

MINUTES
RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Via Microsoft Teams

June 28, 2022

Present: Tory Stevens (Chair); Kevin Brown; Tim Ennis; Purnima Govindarajulu; Stewart Guy; Chris Lowe; Brian Wilkes; Bev Windjack; Jeremy Gye

Guests: Cassandra Cummings; Alison Kwan

Staff: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks; Thomas Munson, Senior Environmental Planner; Nancy Chaggar, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau

CALL TO ORDER

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

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Chair T. Stevens read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by B. Windjack and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the Agenda for the June 28, 2022 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be approved."

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by T. Ennis and Seconded by C. Lowe: "That the minutes of the May 24, 2022 Resilient Saanich Technical Committee meeting be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

DIAMOND HEAD CONSULTING (DHC) UPDATE ON STATE OF BIODIVERSITY REPORT

C. Cummings, project manager for the State of Biodiversity Report, presented a project update to the Committee and noted the following:

- Background reviews have begun, and two rounds of field work with a total of 152 site visits have been completed.
- DHC is coordinating with the Urban Forest Strategy through knowledge transfer and data sharing.
- Spatial data analysis is ongoing.
- Further engagement with the Committee is yet to occur; DHC is flexible on how engagement time may be used.
- A minimum patch size of half a hectare was selected.
- Seven draft maps were shared with the Committee illustrating data collected by DHC.

- Next steps include: incorporating additional data into maps; developing table of contents and report contents; and finalizing maps.
- DHC will continue to engage with the Committee as the project progresses.

The following discussions ensued in response to the presentation:

- It is DHC's preference to further refine the maps before they are shared with the Committee.
- The maps produced by DHC will be made publicly available online.
- As part of the Urban Forest Strategy review, DHC has taken the CRD cover map and analyzed it for accuracy. DHC is currently in the process of writing a technical memo that will describe the results and the methodology used to compare.
- It was expressed that species and abiotic factors should be considered as part of the State of Biodiversity Report.
- An expert workshop is not included as part of the DHC contract; however, it may be possible to use budget funds from other areas to hold a workshop.
- DHC has a total of 40 hours for engagement with the Committee.
- It would be helpful to have experts included in the engagement process with DHC and RSTC as they may be able to answer some questions about the state of biodiversity in Saanich.

MOVED by S. Guy and Seconded by J. Gye: "That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee hold a workshop with external experts."

CARRIED

DECISION ON MILESTONE 3 WORKPLAN

- Staff are to prepare a complete package for Council with the Environmental Policy Framework including a State of Biodiversity Report and a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
- Milestone 2 will carry on until the State of Biodiversity Report is complete.
- Environmental Policy Framework gap analysis should be an explicit line item for the Milestone 3 workplan.
- The gap analysis should address the conflict between housing development and preserving the environment.

MOVED by J. Gye and Seconded by K. Brown: "That the Milestone 3 workplan be approved, with the addition of a line item for completing the gap analysis on the Environmental Policy Framework."

CARRIED

DECISION ON SECRETARIAT POSITION

- A scope of work for the Secretariat position has been drafted and circulated to Committee members for feedback.
- The budget for this position has been previously approved.
- The question remains about whether the Committee wishes to proceed with hiring a Secretariat.
- The scope of work includes supporting the Chair and Committee members.
- It was suggested that this decision be deferred until the scope has been further refined.
- The Committee needs extra help to pull together the pieces of work completed.
- There are various ongoing initiatives with the District that may also contribute towards the RSTC's scope of work.

- An updated scope of work will be sent to staff.

MOVED by B. Wilkes and Seconded by J. Gye: “That the District of Saanich hire a Secretariat for the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee.”

CARRIED

REPORTS FROM RSTC WORKING GROUPS

The Chair provided an update from the Environmental Policy Framework (EPF) working group and noted the following:

- The working group would like Saanich Council’s approval in principle for the principals and goals.
- The draft EPF has already been sent to the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council.
- The document includes a graphic illustrating the Official Community Plan as the overarching policy document, the EPF, the principles and goals, and the policy areas. Some adjustments are still required on the graphic and introduction.

MOVED by C. Lowe and Seconded by B. Wilkes: “That the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee send the draft principles and goals of the Environmental Policy Framework to staff for a presentation to Council.”

- Should Saanich Council endorse the principles and goals, they may then direct staff to forward them to Planning staff for consideration in the Official Community Plan update.

CARRIED

EVALUATION MATRIX/EVALUATION TOOL

- A Working Group is required to complete work on the evaluation matrix.
- Working Group members will include: C. Lowe, P. Govindarajulu, B. Wilkes.

ABIOTIC AND PUBLIC HEALTH DISCUSSION

K. Brown led a discussion to clarify the breadth and depth of “environment” for the Environmental Policy Framework and noted the following:

- People differ in what is considered as important when it comes to environment.
- The Environmental Policy Framework (EPF) requires a clear and comprehensive framing and description of “environment”.
- The Briefing Note provided by Kevin Brown may be appropriate in an appendix to the EPF Report, with some reference to it in the body of the document.
- There should be an overlap among District departments with respect to environmental issues and priorities.
- The EPF principles and goals address the question of communication between departments as it relates to environment.

ELECTION OF NEXT RSTC CHAIR

Tory Stevens was elected as the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee Chair for the next term.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from B. Windjack, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Tory Stevens, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary