

**MINUTES**  
**RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
Conference Call  
**September 9, 2020 at 6:00 pm**

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

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Eva Riccius, Senior Manager Parks

Regrets: Tim Ennis

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### 1. WELCOME

Councillor Mersereau called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and acknowledged the First Nations territories Saanich is located in.

Committee members were welcomed and general housekeeping procedures were reviewed for the conference call meeting. Councillor Mersereau introduced the committee's newest member, Brian Emmett. District of Saanich staff members (A. Pollard, T. Munson, E. Riccius) introduced themselves.

### 2. ADOPTION OF AUGUST 13, 2020 MINUTES

Councillor Mersereau asked for any feedback or revisions to the minutes from the August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and proposed a change of wording; no additional revisions were presented by committee members.

**Motion: MOVED by T. Stevens and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the Minutes of the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting held August 13th, 2020 be adopted, with the revision that the word "mitigation" be revised to "adaptation" in the final paragraph of the Welcome & Introductions section.**

**CARRIED**

### 3. UPDATE FROM THE RSTC COUNCIL LIAISON

Councillor Mersereau provided an update, noting:

- Council has decided to not allow Council Liaison to be Chair to the committee.
- Council feels strongly that the committee ought to do its work from an arm's length position
- Council's concern is that having a Council Liaison as Chair would have political influence on the group; want to avoid that at all costs.

Committee members were in agreement that the Chair's role will be revisited at the in-person meeting on October 3rd. Councillor Mersereau advised anyone considering the role to contact her or staff to discuss the role and responsibilities of Chair. It was noted that efforts will be made to continue learning better ways to share resources virtually.

#### 4. PRESENTATION: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY GAP ANALYSIS

The Manager of Environmental Services presented the “Resilient Saanich Policy Gap Analysis” PDF (provided to committee members by email).

It was noted that:

- This document was designed for 11”x17” landscape printing.
- This is a dynamic document that makes no recommendations or conclusions; it is meant to be used as a tool to support the Committee’s assessment of gaps and illustrate possibilities.

In discussion following the presentation of Table 1, it was noted that:

- This table is to inventory the natural assets and threats. If members desire, another column could be added to show the impacts (benefits and threats) to communities and built environment.
- Committee members felt the table was very nature-protection oriented and it needed to be recognized that we live in a city; according to CRD stats, between now and 2035, approximately 90-95 thousand people will be coming to the Greater Victoria area to live, which may change things. Concern was expressed that when considering this framework, it may be too narrow of a focus.
- Members expressed the human component is important to capture somewhere, so the focus is not just on the environmental.
- A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis approach may be helpful in acknowledging what is being done well, and to help get started in other ways of improvement.

Committee members discussed and agreed the best approach to asking questions during the presentation moving forward was to ask questions of clarification, and hold substantive questions to the end.

Councillor Mersereau encouraged member to record thoughts or questions, including anything they believe to be missing from the information presented, and were invited to share with staff, and copy other committee members, by email following the meeting.

The Manager of Environmental Services continued with the presentation. In review and discussion of Table 2, it was noted:

- The purpose of this table is to give an overview of what is already in place so that the committee, staff, and consultants have all the information.
- Members expressed confusion in reading the table in terms of what legislation each section fell under.

As Part A: Legal Tools was discussed, it was noted:

- The intent of this section is to show what the District of Saanich has the authority to do (as in legislated ability) or the opportunity to do (such as stewardship).
- The example of pesticides – Saanich has the opportunity to regulate the application of pesticides within Saanich, but cannot regulate the sale of pesticides.
- Where there is no colour coding on the table, the information was provided, but we may not necessarily be able to change or make a decision in this area.
- Tables 1 and 2 are background information, Table 3 is what can be done from here, considering what has/has not already been done.
- Committee Members and staff discussed the EDPA; staff expressed that there is

no EDPA in place, if there was one it would be represented be on page 11 in the red portion of the table. It is currently red because this is absent.

- Councillor Mersereau provided a brief background to the committee regarding the former Council's decision to rescind the EDPA, advising direction from Council does not prescribe that the EDPA be reproduced, but that space be created for bigger picture examination for all environmental programming to identify places where we can step up. She advised that the large body of work that went into producing the EDPA should be considered.
- Committee members expressed difficulty in examining gaps when big goals and objectives are yet to be determined. Concern was expressed over gaps in overall approach to biodiversity strategy, noting specifics about parks and placement, networks between them, could be fundamental. It was discussed that gap analysis exercises will continue for some time and the purpose of this meeting as to inform committee of past and current happenings with Saanich. Other concerns included that Saanich declared a climate emergency last year, but there was not referenced in the document.
- There was discussion about the meaning of the word "tool" in relation to the policy tools and bylaw and enabling legislation.
- Staff and committee agreed a set of definitions may be created for the group – including, to start "tools", "stewardship", and "biodiversity".
- It was suggested to change "Enabling Legislation Tool" to "Enabling Legislation" (in Table 3, on Page 8) for clarity.

Staff continued the presentation, with the Stewardship section. It was noted that:

- The Native Plant Salvage Program should also be added to the table.
- The inclusion of stewardship as a pillar for the framework may be to provide leadership and resources, while encouraging private property owners to be actively involved. Reference was made to the HAT program (compost).
- There was discussion around the development community and how to engage stewardship on a long-term or project-by-project basis. Committee members referenced BCSLA, Canadian Landscape Standards.

Staff presented an example from the City of Windsor Environmental Master Plan (2017) as a way to use the document, with goals and objectives, measuring and reviewing each objective with the different tables.

- Example:
  - Goal C – Responsible Land Use
    - Objective C1: Encourage in-fill and higher density in existing built areas
      - Table 1: what threat(s) to what natural asset(s) will this address?
      - Table 2: are we already addressing this?
      - Table 3: what legal tools can we use to address this? Is there room for improvement?
      - Table 4: what stewardship tools could we use; can we build on existing efforts?

Councillor Mersereau affirmed that the committee can identify what is needed in order to move on with the deliverables Council has asked for, and that these gaps would be highlighted in staff's report to Council.

Questions were posed about the scope of knowledge in measuring how effective policy tools are in dealing with the aspects of environment being threatened. It was noted that:

- There was discussion around the Urban Forestry Strategy policy of No Net Loss. Members asked if there are reports on how the replacement trees survive over

time. The Senior Manager of Parks spoke to the No Net Loss goal for canopy cover, identifying funding as one reason there has not been a follow up measurement at this time, but that it is in the sight lines. Regarding replacement trees, there is a need for stewardship program for homeowners to provide data tracking, citizen science, or more funding for staff.

- Canopy was approximately 38% last time it was measured, which is above average for North America.

Councillor Mersereau thanked Environmental Staff for compiling the information for the presentation, acknowledging this document as a tool to serve the duration of the committee's work. Members were encouraged to email specific feedback to T. Munson (and copy other committee members).

## 5. DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING WORKSHOP

Councillor Mersereau shared that a date has been set for October 3, and that bookings have been made for a venue and facilitator. It was noted that B. Wilkes and J. Gye have drafted an agenda for the day and Councillor Mersereau asked that members provide feedback to herself, or T. Munson by Monday, September 14 to be considered.

In discussion, it was noted that:

- Procurement of the facilitator was initiated before the draft agenda by committee members was received. As a part of the procurement process, the facilitator has submitted a proposed; the agendas will be merged.
- Members expressed they would have preferred to have a role in selecting and consulting with a facilitator. In response, Councillor Mersereau indicated this was not possible due to procurement rules. Members requested to meet the facilitator in advance of the workshop. Councillor Mersereau advised this would be discussed further with staff.

## 6. WRAP UP

**Motion: MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by J. Gye, "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee adjourn."**

**CARRIED**

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

## NEXT MEETING

Date to be determined.

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Councillor Mersereau, Council Liaison

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary