

Minutes of the regular meeting of the ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION held in the CVRD Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, on June 9, 2009 at 6:05 pm.

PRESENT: Director Giles, Chair Rodger Hunter, Vice-Chair
 Roger Wiles John Wilson
 Justin Straker Mike Kelly
 Peter Keber Director Kent
 Director Duncan Director Hutchins
 Brian Dennison

ALSO PRESENT: Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy
Dyan Freer, Recording Secretary
Director Iannidinardo
Director Kuhn

ABSENT: Bruce Sampson Chris Wood
 Judy Stafford Francis Hugo
 Bruce Fraser

**APPROVAL
OF AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as amended with the change of the presentation of the delegation to the first item.

MOTION CARRIED

**ADOPTION
OF MINUTES**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the May 14, 2009 Environment Commission meeting be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

DELEGATIONS

- D1 **Cowichan Green Community Association (CGCA) – Emily Bullen re Seeds for Change Environment Conference on June 19th – 21st.**
- The focus of the conference is ‘How the Cowichan can be more Sustainable’ and ‘Keeping it Simple’ will be the theme. An overview of all the speaker’s credentials and presentations was given.
 - We are invited to the AGM for the CGCA on June 25 and they are asking for more volunteer board members.
 - They would like to carry on the speaker’s series – to keep it fresh.
 - Plan to be the lead on initiating a ‘resilience model’ for towns and looking to be the second transition town in Canada, after Peterborough.

**BUSINESS
ARISING OUT OF
MINUTES**

- B1 **Sub-Committee Reports**
- a. **Environmental Lens Development – Chair Chris Wood.**
Gerry Giles spoke for Chris Wood in his absence. They have met two times to develop a practical tool which will involve

staff and member municipalities in its development, to pose questions to prompt people to examine what they do and how they make decisions. Working version 1 attached. Will seek some response from members of the commission and then from staff if willing.

Discussion. Should staff have a more detailed lens than the politicians would need? It will be for all decisions – land use, purchasing, building, transit, etc. Plan for it to be a welcome addition to decision making and a tool to make ‘mindful’ decisions.

ACTION: Chair will discuss with Mayor of North Cowichan if invitation is necessary for their staff and board participation.

b. Regional Sustainability Planning Chair Phil Kent

Group has met once. There is a need for long term land use planning and a tool kit around sustainable planning. What are tipping points for sustainable water, agriculture, food production? How can we move forward? We need to educate members of the board and member governments on long term planning for sustainability. What are the outcomes of action vs inaction? Possibility to try UBC ‘Quest’ model – it looks at real data inputted – where should growth happen and what does it look like – what are effects? CRD would like to include Cowichan Valley in a visual tool in this model.

ACTION: Chair will bring the work of this committee up at a strategic planning session for board and staff June 11/09 .

c. Inventory Mapping/Indicators – Chair Justin Straker

“State of the Environment” report. Sub-committee plans to identify inventory in CVRD, gaps in the data, prioritize what is missing, and make a gap analysis. There is a lot of information out there, how do we acquire or use it? Would like to hire a GIS staff person, have to refine focus of report, and will try to give this table a draft RFP to discuss next meeting. Other organizations are currently working on State of Region reports – we will look at collaboration.

d. Communication strategy – Chair Justin Straker

Three topics were discussed –

1. Role for external website – ‘12 things’ – populates the ‘12 big ideas’ to give more information within each. Turn the existing calendar into an environmental events calendar, and provide a central hub for other organizations in the area to have info on it. We could have Zachariah give ideas on how to add to our website content. Recommendation to use some of our budget for Zachariah’s consultancy fee to further develop

- website.
2. Role for internal website – discussion forum to be used.
 3. External speakers program – get more info from commission. CGC does already have a speaker’s series and we should respect there efforts parallel to us. It would be more effective to support what already exists. We could speak on education in our community – how to connect with what commission is doing.

Discussion on the sub-committees reports: Bruce Sampson offered through his group ‘Board of the Sustainable Cities’ to put on a workshop to staff, commission, board and member governments to ground them with knowledge on how to build sustainable cities.

ACTION: Regional Sustainable Strategy sub-committee will lead this enquiry to organize and develop this workshop and will report back at next meeting.

Discussion on the work of all three committees ensued. There is a need to provide opportunities on how changes mean savings of dollars, changes in health, in the environmental aspect. “Going green is the colour of money saved”.

NEW BUSINESS n/a

CORRESPONDENCE n/a

INFORMATION

- IN1 Ipsos Reid Survey: web link <http://cvrd.bc.ca/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=886>
Discussion on the results of survey. Extremely similar data to the results of the Environmental Commission survey last fall which validates that survey as well. Community is very interested in water quality and quantity and water conservation. Taking input from this poll would help us plan and become more proactive.

Discussion ensued. We will start to see ‘Amenity migration’ – moving here because of environmental concerns and for what we have to offer. Affordable living, opportunities for outdoor recreation, affordable housing, air and water quality are what will draw people to the Cowichan Valley.

- IN2 Transition Town talk on Thursday, June 18 from 7 – 9 pm, in the Somenos Room of the Island Savings Centre
- IN3 Ladysmith City Hall’s vegetable gardens have incredible food growing in them. Instead of flowers they have planted vegetables and herbs and given lots of fresh vegetables to food bank and to local residents.

NEXT MEETING Thursday, July 9, 2009 at 6 pm

ADJOURNMENT **It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.**

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Chair

Recording Secretary

Dated: _____