

**THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
RAVEN ROOM, MUNICIPAL HALL
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024**

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

Staff: H. Keith, Senior Manager, Climate Action & Environment (Staff Representative); E. Willobee, Senior Manager, Engineering Services; T. Dore, Policy & Programs Planner; 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 4:36 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the April 9, 2024 Environment Committee meeting agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the March 5, 2024 Environment Committee meeting minutes be amended by:

- Correcting the word “contentious” from D. Reinsch’s public comment by replacing it with the word “uncontentious;”
- Adding a bullet point to the March 5, 2024 meeting minutes under Item 5, District’s Wildfire Fuel Management Program, that reads “Committee member P. Hundal shared an article titled “Unintended Effects of Fuel Thinning on the Microclimate in the Coastal Forests of Southwestern British Columbia, Canada;”

AND THAT the minutes be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

REPORTS / ITEMS

4. District Community Programs and Events

T. Dore and E. Willobee provided a presentation and responded to the Committee’s questions.

Committee members and the public provided comments and queries regarding:

- Ways that golf courses and playing fields are regulated during water restriction stages;
- How the District tracks/monitors Eagle Lake reservoir levels;
- How water usage is metered and priced based on consumption;
- Manual watering versus automated watering during water restrictions;
- What the enforcement repercussions are for violations of the bylaws; and
- Do residents need to be caught in the act of watering against the bylaw to face repercussions.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the presentation regarding District Community Programs and Events be received for information.

CARRIED

5. Heat Pump Survey

Committee members provided comments and queries regarding:

- Review of overall revisions by staff;
- Request to add a heat pump rental option to question 16;
- Potential for leaving personal contact information for heat pump follow up;
- Request to add cost adjustments to question 17;
- Heating installers dissuading residents from heat pump installation as a barrier/challenge;
- More awareness needed that heat pumps are an efficient emissions reduction strategy;
- Comparison between UK, Netherlands, and Canada heat pump uptake and installation experiences;
- Update question 26 to capture experiences of heat pump dissuasion;
- Heat pump sticker design, review process, and ideas for sticker distribution;
- Overview of heat pump survey timeline, communication, distribution, amplification, and associated budget needs; and
- Exploring survey translation potential.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the Heat Pump Survey be approved and the Committee work with staff to develop a communications plan to launch the survey in spring 2024.

CARRIED

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT up to \$5,000 from the annual Community & Stewardship Education & Outreach Program budget of the Environmental Reserve Fund be allocated to support the launch and promotion of the Heat Pump Survey.

CARRIED

6. Implementation Planning of Annual Work Plan

Committee discussed the work plan and proposed ideas and feedback on implementation. Discussion included:

- Annual work plan presentation to Council set for April 29;
- Overview of the annual work plan categories, timing, and engagement;
- Potential for heat pump survey circulation at Cultural Fest;
- Home energy assessments as potential building block to heat pump uptake;
- Exploring renovation permits as a potential motivator for energy efficiency and low carbon systems uptake;
- Differences between Netherlands, UK and Canada regarding energy transition, conversion, and energy market certainty;
- The state of energy transition as it relates to grant opportunities;
- Go by Bike week engagement, partnerships, and promotional opportunities;
- Updating the North Shore bike map and use of Translink bike map;
- Bike valet service and public engagement;
- Cultural Fest as a point of engagement and promotion for Go By Bike Week;
- Opportunities for event booths to promote annual work plan priorities;
- Confirmation that tree planting actions will require Council approval due to budget needs;
- Local net fishing of surf smelt impacts and the extent of the District's authority with respect to a federally regulated recreational fishery;
- Update on the Climate Action Strategy process and timeline; and
- Potential for a car free event to be explored in more depth in the May Committee meeting that will focus on active transportation.

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the discussion regarding Implementation Planning of Annual Work Plan be received for information.

CARRIED

7. Proposed Amendment to 2024 Environment Committee Meeting Schedule

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the 2024 Environment Committee Meeting Schedule be amended by rescheduling the July 9, 2024 meeting to July 2, 2024.

CARRIED

8. Eagle Lake Wildfire Fuel Management Program

The following motion was made at the March 5, 2024 Environment Committee meeting and was withdrawn at this meeting by the mover (P. Hundal) and seconder (P. Scholefield):

THAT Council be advised that the Environment Committee recommends Council not to finance the Eagle Lake Wildfire Fuel Management Program from the Environmental Reserve Fund and recommends that the program be put on hold until further information is examined about the effectiveness, cost, and location.

The report dated April 8, 2024 was reviewed and read by the Committee, with the Committee agreeing to put forth the report as the following motion:

It was Moved and Seconded:

WHEREAS the Environment Committee is inconclusive about the effectiveness of the Eagle Lake Wildfire Fuel Reduction and believes further examination of its cost, scope and financing is warranted in light of recent studies conducted that question the effectiveness of this approach;

WHEREAS the Environment Committee recognizes the need for proactive measures to address wildfire risk, especially in light of recommendations from consultants but also in light of the fire department who has declared lacking the adequate resources for a fast response;

WHEREAS the Environment Committee acknowledges the importance of wildfire risk mitigation, particularly in interface areas around residential homes but also in those areas affecting our water supply and critical infrastructures;

WHEREAS the proposed Eagle Lake Treatment Unit is a significant expense of over \$400,000 from the Environmental Reserve Fund;

WHEREAS the Eagle Lake Treatment Unit primarily focuses on reducing combustible wood in a specific area, yet it is evident that fire ignition in our region often stems from human behavior such as cigarettes, campfires, and motor off-road activities, and the Eagle Lake area is a restricted zone;

WHEREAS the Environment Committee urges the District to develop a comprehensive wildfire risk strategy that sets forth its actions and expenditures according to the following priorities:

1. preventing the ignition and spread of wildfires through education, communications, regulation and enforcement, including FireSmart projects;
2. equipping the fire department with adequate wildfire-fighting equipment;
3. improving the capability to rapidly detect and communicate the location of wildfires and respond;
4. implementing wildfire fuel reduction measures in residential interface areas; and
5. implementing wildfire fuel reduction measures at strategic locations beyond the interface fuel treatments where their effectiveness has been established.

WHEREAS the Environment Committee has received a presentation on an early wildfire detection system, which the Committee thought could be of interest to our community. The system is capable of detecting wildfires and communicating their location, potentially protecting critical infrastructure and valuable properties in high-risk areas.

WHEREAS certain communities and private assets located in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) are most exposed to fire risk, and treatments are mainly directed toward their safety;

WHEREAS it would be prudent to explore innovative financing schemes involving private stakeholders' participation to supplement public funds, particularly to protect homes and private assets located in high-risk areas;

WHEREAS the Environment Committee suggests exploring complementary measures such as thorough communication and education about adapting to fire risks, but also alternative solutions, including the incorporation of early wildfire detection technologies that cover the entire District of West Vancouver and are cost-effective and the need for the fire department to be duly equipped with fire fighting resources;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Environment Committee recommends to Council that the planned expenditure of over \$400,000 from the Environmental Reserve Fund for the Eagle Lake Treatment Unit be carefully examined pending further study of its effectiveness and the prioritization of alternative wildfire mitigation strategies such as improving the capability to rapidly detect and communicate the location of wildfires and respond.

CARRIED

9. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

D. Reinsch inquired about the use of soaker hoses or pin hole pail watering with regard to District water restriction classifications and noted a dynamic between watering District public trees during drought months from metered watering sources at private residences.

Councillor Watt inquired about ticketing for having green lawns during advanced water restriction stages that restrict lawn watering.

E. McHarg inquired if the District tracks and reports water usage publicly.

L. Jones inquired about what type of follow-up residents receive who did not show water use reductions after receiving a District letter regarding high water use.

J. Miller inquired about how the different stages of water restriction are determined and who sets the restrictions.

L. Jones queried about the interface between the Climate & Environmental Department and collection of runoff water, the Five Creeks Diversion project and how the differences between drinking water and grey water are being identified and communicated to the public. Additionally, queried if there are spaces grey water can be drawn from.

Councillor Watt shared a personal reflection on the experience of installing a heat pump and the associated costs and process.

E. McHarg inquired about how many heat pump survey responses the Committee is aiming for.

Councillor Thompson noted that the Harmony Arts Festival is an opportunity for engagement.

D. Mulhern queried if there is a way for public to self report heat pump installations and is there a heat pump target the District is looking to meet.

D. Mulhern commented on the need for messaging on bike safety as it relates to safe speed limits and traffic.

Councillor Watt commented on the slow your roll campaign.

J. Miller inquired about who will do the background work associated with the motion proposed by the Environment Committee regarding the District Wildfire Fuel Management Program and noted that wildfire is a matter of urgent public security and issues of climate magnification of wildfire pressures locally.

E. McHarg inquired about what Council might do with the Environment Committee wildfire recommendation and what the Committee recommendation means for currently planned wildfire work. They also shared a reflection that the language of “innovative financing schemes” being used in the annual work plan may not best reflect the intent of the work plan.

D. Reinsch inquired about possible future pathways for Council to navigate the wildfire fuel treatment budget now that the budget has been approved, and how the Environment Committee motion may impact future decision making on this issue.

M. Gamel queried about the early wildfire technology exploration and follow up.

L. Jones, inquired about how the \$400,000 sum in the Committee motion is broken down and spent.

D. Mulhern commented on the Environment Committee role and the need for housing protection amid wildfire pressures and concern about rejecting wildfire fuel management.

E. McHarg commented that the Environment Committee motion wording suggests that staff and expertise knowledge are being questioned.

D. Reinsch queried about a motion restricting 2-stroke engines and the impact of 2-stroke engines on emissions creation and if there is an update on this process.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next Environment Committee meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. and held in-person in the Raven Room, Municipal Hall.

11. ADJOURNMENT

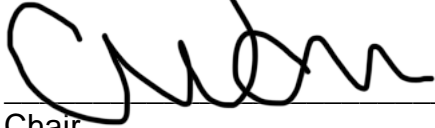
It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the April 9, 2024 Environment Committee meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Certified Correct:



Chair



Staff Representative