

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams
770 Vernon Avenue
Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councillor Nathalie Chambers (Chair), Timio Colistro (via Teams), Ronald Jeffries, Kurban Keshvani (4:06 p.m.), George Klima, Leslie Miller-Brooks, Karin Nelson and Mattias Spalteholz

Staff: Mitchell Edgar, Economic Development Manager, (4:18 p.m.); Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability (via Teams, 4:05 p.m.); Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Specialist and Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

Guests: Claire Remington, Compost Education Centre

Regrets: Diya Court-Stephens

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

MOVED by R. Jeffries and Seconded by K. Keshvani: "That the Minutes of the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee meeting held February 27, 2024 minutes be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

MOVED by M. Spalteholz and Seconded by K. Nelson: "That the Minutes of the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee meeting held on March 20, 2024 minutes be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair made the following comments:

- Farm stands hold significant importance in my family's heritage.
- Saanich and Victoria have some of the best soil in Canada. Continuing to care for the soil is vital.
- On Monday, April 15th, 2024 Council approved a bylaw to allow roadside stands to operate within the urban areas.
- The 51st anniversary of the Agricultural Land Reserve was on April 18th.
- A pamphlet or book detailing the locations and information about local pocket farms could be a project for this committee. A designated page on the Saanich website could be considered.

COMPOSTING EDUCATION

The representative from the Compost Education Centre gave a presentation on Composting Education. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- The Saanich yard and Hartland Landfill Facility are locations for yard and organic waste drop off. Some waste is outside of Victoria. A future plan to handle all waste locally is being explored.
- A local facility could be explored to assist in processing industrial and commercial waste.

- In 2020, Nelson BC purchased a FoodCycler and piloted a program to explore options for diverting food waste and volume from the landfill.
- A presentation to Council from the Composting Education Centre could be achieved through a delegation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The Economic Development Manager gave a presentation on Economic Development and Climate Action Plan. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Current projects are underway to work with local economy and businesses to have a healthy and thriving local business climate. Sustainable options are a high priority.
- Aligning with the Agriculture and Food Security Plan and the Climate Action Plan is vital.
- In 2023, a study on a food hub business plan, emphasizing Indigenous food options, took place at Camosun College. The project received funding from the province.
- Supporting tourism and the hospitality sector is crucial.
- The Circular Economy Accelerator Program provides hands-on support to businesses on Vancouver Island who seek to adopt circular economy principles. Some of these principles include reducing waste, increasing revenue, and developing innovative practices. This program is the first of its kind in Canada. Funding by Saanich has been approved for 7 businesses in 2024 and 7 more in 2025. The program will be overseen by the Synergy Foundation.
- Flavour trails promote and organizes opportunities for the community to experience local harvesters, farmers, fishers, food producers, chefs, vintners, cider makers, brewers and distillers.
- Sustainability tours could be offered to visitors and bring in revenue.

E-BIKES PROJECT

The Sustainability Specialist gave the following presentation (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- This program required a minimum e-bike purchase of \$1800.00.
- Regular maintenance for e-bikes is similar to traditional bikes. Using local vendors is encouraged.
- Saanich Hall serves as a drop-off location for electric and mobility batteries.
- Students were included in this study.
- This incentive encouraged residents to adopt low-carbon, renewable energy, and active transportation options.

MOVED by T. Colistro and Seconded by R. Jeffries: “That the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee recommend that Council request the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) lobby the Province of BC to provide additional funding for continuation of the BC Electric Bike Incentive Program.”

CARRIED

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The following was noted during a roundtable discussion:

- A bylaw banning outdoor balloons and lantern releases could be considered.
- It was suggested that a working group be established to consider creating a booklet with maps and information about pocket farms and vegetable stands within Saanich, to broaden

the outreach on social media to engage the community regarding sustainability efforts in Saanich, and to consider banning balloons and lantern releases due to the threat they pose to animals and biodiversity. M. Spalteholz, K. Nelson, and R. Jeffries will discuss these topics and bring forward information at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from R. Jeffries the meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Nathalie Chambers, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Secretary