

**MINUTES**  
**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2

**June 23, 2015 at 5:15 p.m.**

Present: Councillor Dean Murdock (Chair), Al-Nashir Charania, Harry Drage, Hal Gibbard, George Klima, Kevin Brown, Roberta Hesselgrave

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Environmental Services Manager; Cory Manton, Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas Manager; Elizabeth van den Hengel, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Jude Coates, Mary Haig-Brown

Guest: Larry Leyne

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**Minutes**

**MOVED by H. Drage and Seconded by A. Charania: "That the Minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held May 26, 2015, be adopted."**

**CARRIED**

**BACKYARD ANIMALS**

The Chair introduced Ms. Jillian McCue. Ms. McCue provided the Committee with an overview of backyard miniature goats and the following was noted:

- Backyard miniature goats are an environmentally friendly way to mow lawns and control many types of invasive plants.
- The Town of Esquimalt recently "hired" some goats for maintenance.
- Miniature goats produce fertilizer that can be used within the Municipality.
- Miniature goats can produce up to half a quart of milk per day.
- Miniature goats are quiet if given attention and enjoy being kept in pairs.
- Miniature goats make good therapy pets.
- Seattle allows for backyard miniature goats but the males must be neutered and de-horned.
- Seattle has had a Goat Bylaw since 2007. In the eight years Seattle has permitted backyard miniature goats there are fifty licenced miniature goats in the Seattle urban area.
- The Seattle Animal Shelter reports that they do not receive complaints with respect to backyard miniature goats.
- Denver, San Francisco and Portland also have bylaws that allow for backyard miniature goats.
- The City of Burnaby is currently considering allowing backyard miniature goats.
- Allowing backyard miniature goats is a good fit with Saanich's Strategic Plan model of a sustainably community.
- In the Gordon Head area 132 people signed a petition to allow for backyard miniature goats.
- Miniature goats are approximately the size of a medium sized dog.

The Committee asked questions of Ms. McCue and the following was noted:

- Lot size restrictions would need to be determined.
- Restrictions on the number of miniature goats per lot would need to be determined.
- More public consultation is required.
- Speaking to the Mayors and Councillors of other cities, towns and municipalities that have permitted backyard miniature goats would be a good idea.

The Committee thanked Ms. McCue for her presentation.

**MOTION:**     **Moved by A. Nashir-Charaina and Seconded by R. Hasslegrave: “That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommends that Council request staff to undertake a study on backyard animals that includes public participation and a small pilot project.”**

**CARRIED**

## **FARMLANDS TRUST**

The Chair gave an update on the Farmlands Trust. Committee discussion occurred and the following was noted:

- There is strong public support for the ALR.
- Saanich should take a leadership role in the creation of a Farmlands Trust.
- An inventory of land owned by Saanich with farming potential should be developed.
- Panama Flats and Haliburton Farm could be considered as pilot projects for a Farmlands Trust.
- How funds will be raised to acquire and manage farmland within a Farmlands Trust will need to be considered.
- Demonstration farm could be managed by post-secondary students in farming/agriculture programs.
- A list of farmers who are interested in supporting the development of a Farmlands Trust should be initiated.

**Motion:**     **MOVED by A. Nashir-Charaina and Seconded by G. Klima: “That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee request that Council consider having Saanich take a leadership role in the development of a Farmlands Trust.”**

**CARRIED**

## **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT**

The Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas Manager provided an overview of the Integrated Pest Management program. Committee discussion occurred and the highlights were noted as follows:

- Natural Area staff manually remove several hectares of priority invasive species on public land that have an elevated risk to public health or sensitive ecosystems.
- Specific priority invasive species require a combination of control methods that include the use of an herbicide.
- “Cut and paint” method has been fairly successful controlling English holly and English hawthorn.

- Utilizing Saanich’s Best Management Practices in accordance with the IPM Program the use of Round-Up, Garlon XRT, and 2-4-D as a control measure was researched and applied.
- Homeowner can deny Saanich use of herbicide on private property.
- Definition of “success” with invasives should be defined. Better information results in improved decision making, better resource allocation and improved cost effectiveness.
- Aphid midge release in high aphid infestation areas in several different locations as a test to help control aphids on several tree species. Monitoring the results as part of the IPM program showed good results in the first season of using this predator. Plans are in place to continue use of the midge in the spring of 2015.

**Motion:      MOVED by R. Hesselgrave and Seconded by H. Gibbard, “That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee receive the 2014 Annual Report on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) memo from the Acting Senior Manager Parks and Manager of Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas, dated May 12, 2015.”**

**CARRIED**

## **REVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS AWARDS**

The Manager of Environmental Services reviewed the 2015 ENA awards. The awards went smoothly with the slide show being particularly effective. Follow-up promotion of the winners with a “Day in the Life” style of write-up could be provided to the media increase media coverage. The winners could also be profiled in the Our Backyard magazine.

## **UPDATES**

The Chair informed the Committee that he is continuing to investigate the issue of microplastics. Microplastics will be further discussed at a future ENA meeting. The Chair asked Committee members to submit a “bucket-list” of issues that they wish to have brought before the ENA Advisory Committee. The list will be discussed at an ENA meeting in the fall.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 22, 2015

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Councillor Murdock, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary