



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Climate Action Committee (CAC) Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2026, 11:06am – 11:40am
Sanford Council Chambers / Zoom / YouTube Live

- PRESENT:** Deputy Mayor Debbie Francis, District 5, Chair
Councillor Jim Ivey, District 11
Councillor Bonnie Smith, District 10
Lauren Douglas, Resident Member
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer
Kari Fougere, Acting Director of Planning & Development
Carlee Rochon, Director of Financial Services
Kaleigh McCarthy, Environmental Technologist (Public Works designate)
Kathy Kehoe, Director of Community Development
- STAFF:** John Ogilvie, Climate Action Coordinator
Saarah Kunaseelan, Clean Foundation Community Navigator
Vanessa Lake, Meeting Secretary
- PUBLIC:** 0 members of the public.
- REGRETS:** There were no regrets.

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Deputy Mayor Francis called the meeting to order at 11:06am. All Committee members were present. Everyone welcomed new member Lauren Douglas and briefly introduced themselves.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Ivey and seconded by CAO Phillips that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

3.0 Approval of Minutes (February 11, 2025)

Moved by Councillor Ivey and seconded by Kaleigh McCarthy that the minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 New Business

4.1 Recommendation: PACE Program Funding (John Ogilvie)

At the February 11, 2026, meeting, the Committee voted in favour of recommending that Council allocate up to \$600,000 in external funding for the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program. However, at the Council meeting on February 24, 2026, Council did not vote in favour of this recommendation. No direction was provided to staff regarding the future status of the program, so staff are bringing the recommendation back with more options to consider for a more robust discussion. Staff recommend a smaller amount of up to \$400,000 to allow the program to keep running. Coordinator Ogilvie outlined the many benefits of the program, as well as the risks that may come from not providing further funding for the program. The full report is available with the agenda package.

CAO Phillips suggested amending the recommendation so that the funding source be determined by Council.

Councillor Ivey asked where the Municipality stood with their current reduction targets. Coordinator Ogilvie replied that emission reductions associated with the PACE Program are modeled by SwitchPACE, the program administrators, but that other community sources of emissions or reductions are difficult to track. He added that there is a plan to update the GHG emissions inventory within the Committee's 2026-27 workplan. The last community inventory was completed using 2016 census data.

Councillor Ivey asked if there was a minimum funding amount required by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to consider a PACE program to be operating. Coordinator Ogilvie

will investigate. CAO Phillips noted that each project could cost up to \$40k each, so having more funding available allows for more applications. Deputy Mayor Francis added that the entire \$400k would not necessarily be used, depending on participant uptake.

Councillor Ivey cited possible impacts to taxes and interest rates if the Municipality were to borrow the money.

Moved by Councillor Ivey and seconded by Councillor B. Smith that the Climate Action Committee recommends that Council allocates up to \$400,000 to the Switch West Hants program for energy efficiency financing, to be funded by a method determined by Council. Motion carried unanimously.

4.2 Recommendation: All Hazards Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan (John Ogilvie)

The 2026-27 Climate Action Committee workplan includes an action item to complete an all-hazard and risk assessment for the municipality. Staff have identified that there is funding available from the FCM through the Climate Ready Plans and Processes (CRPP) program. The project would have a 2-year timeline and would help indicate the biggest risks to the Municipality and help prioritize future projects. Many other funding opportunities require having a risk assessment and adaptation plan in place, so having this completed may assist with future applications. The full report is available with the agenda package.

Councillor Ivey asked if this project would be similar to the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). Coordinator Ogilvie responded that while the IRP is focused on the water and wastewater utility, the risk assessment will draw on the IRP as a component. Data from the IRP and other similar projects would be used with the risk assessment and adaptation plan, resulting in a reduced workload to complete the assessment.

Councillor Ivey asked if it was possible to complete the project any faster. Staff recommend the 2-year timeline, to synchronize with the HealthADAPT project to piggyback on data and public engagement. There can be intermittent updates provided throughout the process.

Moved by Councillor Ivey and seconded by CAO Phillips that the Climate Action Committee recommends that Council approves allocating up to \$30,000 as part of an application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Climate Ready Plans and Processes program for funding to complete an all-hazards risk assessment and develop a Municipal climate adaptation plan, to be funded 50% from the Climate Action Committee 2026-27 work plan budget, and 50% from the Regional Operating Reserve.

5.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

6.0 Roundtable Discussion

CAO Phillips attended the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Spring conference last week. A major discussion topic was water and water sources, and in particular, wells. It was discussed what data there was available for wells, particularly in rural areas. Municipalities across the province are looking into the regulation of wells. CAO Phillips and John will be meeting with provincial representatives tomorrow (May 7, 2026) to discuss climate change adaptation programs.

Lauren was excited to see risk assessment planning and adaptation for West Hants.

Councillor Bonnie Smith asked for an update on the Home Flood Protection Pilot Program (HFPPP). John replied that he is currently reviewing quotes submitted by homeowners. CAO approval has been received to distribute funds to several applicants. At this time, about half of the grant money has been expended. A few applicants have completed their projects, John has conducted an inspection, and they have received the final 25% of their grant. There are a few projects lined up to receive their first 75% and a few applications that still require more information. Overall, John is working through applications as quickly as he can.

7.0 Public Comments

The public is encouraged to attend the meeting or contact staff directly with any questions or comments. No members of the public were present at the meeting. John can be reached at JOgilvie@westhants.ca or 902-798-8291 ext. 147. Other staff contact information is available on the municipal website at <https://www.westhants.ca/municipal-staff.html>.

8.0 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2026, at 11:00am. The Committee and the public will be notified if there are any changes.

9.0 Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40am.