

**West Hants Municipal Climate Change Action Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2014**

Present: Councillor Victor Swinamer, Chair
Councillor Randy Matheson
Rick Sherrard, Director of Public Works
Paul Maynard, REMO Coordinator

Staff: Jeanne Bourque, Planner
Karen Dempsey, Director of Planning
Velma Macumber, Admin. Assistant

Guests: Craig Bauchman, Aboiteau Superintendent, NS Department of Agriculture
Anne Warburton, Elemental Sustainability Consulting Ltd
Councillor Mike Campbell

Regrets: Councillor Jennifer Daniels
Kathy Kehoe, Director of Recreation
Cathie Osborne, Interim CAO
Warden Richard Dauphinee

Chair Swinamer called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He asked that the order of the agenda be revised.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & ADDITIONS

Moved by Mr. Sherrard and Councillor Matheson that the agenda be approved as revised.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Sherrard and Ms. Bourque to approve the Minutes of the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan Committee of July 9, 2014.

Motion carried.

PRESENTATION: CRAIG BAUCHMAN, NS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ABOITEAU SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Bauchman gave a power point presentation to the Committee outlining the Department of Agriculture's work on protecting dykes and aboiteaux in Hants County. Mr. Bauchman advised that in Hants County there are 52 aboiteaux, 22 kilometres of dyke which are protecting 2,545 hectares of agricultural land. He stated that the department does regular maintenance which involves erosion protection against normal water movement. Some of the repairs are done with armour rock which can be expensive. The department is trying to raise dykes to Climate Change levels of 2055. Mr. Bauchman spoke about two projects; one with respect to Tregothic Marsh, which has been completed, and the other regarding Elderkin Marsh, which is pending funding approval.

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Discussion followed with respect to funding for projects in West Hants, and how projects are evaluated, and the Agricultural Marshland Act and what role Marsh Bodies play in the protection and maintenance of marshland.

Ms. Warburton asked Mr. Bauchman is there was a specific time of year when project are discussed, and if any dykes were candidates for realignment. Mr. Bauchman said there is no specific time when projects are addressed, just when matters arise, and no dykes are scheduled for realignment at this time. He noted that with any realignment of dykes there is a potential for the loss of agricultural land, and there is a great cost as well. Changing the boundaries would be difficult.

Mr. Bauchman noted that in Nova Scotia, inland flooding is not covered by insurance. This matter could fall under REMO, but it could be recognized through new regulations under planning and development. Ms. Warburton asked if there were any restrictions on an incorporated marsh body. Mr. Bauchman advised that the Marshland Act is very restrictive. Agricultural uses are permitted on marshlands, but no structures are permitted and that includes barns.

A brief discussion was held concerning the process for variances.

Mr. Bauchman gave a more detailed update with respect to Elderkin Marsh Dyke Topping. He said that the topping project has been slated for the budget year 2014-2015 pending provincial funding approval.

The meeting adjourned for a break at 10:20 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 10:37 a.m.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Committee work plan

Ms. Bourque clarified that the MCCAP Committee has a work plan already drafted in the action items outlined in the MCCAP. She said that she would like the Committee to review the action items between now and the next meeting, and then they can discuss how to prioritize the actions and determine what funding is available. Ms. Bourque suggested a 5 year plan could be created and the Committee could make recommendations to Council on what needs to be done.

Mr. Sherrard suggested that the Committee needs to determine what high priority items are more pressing than others. Ms. Bourque suggested that the support staff will meet to review the items to bring to the next meeting.

Update – municipal website

Ms. Bourque advised that the municipal website has been updated with respect to the Municipal Climate Change Action Plan.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was heard.

MISCELLANEOUS

Avon River Causeway

Mr. Sherrard advised that he wanted to make the Committee aware that no maintenance has been done to the dykes along the river above the causeway for over thirty years as the causeway made them redundant. When discussion happens about the possibility of removing the causeway, consideration should be given to the need to repair the old dykes if that happens. Also, consideration should also be given to the regular flooding that occurred in the town of Windsor prior to the building of the causeway.

Mr. Sherrard wished to make the point that Lake Pisiquid was designed as a critical piece of storm water management as it acts as a holding area for water, and he would like to see the water level lower than it currently is. There is a potential conflict of interest when recreational groups wish to have higher water levels which reduce the capacity of the lake to carry out its primary function as a stormwater management structure. A balance needs to be struck between the two uses. Mr. Sherrard informed the Committee that there is a Lake Pisiquid Water Level Committee who determines the water levels in the lake, for instance, during the Pumpkin Regatta. Ms. Bourque said that she would find out more information about the Water Level Committee.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, October 28, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Matheson and Mr. Sherrard that the meeting adjourn.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Chair