

**THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
RAVEN ROOM, MUNICIPAL HALL  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024**

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Committee Members: C. van der Vorm (Chair), C. Castro, A. Gallet, E. Grdina, P. Hundal, P. Scholefield; and Councillor P. Lambur attended the meeting in the Raven Room, Municipal Hall. Absent: D. Bunsha and F. Umedaly.

Staff: H. Keith, Senior Manager, Climate Action & Environment (Staff Representative); G. Howard, Fire Chief; and M. Wise, Climate Action Coordinator (Committee Clerk) attended the meeting in the Raven Room, Municipal Hall.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the February 6, 2024 Environment Committee meeting agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

E. Grdina absent at the vote

**3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the January 9, 2024 Environment Committee meeting minutes be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

E. Grdina absent at the vote

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT 6:30 p.m. be confirmed as the anticipated end time for all 2024 Environment Committee meetings with the option to extend to 7 p.m. should the Chair require.

CARRIED

E. Grdina absent at the vote

E. Grdina entered the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

## **REPORTS / ITEMS**

### **4. District's Wildfire Fuel Management Program**

B. Blackwell (B.A. Blackwell & Associates Ltd.) provided a presentation and responded to the Committee's questions with support from staff.

Committee members provided comments and queries regarding: fuel treatment timing, use of cut trees, Coastal Western Hemlock forest zone, old growth forests, ladder fuels, climate change and drought, forest moisture retention, tree thinning process and equipment, ecology training, reoccurrence of fuel treatment work for an area, wind impacts, District wildfire response capacity, treatment determination process, biodiversity and ecological conservation, efficacy of fuel treatment, community wildfire risks, Eagle Lake infrastructure, fire sensing technologies, FireSmart campaign, interface fires, external fuel treatment grants, scarcity of global wildfire resources, and District wildfire budget.

B. Blackwell left the meeting at 5:56 p.m. and did not return.

G. Howard left the meeting at 6:01 p.m. and did not return.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the presentation regarding District's Wildfire Fuel Management Program be received for information.

P. Hundal requested that the prescriptions for the proposed 2024 wildfire fuel treatment areas be circulated to the Committee members.

**CARRIED**

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT Council be advised that the Environment Committee urges Council not to finance the Wildfire Fuel Management Program from the Environmental Reserve Fund and recommends that the program be put on hold until peer-reviewed science can be presented that establishes the efficacy of the wildfire fuel management prescription being applied to the forests in Coastal Western Hemlock zone, except in direct interface areas.

The Committee discussed the motion on the floor and decided that further discussion and information was required. Therefore, the Committee consented to deferring to the next meeting that is scheduled to be held on March 5, 2024.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the February 6, 2024 Environment Committee meeting be extended 30 minutes and end at 7 p.m.

**CARRIED**

### **5. Environmental Protection and Natural Asset Priority Areas**

Chair provided a presentation on Environment Committee priority themes, scope, and actions.

E. Grdina left the meeting at 6:43 p.m. and did not return.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the discussion regarding Environmental Protection and Natural Asset Priority Areas be received for information.

CARRIED

E. Grdina absent at the vote

## **6. Annual Work Plan**

Chair provided a presentation on the proposed Environment Committee Annual Work Plan for 2024 and responded to Committee questions and comments with support from staff.

Committee members provided comments and queries regarding: workplan timelines, format, implementation, budget, priority themes and actions, funding sources, and Go By Bike Week.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the proposed Environment Committee Annual Work Plan for 2024 be supported for Council consideration.

CARRIED

E. Grdina absent at the vote

## **7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

M. Fillipoff queried about a list of questions sent to P. Hundal and H. Keith regarding the scope and objectives of the Environment Committee and 2024 workplan. It was requested by the Chair that the list of questions be shared with Committee members.

P. Lepp commented on the importance of cost benefit analysis using a nature priority lens and how that applies to ecological engagements and fuel treatment processes.

D. Mulhern queried about how greenhouse gas emissions might be tracked or measured through utilities for insight on how community electrification or retrofit actions are impacting energy and emissions use and efficiency.

E. McHarg commented on water use tracking, importance of public water use education, and water infrastructure protection.

A. George commented on the need for community walking advocacy, improving walking routes for safety, and increased accessible community use.

R. Fassler commented on the importance of leveraging natural environment protections in the community, reducing tree protection size to 20 centimeters in diameter (Urban Forest Management Plan policy projection) and concerns around different wildfire management or suppression techniques.

D. Reinsch quired about the wildfire fuel treatment processes, action from the Urban Forest Management Plan on the thinning of stems per hectare, the boundaries defined in the Urban Forest Management Plan with respect to Council's new motion on dedicating a portion of the upper lands as park, and requested to know the risk class for fuel treatment areas.

T. Reinsch commented on the allocation of funding for tree removal, and concern about the communicated deficit of wildfire resources by Chief G. Howard.

Staff and Committee members responded to the public questions.

**8. NEXT MEETING**

Staff confirmed that the next Environment Committee meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. and held in-person in the Raven Room, Municipal Hall.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

It was Moved and Seconded:


THAT the February 6, 2024 Environment Committee meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

E. Grdina absent at the vote

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Certified Correct:

  
Chair

*Heather Keith*  
Staff Representative