



MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
May 16, 2019**

Attendance

Members

Kevin Boon, Chair
Ashok Bangia
Karl Fernandes
Phil Ling
Diane Ross
Natasha Welch

Regrets

Christopher Ford, Vice Chair
Alimasi Chen
Karl Lyew, Immediate Past Chair
Nadine Pinto
Regional Councillor Jack Heath

Council

Regional Councillor Joe Li

Guests

Martin Bush, Drawdown
Stewart Cumner, Resident
Margit Muller, Teacher

Staff

Jacqueline Tung, Community Engagement
Assistant
Jennifer Wong, Sustainability Coordinator
Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) was called to order at 7:13 PM with Kevin Boon presiding as Chair.

2. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

It was agreed to add the following items to Other Business:

- Hiatus of Alimasi Chen

The agenda was accepted as amended.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON APRIL 18, 2019

It was

Moved by Phil Ling
Seconded by Natasha Welch

That the minutes of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) meeting held on April 18, 2019 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

A. INFORMATION ON MARKHAM INITIATIVES AND COUNCIL MATTERS

- Regional Councillor Joe Li reported that, in order to promote ways to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, Markham may implement a community bike-share program, a system of bicycles available for short term rental that allows users to get a bicycle at one location and drop it off at another. Markham will first study the results of a pilot project in Kingston Ontario.
- Regional Councillor Joe Li also reported that he will champion environmental issues, such as waste management, during this municipal term. The contract to provide waste management services for Markham is being considered for renewal. He advised that he would like Markham to move forward with implementing an underground waste management system in new developments. He will lead a group of developers on a trip to Quebec to view this type of system.

B. FOLLOW UP ON ACTION ITEMS

Chair Kevin Boon reviewed and updated the action items.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. EARTH MONTH PLANNING

Jacqueline Tung reviewed the results of the Earth Day event.

She advised that:

- approximately 450 – 550 people attended
- 180 passports were completed, more than the 124 completed in the previous year
- There were 55 test drives
- People heard about the event via the website and social media
- People liked the animal shows, the children's activities, and the interactive activities; Face painting for the children was very popular
- Next year, people would like to see more animal shows and be able to test drive more cars
- People thought Markham should address these environmental issues: tree planting, water conservation and quality, waste management
- A slide show was created to run at the Earth Day event but was not in a compatible format, so it was not able to be used.

Ms. Tung recommended the following enhancements for next year:

- Better coordination of test drives
- More coordination of volunteer assignments including having volunteers remain at their assigned station as scheduled
- Increase the variety of exhibitors

The Committee felt that there were positive results this year but noted that people don't specifically attend for the Earth Day event; rather they attend the venue for something else and drop in. It was noted that media attention includes newspaper ads, mobile signs in high traffic areas, media releases and social media. The Committee discussed ways to attract residents to the event including asking other EACs what has worked well in their areas. Jennifer Wong and Jacqueline Tung advised that Markham would be open to new ideas. It was suggested that planning for a different type of Earth Day event would need to start sooner. This discussion will be continued at future meetings.

B. CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Martin Bush advised that severe global warming is affecting all parts of the world, even Canada, as noted in three major reports:

- The May 2019 report from the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services has determined that out of 8 million known species of animals and plants, about 1 million are under threat of extinction;
- The report on Canada's Changing Climate, issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada earlier this year, has forecast that Canada will warm twice as fast as the global average, which will very likely increase the probability and intensity of heatwaves, wildfires, extreme weather and floods;
- The *Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C* issued last year by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has determined that the world has just over a decade to take concerted and effective action to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases if global warming is to be limited to not more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

In the past few months, there has been a groundswell of concern relating to the climate change emergency. In Canada, 300 municipalities have declared a state of climate emergency; England and Scotland have also done so.

It was recommended that MEAC recommend to Markham Council that it also declare a state of emergency and a draft declaration was reviewed. It was suggested that a Council declaration would signal to the Markham community that Council is aware there is a climate emergency and that it wants to do something about it, while reinforcing links between the Council and the community. This could also raise community interest in Markham's Municipal Energy Plan (MEP) and other environmental plans.

Committee discussion suggested that:

- This type of messaging is key and the approach is strong
- The element of youth be included in the messaging

Such a request from MEAC to Council would be placed on an agenda for a future meeting of the General Committee. Regional Councillor Joe Li could ask to speak to the issue and would need a colleague to second it. However, MEAC members would also need to attend the meeting to support the request.

It was agreed that MEAC members will suggest edits to the draft declaration, Phil Ling will incorporate the suggestions into a final document, and forward it on to Jennifer Wong for review by Markham staff. Then, the Committee will be able to consider the motion to recommend the revised declaration to Markham Council.

It was

Moved by Phil Ling
Seconded by Ashok Bangia

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee is in alignment with the principle of declaring a climate emergency and will prepare a declaration for consideration by Markham Council.

CARRIED

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- Chair Kevin Boon advised Committee members that Alimasi Chen is not able to participate in Committee meetings or events this year. The Clerk's Office has advised that an Advisory Committee member may take time off from committee responsibilities and, in such instances, the committee member in question would not be counted towards quorum. After discussion, it was

Moved by Ashok Bangia
Seconded by Phil Ling

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee respect the request of Alimasi Chen to take the remainder of this year off from participating as part of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee.

CARRIED

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, June 20, 2019 at 7:00 p.m., in the Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by Natasha Welch
Seconded by Phil Ling

That the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee adjourn at 9:15 PM.

CARRIED