



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

**MINUTES OF THE
CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HELD JANUARY 31, 2024 AT 4:00 PM
OKANAGAN LAKE ROOM (COUNCIL CHAMBER)**

PRESENT: VOTING:

Casey Bain, Youth Member
Stephanie Hendy, Community at Large Rep.
Councillor Guy, Council Appointed
Mayor Cumming
Barry Dorval, Educators, Primary and Secondary Rep.
Sid Kwakkel, Educators, Post Secondary Rep.
Donna Bartel, Community at Large
Jenn Comazzetto, SD22 Rep.

ABSENT: Casey Neathway, Health & Social Services Rep.
Fawn Ross, Community Stewardship Rep.
Jenna Boone, Youth Member
Patrick Riley, Okanagan Indian Band Rep.
Jordan Hart, Business and Commercial Services Rep.

STAFF: Kevin McCarty, Specialist, Climate Action
Barbara Everdene, Long Range Planner
Roy Nuriel, Acting Manager, Planning
Wes Brassard, FireSmart Coordinator

ORDER The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

**LAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *As Chair of the City of Vernon's Climate Action Advisory Committee (CAAC), and in the spirit of this gathering, I recognize the City of Vernon is located in the traditional territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan nation.*

**ADOPTION OF THE
AGENDA** Moved by B. Dorval, seconded by S. Hendy:

THAT the agenda of the January 31, 2024 Climate Action Advisory Committee meeting be adopted:

CARRIED

ORIENTATION

K. McCarty provided an orientation for Committee members, which included the following:

- Review of the Corporate Policy
- Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference
- Review of the City of Vernon's Bullying & Harassment Policy

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Chair

There was a call for nominations. S. Kwakkel accepted a nomination for Chair. No other nominations were put forward. S. Kwakkel is appointed Chair for 2024.

Vice Chair

There was a call for nominations. B. Dorval accepted a nomination for Vice Chair. No other nominations were put forward. B. Dorval is appointed Vice Chair for 2024.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

General membership was also discussed. Staff is currently advertising for a new CAAC member to represent science and technology. It was recommended by the Committee to advertise and fill the third youth representative position.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

COUNCIL UPDATE

Councillor Guy provided the following update on City Council business:

November 27, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting

- EV charging network keeps expanding; this year we added a fast charger and a level 2 charger at Civic Memorial Park and 6 new level 2 chargers outside the Community Services building.
- Report on the e-scooters: 2023 was another very strong year. The Neuron Mobility staff who presented at Council said that Vernon punches above its weight class on scooter usage.
- Neuron scooters will be back in 2024.

December 11, 2023 - Regular Council Meeting

- Mark Dowhaniuk, Manager, Infrastructure, agreed to provide this Committee with information on the creek sampling plan at a future meeting.
- A motion was passed to ask staff to report back to Council on the pros and cons and possible strategic advantages of advancing our adoption of the BC Energy Step Code and the Zero Carbon Step Code.
- At the Public hearing for 3330 31st Avenue (the old Legion site), the developer agreed to include EV and scooter/ebike charging in the underground parking; also, solar-ready infrastructure will be

added upfront to enable possible future solar panels , and the building will developed to Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code (at present we only require step 2 for commercial buildings).

January 8, 2024 – Regular Council Meeting

- The Province has passed several pieces of legislation this fall related to housing, and the changes are significant and complex. The goal is to add significantly to the housing stock and to densify everywhere in B.C. However, the legislation could easily have some unintended negative consequences. Council has authorized the Mayor to arrange an in-person meeting with Ravi Kahlon, Housing Minister, focusing on Bill 44, particularly on the changes to public hearings contained in that Bill.
- We have officially started on the road to renew both the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Transportation Master Plan (TMP). Barbara Everdene, Long Range Planner, will be leading the OCP renewal and Danielle de Vries, Transportation Planner, will be leading the TMP update; both are planned to be finished by the end of 2025. These are both significant undertakings and I'm extremely pleased to see that they are both now underway. It's through this renewal initiative that the Climate Action Plan (CAP) can become fully embedded into the key documents that will guide the city for the next several years, and this committee should play a role in this process.

January 22, 2024 – Regular Council Meeting

- Council gave first, second and third reading to amendments to Zoning Bylaw 5000 to permit secondary suites and accessory dwelling units (aka carriage houses) in all single-family and semi-detached housing anywhere in the city.
- Independent of the province we've been moving forward to modernize our zoning bylaw and increase density, however, our progress has been overtaken by the Province with the legislation they have passed this past fall.
- Staff have been studying the implications of Bills 35, 44, and 47.
- Council authorized hiring three more planners for a two-year period to incorporate the required changes into our zoning bylaw, and the province has funded approximately half of the cost.
- Council amended the January 8, 2024 authorization for the Mayor to arrange an in-person meeting with housing minister Ravi Kahlon to include discussing the changes to the rules governing short term rentals (Bill 35) and the unintended consequences for the City of Vernon.

Council has yet to direct Staff to investigate prohibiting 2-stroke engines to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Upon further review, I

believe this would be a distraction to Staff right now. The CAP has a long list of actions and priorities and this isn't specifically mentioned. It was suggested that CAAC wait to bring that motion to Council to a time when it will have more impact.

The following questions / comments were received:

- Councillor Guy confirmed that speeding up the Step Code should include the pros and cons builders will face. There is no specific timeline for this. Five or six communities have already implemented these changes to their building codes.
- The Committee asked if there is a role for them on the TMP or OCP. Staff confirmed that the OCP/TMP is in the scope of Kevin's work and it is critical that Committees are a part of the process.
- Barbara Everdene commented that Staff do not want climate action to be a reference chapter; we want it woven in the entire document. The OCP covers the entire business of the City and land use, and will set a tone that climate action is important to the city.
- Councillor Guy commented that the CAAC has not started the community engagement part of the CAP. He is hopeful for public input on the CAP dovetailing OCP public interactions.
- Mayor Cumming commented that neighborhood density data should be tracked and Roy Nuriel confirmed this will be part of the OCP process.

J. Comazzetto joined the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

STAFF UPDATE

K. McCarty provided the Committee with "Proposed 2024 CAP Implementation Initiatives and Budget" (Attached to these minutes as 'Attachment 2') on table. A total budget of \$650,000.00 was recommended for CAP implementation in 2024, which includes a 20% contingency. Each CAP focus area was discussed separately as follows:

Transportation

- \$275,000.00 from the City's climate action reserve fund is recommended to support active transportation and public transit initiatives in 2024 and into 2025.
- In response to a query on on-demand transit, K. McCarty stated there is not enough capacity to price this out in 2024. The City of Kelowna is currently piloting on-demand transit and our Transportation Department is awaiting the results and will update this Committee on the outcomes.

- Buying electric vehicles for the City is part of the Council Strategic Plan, as well as the Fleet Services Financial Plan. The Climate Action budget may be used to cover the cost premium of EV's purchased by the City.
- Mayor Cumming suggested that fuel consumption data be shared with the CAAC to help track the performance of shift to EV's. This will be provided at a future meeting.
- The Transportation Department is actively developing EV charging infrastructure to support e-mobility.
- Mayor Cumming suggested traffic counters on multi-use paths would help track performance of active transportation metrics.
- Roy Nuriel stated that Google Maps data may be available for active transportation routes.

Decarbonize Buildings

- \$225,000.00 from the City's climate action reserve funds is recommended to support building retrofits and modeling the carbon impacts of future building developments in 2024 and into 2025.
- It is also recommended that the City apply for up to \$200,000.00 from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities GHG Reduction Feasibility Pathway Study fund to support the City in analysis of building retrofit opportunities to decarbonize City facilities. The Committee agreed to support this.
- It was commented that the weak link might be contractors who are not qualified to install or fix heat pumps. Often rebates comes with a caveat that you only receive the rebate if installed by a qualified installer.
- It was recommended that the City or this Committee provide energy efficiency coaching.
- It was further commented that the Maritime region of Canada has seen great success from using a retrofit advisor.

Community Engagement

- \$100,000.00 from the City's climate action reserve fund is recommended to support community engagement for the CAP implementation.
- The CAAC agreed that community engagement is critical for successful implementation of the CAP and that the budget recommendation needs to be increased to develop a robust communication and engagement strategy. A \$100,000.00 increase (for a total of \$200,000.00) was agreed upon by the Committee.
- It was further suggested that the community engagement also include consumption and embedded carbon in products as this is a large source of emissions.

- The CAAC agreed that community engagement metrics need to be developed to track the performance of community engagement initiatives.

B. Dorval declared a conflict of interest with the Climate Action Ripple Effect Youth program and exited the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

- It was commented that the CARE program is often heard about within the community. It is a well known and loved program.

B. Dorval joined the meeting at 5:42 p.m.

Decision Making & Policy

- \$50,000.00 from the City's climate action reserve fund is recommended to support the development of data analysis systems to support decision making, and also a parks and green space inventory and analysis for the OCP review and updates.
- It was noted that it would be beneficial for the City to have a natural asset inventory. The parks and green space inventory will support this.
- A brownfield inventory was also discussed as an important part of the OCP review and Roy Nuriel confirmed that this is in scope for the OCP review.

Moved by B. Dorval, seconded by S. Hendy:

THAT the CAAC recommends that Council authorize the release of up to \$750,000.00 from the City of Vernon's climate action reserve fund to the Long Range Planning budget in 2024, as presented in the report titled "Proposed 2024 CAP Implementation Initiatives and Budget", prepared by Kevin McCarty, Specialist, Climate Action, and presented to the CAAC on January 31, 2024.

CARRIED

Moved by S. Hendy, seconded by J. Comazzetto:

THAT the CAAC recommends that Council supports administration in a grant application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Greenhouse Gas Reduction Pathway Feasibility Study program, as presented in the report titled "Proposed 2024 CAP Implementation Initiatives and

Budget” prepared by Kevin McCarty, Specialist, Climate Action and presented to the CAAC on January 31, 2024.

CARRIED

CAAC WORKING GROUPS

It was suggested by B. Dorval and S. Kwakkel that working groups be created again. They will be aligned with K. McCarty’s work. Ideas for working groups are:

- OCP/TMP Group
- Metrics
- Community Engagement

B. Dorval and S. Kwakkel will bring solid recommendations to the next meeting.

BC TRANSIT WEEK CHALLENGE

S. Hendy informed the Committee of the progress of the BC Transit Week Challenge and will bring the final results to a future meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Climate Action Advisory Committee is set for March 27, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Climate Action Advisory Committee adjourned at 6:17 p.m. by call of the Chair.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:


_____ Chair