

MINUTES
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue
Council Chambers via MS Teams
May 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

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

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

Councillor Mersereau read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOVED by B. Windjack and Seconded by T. Ennis: "That the Agenda for the May 25, 2021 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee be approved."

CARRIED

4. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

MOVED by T. Stevens and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the minutes of the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meetings of April 15, 2021 be adopted, as amended."

CARRIED

Amendments include adding "if one is chosen" to the last line of the first paragraph under item 6 and correcting a typo in item 8.

MOVED by T. Stevens and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the minutes of the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meetings of April 27, 2021 be adopted."

CARRIED

5. **RECEIPT OF CORRESPONDENCE**

MOVED by B. Windjack and Seconded by J. Gye: “That the correspondence attached as part of the agenda for the May 25, 2021 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be received for information.”

CARRIED

6. **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGY DISCUSSIONS (CONTINUED FROM APRIL 27, 2021 MEETING)**

Councillor Mersereau led discussion on the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy process (PowerPoint on file) and committee members made the following comments:

- A State of Biodiversity Report assembled by staff may not be sufficient; the committee would like to be able to provide feedback.
- There is money for a consultant to assist with the State of Biodiversity and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
- There is committee support for an expanded State of Biodiversity and Conservation Report.
- If staff are going to assemble the report, there is a need to consider appropriate data sources as some of the data is quite outdated.
- The State of Biodiversity Report is the inventory stage with strategy development being the second part of the project.
- A complete and broader inventory will ultimately lead to a better strategy.
- A consultant could evaluate the current conditions of parks; if parks are not in good condition, they do not serve their functions as hubs.
- It may take approximately 1-3 months to complete the first draft.
- Urban forestry canopy and urban spaces have to be documented.
- The built environment, such as the Uptown Corridor, and bylaws and development policies need to be considered; development affects biodiversity.
- A Conservation Practitioner could help to determine targets and threats for the State of Biodiversity Report and will set up the report for success.

The Manager of Environmental Services stated:

- The committee could recommend to Council that additional funding for data collection or extending the timelines is needed.
- Staff would find data that is relevant to Saanich, collate preliminary themes and report areas where data is lacking.
- The committee could provide recommendations on what data they would like included.
- The Progress Report is scheduled to go to Council at the end of June.
- A consultant may be retained for either phase or both; a consultant may not have the skill set for both phases.

Councillor Mersereau stated:

- Staff's role is defined in the current Terms of Reference; the committee can recommend changes to the Terms of Reference to Council, if desired.
- The committee could recommend a consultant be hired to do additional work.
- If additional budget is needed, staff would elevate the request to Council for approval.
- The committee could also recommend additional studies to fulfil conservation work.

The Senior Manager, Parks stated:

- It is important to move forward with strategy building.
- It is the intent that all of Saanich's private and public lands be considered in the strategy.

MOVED by B. Windjack and Seconded by T. Stevens: “That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC) recommend that Council direct staff to proceed with:

- 1. A preliminary state of biodiversity report to be completed by the Environmental GIS Analyst staff using existing data;**
- 2. Analysis of data is left to be considered by the consultant hired to develop the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy;**
- 3. The RSTC approve the dataset recommendations in Table 1 which would be actioned by the Environmental GIS Analyst; and**
- 4. The RSTC consider if any data gaps or research should occur in advance of the consultant work to complete the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Council consideration as per Action 11.”**

Committee members made the following comments:

- It may not be appropriate to move forward with work in advance of setting targets.
- A Conservation Practitioner would cost between \$10,000 and \$25,000.
- The data available is older and has not been assessed for suitability.

The Manager of Environmental Services stated:

- The Milestone 1 Progress Report could be presented to Council with a statement that the committee is looking at the best approach in determining data gaps.

**The Motion was DEFEATED
with K. Brown, T. Ennis, P. Govindarajulu, S. Guy, J. Gye, T. Stevens and B.
Wilkes OPPOSED**

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by T. Stevens: “That an additional meeting be held within the next 10 days to receive a presentation on the Conservation Measures Partnership.”

CARRIED

K. Brown presented a draft Fact Sheet (page 11 of the agenda) to address questions and uncertainty and outline new and emerging ways that biodiversity is being qualified.

MOVED by T. Ennis and Seconded by T. Stevens: “That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee endorse the development of a proposed fact sheet/background document as developed by Kevin Brown and which will be reviewed by the Biodiversity Working Group for feedback.”

CARRIED

7. SAANICH STAFF FEEDBACK ON INTEGRATING THE RSTC WORKPLAN AND THE RESILIENT SAANICH TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Manager of Environmental Services presented the Environmental Policy Framework Terms of Reference (PowerPoint on file) and answered questions as follows:

- Once the committee is satisfied with the changes, it would go to Council for consideration in approximately mid-July.

- Changes were made to ensure the wording was more succinct.

Committee members made the following comments:

- It may be appropriate that the committee have input into the environmental aspects of the Climate Plan.
- A more integrated environmental framework should be created so that the thematic areas support each other.

The Senior Manager, Parks stated:

- The committee could be asked to provide feedback on different plans such as the Urban Forestry Strategy at appropriate times.

Action Item:

The RSTC will provide written feedback on the proposed changes to the Workplan and Terms of Reference to T. Stevens who will collate the feedback for staff before the June meeting.

8. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT: NEXT STEPS

The Manager of Environmental Services provided an overview of the public engagement report and next steps.

MOVED by T. Stevens and Seconded by K. Brown: “That the committee endorse that:

- 1. The draft goals and objectives be edited to clarify terminology and to flesh out the goals and objectives to be “SMART” (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound);**
- 2. Supportive funding be made available to retain a First Nations representative to provide feedback on the draft.**
 - a) That a consultant take the results of the engagement process and return with a revised draft of the vision, principles, goals and objectives for the consideration of the RSTC;**
- 3. The results of the inclusivity and preferences questions be used to guide future engagement as part of Resilient Saanich (such as adding cultural groups to the lists of targeted stakeholders);**
- 4. Staff continue efforts to engage First Nations for more in-depth stakeholder engagement for the future phases.”**

CARRIED

9. MILESTONE ONE PROGRESS REPORT

The Manager of Environmental Services provided an overview of the Milestone One Progress Report and commented:

- The report is mostly complete and will be finalized utilizing the motions from this meeting.
- The Milestone One Progress Report will include a memo to Council, the public engagement report, the proposed Workplan and correspondence from the RSTC about the evaluation matrix and the scope of data collection.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by T. Stevens and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the meeting of the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee be adjourned."

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

June 17, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Stewart Guy, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary