

Minutes of a Meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee held in the St. Albert Business Centre, on the above date at 6:00 pm.

Present

Councillor N. Joly
T. Doran
T. Fulton
B. Marsh
B. Peori
B. Thronson

Absent

A. Lefebvre

Guests

N. Pearson, Marketing Specialist, Economic Development
M. Killoh, Business Licensing Inspector, Economic Development
E. Pickard, Operations Supervisor, Parks and Open Spaces
L. Stewart, Senior Manager, Public Works Operations

Staff

K. Polkovsky, Director, Utilities & Environment
C. Benson, Manager, Environment
M. Myers, Environmental Coordinator – Community Strategy & Engagement

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Chair declared the agenda adopted as presented.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The Chair declared the minutes of October 24, 2019 adopted as presented.

Opt-In Flyer Distribution (Council Motion) Review

M. Killoh and N. Pearson introduced the Council motion to the opt-in flyers Council motion.

Background

- Administration was requested to provide a report, including recommendations, that explores the possibility of requiring marketing flyers delivered with St. Albert are opt-in rather than an opt-out service.
- Not aware of municipalities in Canada that regulate the distribution of flyers in an opt in program.

- Halifax and Calgary have regulated the distribution of flyers through bylaws that prohibit the distribution of flyers when a resident has posted a sign on their property noting their intent to not receive flyers.
- Federal government has legal jurisdiction over postal service so would have a monopoly over delivering flyers when businesses are looking to advertise this way.

Discussion included:

- Can understand the rationale from an environmental point of view however from a business point of view it might be make them at a disadvantage.
- Councillor Joly commented the goal of the Council motion is to raise awareness and make it easier for residents to learn how to opt-out for receiving flyers.
- Report is going forward to Council in February.
- Committee generally supportive however recommends a staggered approach (different regulatory options that accomplish the same goal - option 1 opt out, option 2 opt in (flyers please signage), option 3 do nothing).
- Perhaps Gazette could change their delivery be a subscription service.
- If the City goes ahead with the opt in option, it needs to be obvious how to do that.
- Questions raised on how energy intensive the recycling process is for different types of paper (i.e. shiny versus glossy versus newspaper).

B. Thronson volunteered to draft advice on the flyer topic to include in the agenda report for Economic Development. M. Myers will send the draft to the Committee for comment and approval.

Urban Forest Management Plan – Update

L. Stewart and E. Pickard introduced the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP).

- The plan included a vision for the City's urban – Protect, ensure health, cherish and expand the urban forest for today and future generations.
- Goals within the plan won't change
- Recommendations at the back of the plan short, medium and long term
- Moving forward now
- Canopy target – ambitious. Could still get there however the target year (2037) may need to be updated.
- What will affect the target is the annexed area. Might drop once the annexed area is within the City limits.
- At 13 per cent and still at 13 per cent. Haven't lost but have not gained.
- E. Pickard position is dedicated to the UFMP.
- The plan will need some amendments.
- Goal for sustainable ongoing maintenance - 5-year pruning – touch every tree within that segment in that year. Use internal staff and using more external staff. This year didn't reach all the trees in 2019 however in 2020 should reach that target.

- Urban Forest Management Policy – review in 2021 – looking to include the structural value of the tree (qualify a tree for the benefits and services it provides). Formula as a potential penalty when natural infrastructure is damaged.
- Trees fit in the Traffic Bylaw as street furniture – staff pushing trees to go into another bylaw that makes more sense.
- Working tree inventory (2016) – 64128 street and park trees. 40 per cent are ash (not as diverse as would have wanted). The other 60 per cent are quite diverse.
- Intent that the tree inventory would be available for open data.
- Committee comment - planting data would be interesting to include in the public portal.
- Age class structure will become public as soon as reviewed by executive.
- Infill are an issue for tree protection – engineering standards are currently under review and will update to require large enclosure of mature trees.
- Tree education – Clean and Green RiverFest, Spruce Up St. Albert, and Arbor Day
- City of Calgary - Grade 6 class, spend some time at City nursery, 5-gallon tree is sent home to plant on private property. Interested in implementing this in St. Albert.
- Natural areas management plan and naturalization program – 24 projects over 5000 native species planted, approx. 1700 participants. Record breaking year!
- Climate resiliency – regional project – tree planting guide – pest vulnerability study (2 documents).
- Linkages between natural areas management plan and the urban forest management plan. Environment and PW will work together on both of these plans as they overlap.
- Education will be key to increase the tree inventory within St. Albert
- Public Works receives as many calls from people that like the trees as don't like the trees.
- Education for Councillors – cheat sheets on what PW does and why they do it
- Idea for the June tour – go on a tour with L. Stewart (similar to the tour with the Councillors).

Discussion included:

- The trees that were pruned in year one – will they need to be pruned again once the 5-year maintenance cycle is complete. Yes! May take 15 years for the tree to get used to the pruning cycle (termed structurally trained). Prior to this pruning was a reactionary program so it will take some time to catch up.
- Operational (snow clearing) and safety (children) issues to changing the position of the boulevard (boulevard beside the road versus beside the property). Looking at getting the boulevard bigger and pulling the trees away from the boulevard.

- Schoolboard planting – City can plant on the property however the City focuses on their own sites. Other opportunities for schools to get funding to plant trees.

EAC 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Priorities

Attendees reviewed the 2019 annual report and 2020 priorities.

Moved by B. Marsh

That the Environmental Advisory Committee 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Priorities be approved, as amended, and presented to the Community Living Standing Committee at future Committee meeting.

CARRIED

ROUND TABLE

- Environmental Initiatives Grant EAC recommendations will go to Council on December 16.
- City received recognition for milestone 5 of the Partners for Climate Protection Program. The program is designed to support municipalities to in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Thank you to Bill, Tanya and Ben – 3 consecutive terms
- Thank you, Ben, for his 4 years of service on the committee
- Environment purchased portable air quality monitoring devices to test out with staff. Idea is to eventually develop library kit for residents to use them.
- Governance changes – still figuring out how going work. Change to 2 committees and 2 council meetings per month.
- Free local bus passes for youth has been extended.

T. Fulton departed 8:01 p.m.

- Municipal Energy Specialist start Monday and will eventually attend the committee to present on the work they are completing.
- \$500,000 approved for solar on a Public Works facility in 2020. Public Works has a new sand and storage shed built to be solar ready.
- Council is reviewing the Committees of Council during their strategic planning session.
- Sustainability Scholars program approved to help with the single use plastic item strategy.

NEXT MEETING – January 23, 2020

ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.


CHAIR


DESIGNATED OFFICER