

MINUTES
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
August 13, 2020 at 6:00 pm

Present: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau (Council Liaison), Kevin Brown, Bev Windjack, Brian Wilkes, Tory Stevens, Jeremy Gye, Purnima Govindarajulu, Tim Ennis

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Nathalie Dechaine (representing Eva Riccius), Manager of Community Development/Business Systems; Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability

By Phone: Stewart Guy

Regrets: Claudia Copley

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Mersereau called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. and read the First Nations acknowledgement.

Committee members were welcomed and general housekeeping procedures were reviewed. Councillor Mersereau advised that:

- This committee marks a transition to turning a new page and taking stock of a long legacy of environmental programming at the municipal level and receiving expertise from the community to guide programming forward.
- Council was excited about the number of highly qualified applicants.
- Her role as Council Liaison is to facilitate a link between the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC) and Council; Council's hope is that the committee be an arm's length group to bring expertise in a variety of areas.

Roundtable introductions were made and committee members shared their background and area(s) of expertise, what they hope to contribute to the process with service on committee, and their most memorable summer vacation (past or upcoming).

Committee member S. Guy joined during the meeting at 6:24 p.m. by telephone and introductions were resumed and completed.

Councillor Mersereau encouraged members to ensure that the committee applied a lens of climate change adaptation during all discussions and with all decisions.

2. CHAIR SELECTION

Councillor Mersereau requested a volunteer for the position of Chair of the RSTC with no interest from committee members.

Councillor Mersereau advised that C. Copley has resigned from the committee.

It was the consensus of the committee to postpone the discussion of a Chair to the end of the meeting with the following being noted:

- There may be a possibility of have a rotational Chair if there was interest from multiple parties.
- There is a need to understand how much work the committee will be tasked with before setting a meeting schedule.
- Members discussed concerns that it may be too much to have a committee member Chair meetings and also participate fully, and discussed the possibility of bringing someone in with specific expertise to Chair meetings.
- Support was expressed to have Councillor Mersereau act as Chair in the interim.

Councillor Mersereau advised that the mandate and Terms of Reference suggested there be a single Chair for the committee.

It was the consensus of the committee to consider Agenda items 2 (Chair Selection) and 3 (Meeting Schedule) later in the meeting.

In response to a question, staff expressed the intent to have a First Nations Representative join the committee at the next meeting, and highlighted correspondence with a representative of the Esquimalt First Nation and a committee at the CRD.

It was the consensus of the committee that Agenda items 4 (Honourariums) and 5 (Email Contact Sharing), being administrative in nature, be considered at the end of the meeting.

RESILIENT SAANICH POLICY FRAMEWORK OVERVIEW – ADRIANE POLLARD, MANAGER OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Manager of Environmental Services presented the Resilient Saanich Policy Framework Overview (PowerPoint on file).

In response to questions from the committee, the following was noted:

- Gap analysis will be used to inform policy framework and stewardship.
 - Staff discussed the Green Bylaws Toolkit, through the Land Stewardship Centre Online.
 - Staff have developed a brochure to give a snapshot of all bylaws that have pieces of environmental protection in them.
- The Committee recessed at 7:31 pm with the meeting reconvening at 7:48 pm.

OVERVIEW OF CLIMATE PLAN – REBECCA NEWLOVE, MANAGER OF SUSTAINABILITY

The Manager of Sustainability presented the Overview of the 2020 Climate Plan (PowerPoint on file).

In response to questions from the committee, the following was noted:

- This plan won an award from the Planning Institute of BC.
- Additional education and discussion of soil carbon sequestration may be considered.
- Natural asset management program, valuation, and environmental policy framework are cross-cutting issues that influence all.

PARKS OVERVIEW – NATHALIE DECHAIINE, MANAGER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ BUSINESS SYSTEMS

The Manager of Community Development/Business Systems presented a Parks Overview (PowerPoint on file).

Councillor Mersereau advised that if the committee had further questions, she could forward them to staff to be addressed at the next meeting.

In response to questions from the committee, the following was noted:

- The Saanich Parks Master Plan speaks to a land acquisition strategy; at this time, the land acquisition strategy is not publicly available.

HONOURARIUMS, EMAIL CONTACT SHARING – THOMAS MUNSON, SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER

The Senior Environmental Planner presented information about the honourarium endorsed by Council. All committee members agreed to receive the honourarium.

It was the consensus of the committee that email addresses may be shared within the group for subsequent communications.

RTSC ACTION ITEMS FOR MILESTONE 1

The Senior Environmental Planner presented the material included in the RSTC Committee binder under the “Timelines – Deliverables” tab, highlighting the immediate focus for the October 30, 2020 deadline for draft goals and objectives for the Environmental Policy Framework to be completed.

Staff reiterated that there will be a Policy Gap Analysis which may be helpful to determine what additional studies may need to be done, whether more data needs to be collected to achieve Milestone 1. In the meantime, there will be fact sheets provided for what information is available currently (re: what is protected area in Saanich v. CRD v. federal parks). Members were encouraged to review Milestone 2 on their own, as Milestone 1 is the main priority focus at this time.

In response to questions from the committee, the following was noted:

- Members expressed that there wasn’t an expectation to receive something “nearly so programmatic to guide [their] work” – expected committee to participate in determining course of work.
- Members discussed the quick timelines and requested timeline for resource provision to review in advance of October 30, 2020 deadline.
 - Staff has assembled six background binders including biodiversity strategies from other municipalities and across the country, natural assets valuation, and conservation planning and biodiversity protection for natural resources.
 - Staff requests that members access these resources electronically (via an email link to reduce printing), or by borrowing printed copies.
- Having a “straw dog” set of policy framework goals and objectives that members may refine within the 8 weeks leading up to the deadline, to refine during this time, instead of trying to draft from scratch in one 3-hour meeting may be preferable to some members. Staff addressed that if this is a request, it may be considered.

- Staff is looking at work already done for Saanich, as far back as the 1970s and foundations from the earlier presented Climate Action Plan. For next meeting: goals, objectives, and different criteria that this group can pick and choose from, refine and add to, will be prepared.
- Council expectation is that this committee brings forth the goals and objectives for public engagement. Staff acknowledged timelines are best case scenarios and ambitious and confirmed the timelines were set to help meet final deadlines included in the Terms of Reference set by Council. Staff suggested evaluating throughout the process, with the potential that public input time could be a bit shorter if more time is necessary.
- Members shared interest to lay a foundation of information gathering from the Gap Analysis, gain a scope of what the framework contains, and review a list of policy tools to help in this process.
- Action Request: that there be a whiteboard for future meetings.
- All speaking members agreed that there should be something to work from for the next meeting.
- Councillor Mersereau suggested to Staff to compile some examples of goals and objectives for the framework from resources to bring forward in consolidated format as a starting point.
- It was expressed by a member of the committee that there may be different expectations and it should be noted there is a gap between what Environmental Services sees as the work of committee and what the Committee sees as work of the Committee.

Councillor Mersereau suggested she may work with staff to ask for questions about the process and come up with prompting questions for Committee Members to reflect to staff their vision and expectations for basis of discussion at the next meeting about what we are setting out to do and get on the same page.

RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

Committee members were informed that six resource binders are available for lending and review and that any questions for the Senior Environmental Planner may be emailed.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Committee members discussed the following:

- That a half day or one day focused work session be considered with the desired outcome of creating a work plan, timelines, and meeting schedules (continuing with regular evening meetings after that).
- That having the Gap Analysis available before the next meeting would be necessary.
- That the longer work session meeting be facilitated by an outside facilitator if the budget allows; add to the scope of the facilitator to get some of the preliminary notes or writing outcomes set out for the day.

It was noted that:

- Staff will be in touch to canvass member availability and schedule the next meeting for a Saturday within the next month.
- The Chair appointment will be left to the next in-person meeting. Councillor Mersereau will circulate by email a description of expectations of the Chair.

- Questions that are content or process related may be sent Councillor Mersereau and to T. Munson.
- No committee members expressed interest in Chairing at this time.
- Members requested that:
 - The gap analysis be presented virtually in advance of the next meeting (by conference call line).
 - Thought to be put into the structure of the workshop, how to make the workshop effective, determine role of staff, and provide feedback about what support is required. Question was briefly brought forward of whether this would be a sub-committee or working group.
 - A Draft Agenda to be circulated to committee members in advance of the next meeting in order to provide the opportunity to give feedback before it is finalized.

CHAIR SELECTION

Further comments on the process of choosing a Chair brought additional discussion. The following was noted:

- Members discussed that other committees have Council members as Chairs.
- Councillor Mersereau spoke to the complications of acting as Chair herself, related to the intent for the RSTC to be an arm's length body, protected from the influence of politics.
- Members voiced the general preference to participate solely as committee members, and not take the role of Chair, in order to give fullest to goals and objectives of the committee.
- Councillor Mersereau gave call for expressed interest for Chair, to no response. Members voiced support for Councillor Mersereau for nomination.
- Members asked if it could be someone else from outside the committee, if Councillor Mersereau is reluctant to do it. Councillor Mersereau stated that this may be outside of the Terms of Reference
- Councillor Mersereau stated that meetings with Council in the week of August 17th would aim to address the vacancy on the committee with the anticipation of having a new member by the time the committee meets next.

RSTC WRAP UP:

Motion: MOVED by J. Gye and Seconded by B. Wilkes, "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee recommend that staff provide the committee with a gap analysis to be presented at the next meeting."

CARRIED

Motion: MOVED by S. Guy and Seconded by T. Stevens, "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee recommend that staff compile sample goals and objectives from other documents to provide to the committee for the next meeting."

CARRIED

Motion: MOVED by P. Govindarajulu and Seconded by T. Ennis, "That it be

recommended that the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee hold a full day Saturday workshop in September to be supported by an independent facilitator with the intended outcomes of preparing draft goals and objectives and refining the committee’s work plan.”

CARRIED

Motion: MOVED by J. Gye and Seconded by P. Govindarajulu, “That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee recommend that Councillor Mersereau work with staff to explore technological tools to support the committee work.

CARRIED

Motion: MOVED by J. Gye and Seconded by T. Stevens: “That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee recommend that appointment of a Chair to the committee be postponed to the next in-person meeting.”

CARRIED

Motion: MOVED by S. Guy and Seconded by B. Wilkes, “That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee recommend that the Council Liaison discuss with Council the possibility of the Council Liaison serving as non-voting Chair of the Committee.”

CARRIED

It was the consensus of the committee to circulate ideas for the one-day workshop via email.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm.

NEXT MEETING

Date to be determined.

Councillor Mersereau, Council Liaison

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary