

AGENDA
For the Special Meeting of the
Environment & Natural Areas Advisory Committee
To be held in Council Chambers
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue
Wednesday, October 21, 2020 - 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Due to COVID-19 measures, Saanich is unable to accommodate the public for any Council, Committee of the Whole, Advisory, Board or Foundation meetings while maintaining the limits on large gatherings due to the Public Health Order.

As per the Order of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, *Emergency Program Act*, Ministerial Order No. M192, public attendance at the meeting is not required if it cannot be accommodated in accordance with the applicable requirements or recommendations under the *Public Health Act*.

To register to hear this meeting by telephone, please email council@saanich.ca or telephone 250-475-5501. You are asked to provide your name and an email address where instructions can be sent to you, along with the name and date of the advisory committee meeting you wish to hear. The registration deadline is 12:00 p.m. noon on the day of the meeting.

6:00 p.m. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is appropriate that we begin by acknowledging that our municipality lies within the traditional territories of the Lkwungen (Lay-kwung-gen) peoples known today as Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the W̱SÁNEĆ (weh-saanich) peoples known today as W̱JOLEŁP (Tsartlip), BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin), STÁUTW (Tsawout), W̱SIKEM (Tseycum) and MÁLEXEL (Malahat) Nations.

- 6:05 p.m. ADOPTION OF MINUTES** (attachments)
- February 19, 2020
 - August 18, 2020
 - September 16, 2020

6:05 p.m. CHAIR'S REMARKS

6:10 p.m. INTEGRATED STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING
L. Hatch, Senior Manager of Water Resources and Urban Systems Ltd.

7:00 p.m. URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY: TRACKING & MONITORING TREES
N. Dechaine, Manager, Community Development/Business Systems
<https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Community/Documents/Urban-Forest-Strategy.pdf>

- 7:45 p.m. ROUNDTABLE UPDATE**
- Resilient Saanich

* Adjournment *
Next Meeting: November 18, 2020

MINUTES
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room #2
February 19, 2020 at 6:04 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau

Members: Kevin Brown, Jane Cameron, Al-Nashir Charania, Braedan Drouillard
Kyle Empringham, Nicholas Loughton, Karthik Narayan, Ryan
Senechal, Carmel Thomson and Anqian Wei.

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager Parks; Adriane Pollard, Manager of
Environmental Services; and Jeff Keays, Committee Clerk

Regrets: George Klima,

Guests: Jill Robinson, Capital Regional District, Elk/Beaver Lake Project
Coordinator.

MINUTES

MOVED by R. Senechal and Seconded by K. Brown “That the minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held November 20, 2019, be adopted as circulated.”

INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed the members to the first meeting of the new term. Noting that there were a number of new committee members the Chair invited a roundtable of introductions. Members shared their various backgrounds and experiences before moving into the first agenda item.

ELK/BEAVER LAKE

The Chair welcomed the Elk/Beaver Lake Project Coordinator to the meeting. The Coordinator provided the committee with an update on the status of the Elk/Beaver Lake Initiative. The following was noted:

- The Elk/Beaver Lake Initiative (EBLI) was created by the Capital Regional District (CRD) in 2016 and endeavors to undertake actions that will:
 - Lead to a reduction in the frequency and toxicity of cyanobacteria (a.k.a. blue-green algae, ‘BGA’) blooms in Elk and Beaver Lakes,
 - Improve fish habitat, manage weed growth, and ensure continued recreational use.
- In 2016, the CRD Parks and Environmental Services provided funding for one part-time coordinator, and a budget for continued water quality monitoring, the selection and implementation of an in-lake remediation option, and preparation of a watershed management plan.
- The EBLI was established in response to public demand for focus on the struggling lake ecosystem.

- In addition to annual toxic cyanobacteria blooms, there is concern over:
 - the sustainability of a healthy fishery under low oxygen (anoxic) conditions;
 - the proliferation of nuisance aquatic weeds;
 - the presence of invasive aquatic and terrestrial species; and
 - public health and safety during water contact recreation.
- Watershed Management Plan:
 - The development of a watershed management plan is underway to address external sources of nutrients through a public engagement process.
 - External sources of nutrients come from various land use activities around the lake (urban or agricultural) as well as natural processes that bring nutrients into the lake.
 - The public were invited to comment on the draft Elk/Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan through an online survey to support the finalization of the plan.
- In-lake Remediation Plan:
 - The development of an in-lake remediation plan is underway to address internal sources of nutrients in Elk/Beaver Lake.
 - These nutrients have accumulated over decades in the lake and bottom sediments and are continually recycled back into the water column under low-oxygen conditions.
 - The in-lake remediation process is guided by expert consultants and an intergovernmental working group.
 - On September 11, 2019 staff brought forward a Staff Report and Business Case to the CRD Board outlining the environmental, recreational, community and economic values of the lake (over \$10 million annually) and a recommendation to remediate the lake.
 - The CRD Board approved the recommendation to move ahead with the in-lake remediation of Elk/Beaver Lake, subject to receiving at least 50% capital grant funds for the project.
 - This recommendation included the installation of oxygenation systems in Elk/Beaver Lake to improve water quality at a capital cost of \$1.4 million and ongoing operational costs of \$100,000 - \$150,000 annually.

Committee discussion ensued, the following is noted:

- Specific targets will set for specific actions.
- Provincial targets will be utilized for measuring outcomes, i.e. cyanobacteria at < 50% is considered healthy.
- PH levels are hard targets.
- Three dams were installed in the 1800's to create a potable water reservoir for Victoria.
- Practice was suspended in 1915 as a result of poor water quality.
- The construction of the Patricia Bay highway in the 1950's significantly changed the hydrology of the area.
- Although water quality issues were identified in the late 80's it is suspected that they had actually arisen in the 1970's.
- Peninsula municipalities were still relying on the lake as their primary water source.
- Recreation groups have been generally supportive of the restoration efforts, as there will be minimal impact to their activities.

- The CRD will be submitting grant applications to the Province, per the Board's recommendation.
- The item could conceivably come back to the board in the event the grant applications were unsuccessful.
- There is significant interest by the Board in seeing this plan implemented successfully.

The Chair thanked the Coordinator for their presentation. The coordinator will return to committee with the final draft in Q2.

REVIEW: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Clerk circulated the updated Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee Terms of Reference dated January 28, 2020. The committee reviewed the document, along with the Advisory Committee Handbook dated January 22, 2020 and the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee: 2019 Reference Guide.

The Clerk reminded members the mandatory committee workshop being held in Council chambers on February 25, and 26, 2020.

CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITIES & INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The committee considered the Chair's memo, Climate Change Priorities & Investment Strategies, dated February 12, 2020. The following was noted:

- There is an apparent disjuncture between our climate change priorities and our investments.
- Activities funded through Saanich's investment portfolio include fossil fuel-related endeavours.
- Investment options for local governments are very limited and heavily regulated, in order to protect residents from undue risk.
- Historically there have been very few socially responsible investment options for local governments.
- The City of New Westminster has been working with the Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) to develop a new fossil-free investment fund for local governments.
- In turn, they are seeking commitments from other local governments to secure this new investment opportunity.
- The new bond fund would exclude securities of companies directly involved in the extraction, processing and transportation of coal, oil or natural gas.
- As of April 2019, Saanich invested approximately 1/3 of its holdings or \$53 million with the MFA; however, the proposed fossil-fuel free short term bond fund may be an opportunity to align our investments with the corporate priority of supporting a transition to a carbon-neutral future.
- A recommendation has been included with the report for Council's consideration.

Committee discussion ensued, the following was noted:

- A staff report would lay out a social responsible investment framework for Council's consideration.
- The liquidity of the fund is important, as it could impact the Districts ability to access this money if/when needed.

- There are issues beyond just oil, when considering ethical/socially responsible investments, accordingly it is important that the fund be monitored and/or managed.
- How do you unpack investments in tertiary industry and businesses, such as CN? These industries play a significant role in the energy industry's supply chain.
- An expression of general support would be appropriate. What is considered socially responsible in 2020 may not hold true if/when the fund comes to market.
- Divestment and re-investment policies should be developed simultaneously.
- Council does not have a governing document to inform or support socially responsible investment.
- Incorporating socially responsible investment guidelines into our current policy would give Council options.
- The proposed recommendation could be more assertive in its language.

MOTION

Moved by A. Charania and Seconded by K. Brown “That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommend that: Council

- a) Pass a resolution outlining an intention to invest funds in a new MFA Bond Fund with a Standard Fossil Fuel Free Screen; and**
- b) Send a letter to the Municipal Finance Authority indicating support in principle for the new MFA Bond Fund with a Standard Fossil Fuel Free Screen – pending more information on the subject – with an estimated amount of potential investment in the fund based on staff's advice; and**
- c) Update the investment policy so it reflects an intent to use socially responsible investing when available and within the constraints of the policy and regulations governing investment activities.”**

CARRIED

UPDATES

The committee received updates on the following:

- Panama Flats & Regional Foodland Trust
- 2020 Climate Action Plan: 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich
- Tree Protection Amendment Bylaw No. 9548
- Urban Forrest Reserve Fund
- Doubling of Tree Fund – Resource Request
- Motion to Council seeking an additional \$2,000,000 to accelerate Active Transportation Plan initiatives

COMMITTEE ROUNDTABLE

The Chair invited input from the committee on items of interest for upcoming meetings. The following was noted:

- Climate Plan – Staff will attend the next meeting.
- Urban Forestry – Staff will attend a future meeting.
- Greenbelt Celebration
- Strategies for engaging the community in environmental leadership

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary

DRAFT

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SAANICH MUNICIPAL HALL, 770 VERNON AVENUE
August 19, 2020 at 6:31 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau

Members: **Electronic:** Kevin Brown; Al-Nashir Charania; Braedan Drouillard;
Nicholas Loughton; Karthik Narayan; and Ryan Senechal.

In-person: Jane Cameron; George Klima; Carmel Thomson; and
Anqian We

Staff: **In-person:** Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services and
Jeff Keays, Committee Clerk

I. MOTION

MOVED by C. Thomson and Seconded by A. Wei: "That the meeting be closed in accordance with the *Community Charter*, Part 4, Division 3, Section 90 (1) (b) as the matter relates to personal information about an identifiable individual who is being considered for a District award or honour [Saanich Environmental Award], or who has offered to provide a gift to the District on condition of anonymity."

On a motion by C. Thomson, the meeting adjourned to In Camera at 6:33 p.m.

The Special Advisory Committee Meeting reconvened at 9:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2020

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary

**MINUTES OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
September 16, 2020

Present: Chair: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau

Members: Kevin Brown, Jane Cameron, Al-Nashir Charania, Braedan Drouillard, George Klima, Karthik Narayan, Carmel Thomson and Anqian Wei.

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager Parks; Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services; and Lynn Merry, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Nicholas Loughton, Ryan Senechal

IN CAMERA MOTION:

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by C. Thomson: “That the meeting be closed in accordance with the *Community Charter*, Part 4, Division 3, Section 90 (1) (b) as the matter relates to personal information about an identifiable individual who is being considered for a District award or honour (Saanich Environmental Award) or who has offered to provide a gift to the District on condition of anonymity.”

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 6:04 p.m.

AGENDA

MOVED by G. Klima and Seconded by K. Brown: “That the agenda be amended to add an item – Chair’s Report.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REPORT

- Municipal operations are now back to normal and the Municipal Hall open to the public.
- Council and committee meetings have resumed.
- Council approved a status quo budget for 2020 which may have implications on work on the Climate Plan.
- Because of the decreased number of committee meetings due to COVID, Council made a motion to ask committee members if they wished to extend their appointments until December 31, 2021.

- Councillor Mersereau has been appointed as the Council Liaison to the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee; she will be tasked with communicating to the committee and to Council.
- Of the recommendations made at the February 19, 2020 ENA meeting, only the final recommendation to update the Investment Policy needs to be actioned; the Municipal Finance Authority has proceeded with the Bond Fund and the product is available to municipalities.
- Councillor Mersereau will prepare correspondence on the recommendation to be brought to Council in the Fall.

UPDATE: PARKS NATURAL INTELLIGENCE SUMMER CAMPAIGN

The Senior Manager, Parks presented the Parks Natural Intelligence – Foundations of Stewardship (PowerPoint on file) and answered questions from the committee as follows:

- Data shows that residents are spending on average 1-2 hours outside every day walking, running, gardening, and hiking; most are women between 35-65 years of age.
- Young people are not being reached.
- Respondents stated that nature to them means life, happiness, joy, peace, calming, health, making connections and finding happiness.
- CTV Vancouver Island aired the Natural Saanich segment and included links to the Saanich webpages.
- Further data will be provided on the reach of the advertising.
- Metrics will continue to frame projects around Natural Intelligence and focus on what people can do; partnerships will be sought with like-minded organizations such as schools.
- The committee is encouraged to look for interesting projects and feed ideas to staff.
- The municipality is open to the development of more community gardens; interested groups are encouraged to discuss with staff.
- Parking near some neighbourhood parks continues to be a challenge but parks were not designed to allow for parking.
- There may be the potential for more tree planting near Wilkinson Road and Quick's Bottom Park.
- A First Nations story teller and historian was engaged and staff were educated on how the land was viewed historically and the resources that were used.
- Discussion took place on how to get the stories out to the broader public and reaching out to First Nations to see if they are interested in working on Saanich projects.

The committee made the following comments:

- The media clips were informative; more clips would be appreciated.
- There are long wait lists for spots at community gardens.
- Parks could be more accessible with more parking.
- There may be opportunities to engage young people and encourage them to integrate with nature.
- First Nations could be brought in as partners.

The Chair made the following comments:

- A new position of Agriculture and Food Security Planner has been created and could address renewed interest in community gardens.
- Council is interested in developing more meaningful relationships with First Nations.
- Local Area Planning processes are underway and there has been some engagement and discussions on better incorporating and including First Nations in those processes.

The Senior Manager, Parks exited the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

EV CHARGING USER FEES & E-MOBILITY STRATEGY

The Manager of Sustainability presented the Electric Mobility Strategy (PowerPoint on file) and answered questions from the committee as follows:

- There has been an increase in EV sales in the past years with 1,200 EVs in Saanich as of 2019.
- The E-Mobility Action Plan includes 38 actions in five focus areas: EVs, E-bikes and other e-mobility devices, home and workplace charging, public charging network and District leadership.
- E-bikes and other e-mobility devices present opportunities to reach/exceed Active Transportation Plan targets.
- EV Charging Infrastructure require 1 on-site parking space per unit to be energized in single-family, duplex or townhouse development; require all off-street parking spaces to be energized in multi-family development and require 0-5% of parking spaces to be energized in institutional, commercial and industrial.
- Saanich currently has 12 public level 2 EV charging stations located at key facilities with 20 new public level 2 charging stations are proposed.
- A user fee of \$1 per hour has been approved by Council; this is consistent with neighbouring municipalities.
- Revenue will be used to offset costs of operating the charging stations and for climate action initiatives.
- A review will take place after one year.
- Currently, there is a three hour time limit in place but it is not enforced; it is proposed that the time limit remain the same but enforced with a \$30 fine.
- A NRCan grant application has been submitted for 24 Level 2 EV Charging stations for fleet.
- Staff are looking at Federal and Provincial grants.
- There is a need for fast-charging stations throughout the CRD.
- It is noted that Gas Tax money is currently used for road infrastructure improvements and it may no longer be available once the move to EV takes place.

The committee made the following comments:

- Marketing is important in that revenue can help to offset capital costs.
- Policy and strategy has to include safety considerations.
- Hybrid vehicles should be considered in the data as well.

- There may be a need for legislative changes for insurance for E-Bikes.

The Manager of Sustainability exited the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

BOWKER CREEK DAYLIGHTING FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Manager of Environmental Services presented the Bowker Creek Daylighting Feasibility Study (PowerPoint on file) and answered questions from the committee as follows:

- 87% of the Bowker Creek watershed is now developed.
- 2.5 kms of the 8 km creek is above ground.
- If an opportunity comes along through redevelopment, daylighting could be considered.
- Next steps – the study will be considered by Council, and if adopted, staff would work towards achieving the plan when opportunities arise; greenways would be updated based on the plan; and the Bowker Creek Blueprint would be updated with new information.
- 5-6 kms of the creek is left to be daylighted.

The committee made the following comments:

- Broader and bolder statements are needed for daylighting.

The Chair made the following comment:

- The Kings Park fundraising deadline has been extended to April 2021 in light of COVID-19.

MOVED by C. Thomson and Seconded by G. Klima: “That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommend that Council adopt the Bowker Creek Daylighting Feasibility Study.”

CARRIED

UPDATE: RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Manager of Environmental Services stated:

- Residents can sign up for E Bulletins.
- The committee has started the work and new fact sheets will be posted this week on the website.
- There will be more opportunities for public engagement.
- The committee has been tasked with drafting goals and objectives which will be made available to the public.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by C. Thomson and Seconded by G. Klima: “That the meeting adjourn at 8:10 p.m.”

CARRIED

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary

DRAFT