



**CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT**

**MINUTES**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, June 23, 2011  
7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Municipal Hall

**PRESENT:** Michael Hill, Chair  
Mark Salter, Vice Chair (Departed at 8:25 p.m.)  
Councillor Don Linge  
Councillor Alison Gaul  
Donald Kramer (Arrived at 7:04 pm and Departed at 9:17 p.m.)  
Carole Witter  
Annie Do  
Larry Dill (Arrived at 7:04 pm)

**STAFF:** Marlene Lagoa – Sustainability Coordinator (Staff Liaison)  
Deborah Liske – Recording Secretary

**REGRETS:** Blair Irwin  
Chris Zegger-Murphy

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hill called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. LATE ITEMS**

The following late item was introduced:

1. Add to Agenda item **9. Committee Member Announcements** (1) Update on Composting Toilets at Hidden Harbour Marine Centre

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Vice Chair Salter, seconded by Councillor Gaul that the agenda of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of June 23, 2011 be approved as amended with the inclusion of the late agenda item.

The motion **CARRIED**.

**4. MINUTES**

- (1) Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting, May 26, 2011

Moved by Councillor Linge, seconded by Vice Chair Salter that the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of May 26, 2011 be approved as presented.

The motion **CARRIED**.

**5. PRESENTATIONS**

- (1) Ethos Sustainability Solutions, Royal Roads University, Social Marketing Campaign to Reduce the Distribution of Single-Use Plastic Shopping Bags

Members of student team Ethos Sustainability Solutions introduced themselves.

Donald Kramer and Larry Dill arrived at 7:04 p.m.

The students updated the committee on the status of the project through a verbal and PowerPoint presentation. Key points of the presentation included:

- Rebrand voluntary ban to “Plastic Bag Free Esquimalt”
  - Educate through marketing to voluntarily reduce distribution and usage of single use plastic shopping bags
  - Include public and businesses in strategy design
  - Create and promote proactive approach without creating / imposing controversial bans or levies
  - Design and develop a recognition program for business that participate
  
- Conducted consumer surveying to:
  - Gain public input and concerns of consumers
  - Identify misconceptions and barriers to success
  - Educate consumers of initiative
  - Characterize current consumption behaviors
  - Utilize results as a base for designing marketing plan
  
- Survey results and observations
  - Conducted 4 – 2 hour survey periods
  - Survey locations – Esquimalt Plaza and Place Valentine
  - Surveyed 355 consumers – observed 817 consumers
  - Survey also available on Township of Esquimalt website – received 59 responses
  - Identified misconceptions:
    - Single use plastic shopping bags degrade in landfill faster than garbage liners
    - Reusable bags are a cash grab for retailers
    - Ban already exists on plastic bags
    - Nothing wrong with using biodegradable bags or paper bags
    - Initiative is a waste of money
  - Observed how many and the types of bags used
  - In-person survey results (of those surveyed)
    - 49.86 % surveyed are residents in support of going plastic bag free
    - 25.63 % surveyed are non-residents in support of going plastic bag free
    - 5.35 % surveyed are residents with no opinion
    - 3.94 % surveyed are non-residents with no opinion
    - 11.55 % surveyed are residents unsupportive of going plastic bag free
    - 2.54 % surveyed are non-residents unsupportive of going plastic bag free
    - 0.85 % surveyed are residents that fell into the “other” category
    - 0.28 % surveyed are non-residents that fell into the “other” category
  
  - Reasons for taking plastic bags from store (asked this question to help businesses understand the number of plastic bags being used and why.)
    - ❖ 29 % forgot reusable bag at home
    - ❖ 24 % never take plastic bags
    - ❖ 15 % forgot reusable bag in car
    - ❖ 14 % reuse plastic bags for other purposes
    - ❖ 6 % don’t think / care about using a reusable bag
    - ❖ 2% don’t own reusable bags
  
  - Preferred alternatives to plastic shopping bags
    - ❖ 78 % reusable bag
    - ❖ 14 % paper bag
    - ❖ 1 % plastic bins
  
- Conducted business information session on June 2<sup>nd</sup> from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. to provide businesses with an opportunity to express concerns and provide input
  - 30 minute presentation followed by question and answer session
    - Businesses do not want a ban to affect consumers
    - Businesses want their effort to reduce the use of single-use plastic bags recognized

- 1 local business attended out of 100 invited
- Ideas to incorporate into initiative:
  - Prevent impacts on business
  - Develop recognition program to promote current store initiatives
- Designed business recognition program
  - Point system based on pre-determined criteria
  - Award of “star levels” for points awarded
- Social marketing will assist with:
  - Alignment of project
  - Building confidence and trust
  - Education
  - Community image and pride
  - Engaging target audience
    - Esquimalt residents / non-residents
    - Residents associations
    - Individual business owners
    - Chamber of Commerce
    - Business Association
- Consumer barriers and possible solutions
  - Convenience – don’t forget
  - Multipurpose – reusable bags can be used for many purposes
  - Cost – bag pays for itself after 20 uses
  - Sanitation – easy to clean – wash and dry after use
  - Personal entitlement – you have a choice
  - Environmental impact – correct reusable bag saves resources
- Marketing Media
  - Public
    - Social media: Facebook, blog, YouTube
    - Introduce into school curriculum
    - Educate children and youth through recreation summer programs
    - TV and radio
    - Municipal newsletter
    - Municipal website – interactive web tutorial
    - Email
    - Pamphlets
    - Signage – Did you remember your bag?
    - Reusable bags
  - Associations
    - Meetings
    - Presentations
    - Private online forum
- Track coverage / evaluate outcomes
- Next steps for student team
  - Collect feedback from Environmental Advisory Committee
  - Finalize targets, messages and media resources
  - Design marketing messages for each audience identified and impacted
  - Adapt design of recognition program for participating businesses
  - Compile recommendations for Township of Esquimalt
  - Complete report and final presentation (August)
  - Implement chosen marketing strategies and recognition program

Committee members asked question and provided feedback to the students. Key points of the discussion included:

- Students were asked how they will respond to overall negativity about the initiative including such items as cost
  - Student response – provide facts, acknowledge this is first step in directing change and minimal effort has been utilized for potential outcome
- Committee members noted the following:
  - Volume of plastic bags in landfill is not as significant as the effects of leachate
  - Businesses will need to be brought onside to assist in rewards initiative
  - Rewards program could take place once a year during designated environmental initiative event such as waste reduction week
  - Would like retailers to take back all plastic wrapping from the products they sell
  - Concerned if not all fears addressed will receive increased pushback – need to focus on building trust with businesses and consumers
  - Other municipalities are very interested in this initiative and potential outcome
  - The onus of responsibility does not lie with businesses alone
  - Need to focus on educating all ages (including school children)
  - Need to slowly introduce initiative to assist in acceptance
- Students noted they have struggled with engaging local businesses but have made a substantial effort

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison noted consumers will need to be educated about this initiative and businesses are the key component in assisting with getting the message out. Step 2 of business input is to meet with the Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce and the Esquimalt Residents Association and collect their input to share with the students for consideration in their final report.

Chair Hill thanked the students for their presentation.

(2) Island Horizon Group, Royal Roads University, Framework for Community Engagement in Climate Action

Members of student team Island Horizon Group introduced themselves and provided the committee with a verbal and PowerPoint presentation. The presentation included the following:

- Overview of project
  - Develop a framework for successful community engagement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
    - By 38 % by 2020
    - By 83 % by 2050 (compared to 2007 levels)
  - Outline policies, strategies and action that can be applied to help meet targets – focusing on buildings, transportation and waste
- Research completed to date
  - Contacted sustainability specialists and stakeholders to solicit feedback and information on current, innovative concepts to implement effective community engagement action plans
  - Researched Community Climate Action Plans
    - Questionnaires were distributed to organizations soliciting information
    - Summarized CCAP information from websites
    - Areas researched included:
      - ❖ City of Dawson Creek, British Columbia
      - ❖ City of Medicine Hat, Alberta
      - ❖ Redwood City, California
      - ❖ District of Saanich, British Columbia
      - ❖ ecoPerth, Ontario
  - City of Dawson Creek
    - Only community to complete and return questionnaire
    - Highlights include:
      - ❖ An advisory committee;

- ❖ A Planning for Youth Strategy to involve youth in climate change and other youth related issues ([www.planningforyouth.ca](http://www.planningforyouth.ca));
- ❖ A communications strategy called “Planning for the People” to engage the community in sustainability related issues ([www.planningforpeople.ca](http://www.planningforpeople.ca));
- ❖ A bio-energy strategy for the local multiplex
- ❖ Focus on understanding its citizens – interested in saving money, not climate change issues
- ❖ Installed solar hot water systems in local seniors hall to engage the demographic in current initiatives
- City of Medicine Hat
  - Introduced many initiatives to encourage conservation
    - ❖ 20% reduction in energy consumption per capita in the residential sector
    - ❖ Launched HAT Smart program in 2008
      - Created a recognizable brand; major ad campaign; website; condensed and simplified rebates
    - ❖ Reduced GHG emissions by 1017 tonnes
    - ❖ Library stocked a home retrofit kit residents could borrow to take home to review for ideas to implement in their homes – such a popular concept, additional kits were made available
- Redwood City
  - Currently has an extensive trail system and implemented a Trails Master Plan; Bike Share Program and Safe Route to School Program
- District of Saanich
  - Employs a sustainability coordinator
  - Provides funding and in-house resources
  - Conducted a public review process in 2008
  - Prioritized actions
  - Introduced the Tap by Tap Program
  - Engages the business community
- ecoPerth
  - Developed in 1998 to:
    - ❖ Initiate action projects
    - ❖ Identify target champions
    - ❖ Encourage volunteers
    - ❖ Emphasize positives
  - Factors that lead to the success of the program
    - ❖ Focus on early action and positives
    - ❖ Concentrate on programs that people want
    - ❖ Encourage use of volunteers who can champion the programs
    - ❖ Create a rating system to evaluate successes
- Challenges encountered
  - Low response rate to questionnaire even with follow-up phone call
  - Difficult to compare results because of low response
  - Questionnaire too long and time consuming
  - Determining success of programs is difficult and unknown as initiatives are in their infancy
- Final steps
  - Contact communities that indicated an interest in participating and solicit input
  - Summarize the CCAP's
  - Analyze results for possible initiatives that can be implemented in Esquimalt
  - Receive feedback from Esquimalt on initiatives they would like to see implemented
  - Produce final report

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison noted the intent of the project was to identify successful initiatives and what made them a success. These could then be applied to programs in Esquimalt.

Committee members asked question and provided feedback to the students. Key points of the discussion included:

- Students noted the following conclusions:
  - Branding seemed to be the focal point of initiatives
  - Really good functional websites separate from municipal / city website work well
  - Need to know what the community wants
  - Need to include focus groups and encourage feedback
  - Outside marketing sources utilized to assist with implementation of strategies
  - Have been able to analyze some trends based on information collected; will continue to collect additional data for analysis
- A committee member suggested researching award opportunities to identify successful programs and collect information pertaining to what made the program successful
- Students noted they have been unsuccessful in locating any literature, such as studies and reports on sustainable initiatives because studies are ongoing and still in their infancy
- Students noted the Esquimalt Residents Association has indicated their interest in participating in focus groups

Councillor Gaul noted the Township of Esquimalt has had great success with many initiatives but a plan is needed to identify and outline what we are doing as a municipality and how we are achieving the reduction targets.

Councillor Linge noted initiatives need to both be beneficial and understood as being beneficial to both residents and the community. Benefits need to be identifiable and measurable to provide insight to successes.

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison noted community climate action still needs to go to the community engagement stage and would like the students to identify the top actions for easiest and most successful implementation.

Chair Hill thanked the students for their presentation.

Vice Chair Salter departed the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Chair Hill recessed the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:32 p.m.

## **6. OLD BUSINESS**

- (1) Green Initiatives for Buccaneer Days

This item was deferred to the September meeting.

## **7. WORK PLAN ITEMS**

- (1) RRU Project Partnership – Plastic Shopping Bags

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison noted the students will be making their final presentations at Royal Roads University on August 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and invited committee members to assist her in reviewing the draft reports. Ms. Lagoa noted the proposed recognition program point allocation would need to be revamped and if the committee thinks the recognition program will not be beneficial to the committee, that the students be advised as soon as possible.

Committee members discussed the student presentation and deliverables noting their concerns with the number of points being awarded for providing a recycling service, providing biodegradable plastic bags and proper education around compostable bags. Ms. Lagoa will advise the students of the critical points and concerns.

(2) RRU Project Partnership – Community Engagement Framework

Committee members discussed and provided feedback on the concepts included in the student presentation and deliverables. Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison will forward the feedback provided by the committee, as well as her insight into what the expected deliverables were to be, to the students for inclusion in their project.

(3) 2012 Royal Roads University Environmental Science Program – Student Project Partnership Opportunity Proposals

(a) Phase 2 – Community Engagement in Climate Action

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison reviewed the proposal outline with committee members, followed by discussion of possible amendments and clarification of items.

Moved by Chair Hill, seconded by Donald Kramer that the Environmental Advisory Committee approve the 2012 Royal Roads University Environmental Science Program – Student Project Partnership Opportunity Proposal – Phase 2 – Community Engagement in Climate Action. The motion **CARRIED**.

(b) Marine Shoreline Project

Committee members reviewed the proposal. No amendments were identified.

Moved by Donald Kramer, seconded by Councillor Linge that the Environmental Advisory Committee approve the 2012 Royal Roads University Environmental Science Program – Student Project Partnership Opportunity – Marine Shoreline Project proposal. The motion **CARRIED**.

(4) Centennial Celebrations Project

Committee member discussed how the committee wanted to move forward with organizing a centennial celebrations project. Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison noted the committee has a budget of \$3000 for 2012. It was suggested the committee consider a project that is within the projected budget funds for 2012.

Councillor Linge noted it is not mandatory for advisory committees to participate in the centennial celebrations. Each advisory committee can choose how and if they would like to participate. Councillor Linge provided various examples of how the committee could participate if they so choose.

Councillor Gaul noted initiatives of the committee in 2012 can be included and showcased in the centennial year.

Donald Kramer noted the Royal Roads University projects have taken up a significant amount of the committee's time and financial budget to move the projects forward.

Chair Hill suggested committee members consider ideas that could be suggested to the Centennial Celebrations Select Committee.

Committee members discussed a potential project the committee could possibly participate in; the planting of 100 centennial trees. Suggestion included:

- Partner with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee on this project
- Not limit the plantings to only municipal properties; could include school properties
- Create partnerships/stewardship opportunities with local schools, PAC's and students

This item will be discussed further at the September meeting.

**8. REPORT FROM STAFF LIAISON**

Marlene Lagoa, Staff Liaison noted she will be available during the committee summer break and is hoping to be able to dedicate more time to sustainability initiatives in the Fall.

**9. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(1) Update on Composting Toilets at Hidden Harbour Marine Centre (**Late Item**)

Carole Witter reported the two remaining float homes at the marine centre have installed composting toilets.

Donald Kramer departed the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Larry Dill noted a recent newspaper article highlighting the City of Victoria as being the first municipality in the Capital Region to ban bottled water. The committee discussed the inaccuracies of the statement.

Chair Hill raised his idea of organizing a cycling tour for committee members to review environmental highlights in Esquimalt. Chair Hill will organize.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will take place on September 22, 2011.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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Michael Hill, Chair

This 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2011