

TOWNSHIP OF BILLINGS
MINUTES
Climate Action Committee (CAC)

May 25th, 2022

Virtual Meeting – Zoom@7pm

PRESENT: Councillor Bryan Barker (Chair), Bob Clifford, Paul Darlaston, Chris Theijsmeijer

REGRETS: John Hoekstra (technical issues)

Staff: Todd Gordon (MPM, Recorder)

Members of the Public: None

Media: None

1) OPEN

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Moved by Paul Darlaston; Seconded by Bob Clifford. Carried.

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda for the May 25th, 2022, meeting was approved.

Moved by Bob Clifford; Seconded by Chris Theijsmeijer. Carried.

3) DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

4) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The minutes for the April 20th, 2022, meeting were approved.

Moved by Chris Theijsmeijer; Seconded by Paul Darlaston. Carried.

5) DELEGATIONS

None.

6) OLD BUSINESS

i. Spring Event - Debrief

A roundtable discussion, starting with Chris Theijsmeijer and then Chair Barker – as the two members who were able to attend the full event. All members joined in the discussion. Key points included:

- Attendance was low (20 plus members of the public), but engagement of those in attendance was excellent.
- Speakers were very good, and well received. A good mix of speakers/topics
- Good information booths – also well received by the public, and engaged
- The inability to get the PC Wi-Fi working was the one “issue” – although minor, it affected Colen McKeever’s ability to present info at his booth. We will need to resolve this issue for future events.
- Positive, direct outcomes included:

- Encouragement to consider township re-engagement with Re-Think Green, and also to hear more about the technology that Colen McKeever represents.
- Take-aways included:
 - A longer planning horizon will help in future
 - More and varied advertising/promotion will help
- All in all, considering the limited planning window, and the fact that the event was occurring after 2 years of pandemic, the event was probably at least a qualified success, and definitely worth the effort.

ii. CCIC Position Update

- Unfortunately, nothing has happened on this front.
- The Committee urged that another posting be launched for the position.
- There may be a possibility that Re-Think Green could assist with this matter, pending re-engagement.
- The Chair will consider raising the climate change/climate action topic again at a future MMA meeting, to see where other municipalities are at in this area, and what is happening, if anything.

iii. CAC Blog – Standing Item

The committee agreed to make the CAC Blog a standing agenda item because of its importance as tool for disseminating information to the community. The committee expressed the need to keep posts informative but not overwhelming or excessively negative – the topic of climate change is very serious, and the need for action, vital, but it can get quite intense. There was discussion of using previous extreme weather events in the township’s history as one contextual tool in discussing climate change impact and the need for action. Chris Theijsmeijer had written some extension draft posts related to the Earth Day event, and these were enthusiastically embraced by the committee. Paul Darlaston’s ongoing work monitoring and synthesizing COP related developments, and how/where best to communicate this information, was also discussed (see also, National Adaptation Strategy Update, below). The committee also discussed using article links in the blog – the what, when, and how of doing this.

7) NEW BUSINESS

i. Re-Think Green Partnership

The Chair had some discussion with Simon Blakely of Re-Think Green at the Earth Day event – Re-Think Green was one of the booth-holders at the event. Billings had a formal partnership with Re-Think Green in the period leading up to the hiring of the Climate Change Coordinator, and development of the CEEP. Based on discussions with Mr. Blakely, the Chair asked if the committee would be interested in having him present to the committee at an upcoming meeting. There was unanimous interest.

ii. Steps moving forward with the CEEP

The committee had good discussion and suggestions and comments included the following:

- Continuing to work on communication – which is vital, and important in demonstrating that the CAC has a purpose and can be of service to Council and therefore the municipality/community.
- Looking for ways to assist in improving the corporate organizational capacity (to address climate change - referenced directly and indirectly in many CEEP action items.
- The need to get back to energy-tracking – especially determining, at this stage, what information is actually already available, in what form, and how it can be used to inform this important component.
- Think about the potential “quick wins” for the rest of this year and into early 2023:
 - Composting pilot, and/or composting subsidy – exploring this to see if/how it might be implemented
- Staff (and everyone) urged to watch for, and be mindful of, potential funding opportunities that might help directly or indirectly with achieving an.

iii. National Adaptation Strategy Update – Paul Darlaston

Paul Darlaston gave an update on the national strategy, which outlines Canada’s plan, including timelines to reduce GHG from Canada’s commitment in response to COP 26.

iv. Status of CAC Following the 2022 Municipal Election

The Chair reminded the committee that technically, committees serve at the pleasure of Council. It seems fairly likely that the CAC will continue in the new term of Council, but ultimately, committee status won’t be known until the election is completed, the new Council is sworn in and begins governance.

8) CORRESPONDENCE

None

9) INFORMATION

None

10) CLOSED SESSION

None

11) RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

None

12) NEXT MEETING

June 22nd, 7:00 pm, via Zoom

13) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm, on a motion by Paul Darlaston.