends that Council declare the first full week in May as International Compost Awareness Week in a manner substantively the same as in Attachment A of the report titled “International Compost Week” to the MCCAP Committee dated April 12, 2023. Motion carried.

Information: Planning & Development Fleet Conversion (John Ogilvie)

John discussed the electric vehicle fleet conversion study conducted by the Clean Foundation for the Planning and Development fleet. The highlighted case study was replacing the current gas-powered Jeep Compass for an electric Kia Niro when replacement is needed. Over a 7-year ownership period, the Kia Niro produces 87% fewer emissions, and the ownership costs are 20% less than the Jeep Compass. It would create an annual saving of approximately \$1,700 over the 7-year period. The recommended replacements for all vehicles showed similar emission reductions, however the Ford Lightning would incur more costs than replacing the current Ford F-150 with another gas-powered equivalent.

Mark Williamson commented that although the savings and emission reductions of electric vehicles are significant, availability is a serious issue. Many people are on waitlists which can be as long as 18 months. Staff are aware of this and are looking into ordering them early. Chair Jannasch asked what would happen to the electric vehicles at the end of the 7-year period. John responded that many vehicle batteries would still be operational, and the vehicle could be sold second-hand. Disposal of a used battery is regulated, and recycling plants for batteries exist throughout Canada with many more projected in the future.

Discussion: Coastal Protection Act Regulations (Chair Jannasch)

Chair Jannasch wanted to discuss the Coastal Protection Act Regulations. The Province passed the Coastal Protection Act in 2019 “to protect natural ecosystems and make sure new homes and businesses are safer from sea level rise, coastal flooding and coastal erosion.” The accompanying regulations would provide direction for development along coastlines throughout the Province. The current government introduced an Action Plan for Climate Change and stated that these regulations would be released “within the first couple of years of their mandate.” Recently, these regulations were put on an indefinite hold.

WHRM has a vast amount of coastline, and many low-lying areas protected by dykes, so these regulations are an important issue for the future of the Municipality. Without these regulations, the Planning and Development Department is left to address coastal climate related impacts alone. Chair Jannasch wanted to check in with the Committee to see how they feel about these regulations and what the course of action may be.

The Committee asked whether these were Federal or Provincial regulations, and staff replied that they were to be Provincial. The Committee discussed how to proceed and thought it would be worthwhile to send a letter to the Province to find out the status of the regulations and copy our local MLA.

Moved by Debbie Francis and seconded by Scott McLean that the MCCAP Committee recommends that Council write a letter to the Provincial Government expressing concern about the implementation of Coastal Protection Act Regulations, and to copy the MLA for Hants West. Motion carried.

Discussion: High School Science Fair Projects (Chair Jannasch)

Recently, both Debbie Francis and Mayor Zebian participated in the judging of the Science Fair. Chair Jannasch was wondering if the Committee was interested in sponsoring an initiative to encourage high school students to conduct climate change-based projects.

The Committee discussed whether a monetary or physical prize was suitable, and Debbie suggested contacting Rob Davies, who oversees the Science Fair. Many students already conduct experiments based on climate change. Budget deliberations are ongoing, and the MCCAP request includes a full-time permanent position, with a small budget they could use for such projects at the direction of the Committee. It was noted that a full-time employee could speak at the schools to promote climate change as a topic and getting the Municipality involved with the science fair was seen as beneficial.

Business Arising from the Minutes

Update: NS Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund (John Ogilvie)

John is still waiting to receive updates on this funding stream.

Update: Committee Name (John Ogilvie)

There was a large MCCAP section in the Municipal newsletter. Within this section, it requested residents to submit new name ideas for the MCCAP Committee. Suggestions are open until June 1 and can be submitted to John via email. This remains a non-urgent item.

Update: Green Business Initiative (John Ogilvie)

As requested, John edited the scoring system for the Green Business Initiative to include carbon sequestration as bonus points. The initiative is now ready for use and release.

Roundtable Discussion

As the next meeting date is scheduled for September, Mark Williamson asked if a green light on the NS Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund would trigger an additional meeting. Sara confirmed that the Committee Terms of Reference allow staff to request an additional meeting outside of the regular schedule if needed. If any new information or substantial updates are available, an additional meeting may be needed, and the Committee will be notified.

John reminded the Committee of what the NS Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund application was for. Staff applied for a ground-mount solar project, likely at a water/wastewater treatment plant, as they have the most open space. A roof-mounted project would require an additional structural assessment and this fund has a very quick turnaround. When the application was submitted in December, the intent was for the project to be complete by the end of 2024. Now that the selection process has been delayed by two months, it is possible the deadline has changed as well.

CAO Phillips mentioned that he attended the Ideal Home Show in Halifax a few weeks ago, and PACE programming seems to be in alignment with the current market for home renovation options. As a homeowner, he feels the industry is ready for and is promoting such projects.

Debbie said she feels good about the progress MCCAP has made recently. She feels the Municipality is taking it seriously and the Committee is making strides. She hopes Council can see the work put into this Committee and they are able to stay on this path.

Alex asked the Chair where he heard about updates regarding the Coastal Protection Act Regulations. Chair Jannasch replied it was from an Action Plan written up by the Provincial Government and will share the document with the Committee after the meeting.

Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next meeting date is scheduled for September 13, 2023. The Committee will be notified in advance if any additional meetings are needed.

Moved by Todd Richard and seconded by Debbie Francis that the meeting be adjourned at 12:23pm. Motion carried.

Chair's Signature