



Electronic Waste Diversion Committee

Zoom

March 16, 2021

9:00 AM

Members: Regional Councillor Jack Heath Regional Councillor Joe Li Councillor Reid McAlpine Valerie Burke, Resident Guests: Councillor Alan Ho Councillor Isa Lee Regional Councillor Jim Jones Councillor Andrew Keyes	Staff: Claudia Marsales, Senior Manager of Waste Management & Environment Michael DiPasquale, Supervisor, Waste Operations Sara Tam, Manager of Business Planning and Innovation Juliana Aparicio, Diversion Programs Technician Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator <u>Regrets</u> Karl Lyew
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1. Call to Order

The Waste Diversion Committee convened at 9:09 AM with Regional Councillor Jack Heath in the Chair.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

That the Minutes from the November 25, 2021 Waste Diversion Committee be approved as presented.

Carried

3. New Business

Regional Councillor Joe Li will provide an update on Automated Vacuum Systems under New Business.

4. Update on Blue Box Regulations

The final regulations to make the producers responsible for the the blue box program went to the provincial cabinet in February 2021. The regulation was sent back to staff for further amendments. It is anticipated that the final regulations will be released in April 2021. There is no clear direction on whether municipalities will be allowed to go with their preferred transition date or if there will be a strict schedule.

Committee noted that Markham will need to decide if it moves forward transitioning responsibility of the blue box program to producers in 2023 based on the Council decision or if it transitions on later date based on the York Region Council decision. If there is a delay in the producers taking over the blue box program, York may consider transition in 2024.

5. Textiles

Markham has successfully diverted over 20 million pounds of textiles since it started its textile program in 2017. A press release recognizing this good news story will be issued. The City continued to collect textiles throughout Covid-19. Over 3.9 million pounds were collected during the the pandemic. There are still approximately 20 unlicensed Green Earth Used Clothing textile containers in Markham that staff would like to have removed. A textile sensor pilot will be launched in the spring of 2021. The new more advanced sensors will be placed on 10 containers with the objective of being able to reduce servicing trips therefore further reducing the program's carbon footprint.

Staff provided the following responses to inquiries from the Committee: the larger textile containers previously had sensors that used an older type of ultrasonic device that provided mixed results and was costly. The hope is that the newer versions of the technology will be more efficient and effective. Once staff have a complete set of data from the new sensors, charities can place and service the textile containers more strategically. The sensors will also permit for textile containers to be placed in more remote areas, as they will be able to be serviced less. A battery with a 6-10 year lifespan operates the sensor.

Staff further responded to inquiries from the Committee: Diabetes Canada is now picking up its textiles, as it had prior to Covid-19. Producers may takeover textiles in the future, but there is no current plan for this. There could become an oversupply of textiles if all municipalities started textile recycling programs, but this is currently not an issue. A registered letter providing Green Earth Used Clothing with 7 days to remove its unlicensed textile bins could be sent. Municipal staff could then remove the bins after 7 days if they are not removed. The bins could also be stored if required.

Committee suggested that staff should remove the unlicensed bins, but should speak with Claudia Storto first.

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine

Seconded by Valerie Burke

Whereas out of concern for the welfare and safety of Markham residents; and,

Whereas the City's by-law authorizes staff to complete task of removing the bins; and further,

That the Waste Diversion Committee recommends that Earth friendly textile clothing bins be removed from Markham streets.

Carried

6. Update on Success of Packaging Styrofoam Ban

Markham has experienced a 70% increase in the recycling of Styrofoam at the depots since its curbside ban on packaging Styrofoam. The increase in Styrofoam being brought to the depots may also be the result of York Region cancelling its Styrofoam recycling program. The long line-up at the depots is attributed to Covid-19, as only two people are permitted in the depots at the same time. A video on the ban was created, as part of an application for the "Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators Award". The video was displayed to the Committee.

Committee requested that the video be circulated to Members after the meeting. The Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Heath contemplated asking why York Region cancelled its Styrofoam recycling program.

7. By-Law Amendment Masks/Gloves in Blue Box

The City launched the Target Zero campaign to address Covid-19 related concerns including gloves, masks and wipes being put in the blue box. The PPE in the blue box is a health hazard for staff working at the MRF. According to data, many offenders are repeat offenders. In order to address this issue, staff are recommending the City's Refuse By-Law be updated to include wipes, tissue, protective gloves, and masks as "non-collectible blue box " items, which means residents can be fined for putting these items into the blue box.

Committee noted that residents are also littering their PPE, which could possibly be addressed under the Keeping Markham Beautiful By-Law.

Moved by Regional Councillor Joe Li

Seconded by Councillor Valerie Burke

That the Waste Diversion Committee supports prohibiting masks, gloves and tissues from the blue bin by amending the City's "Refuse By-Law" to include these items on the non-collectible refuse list.

Carried

8. COVID Impact on Recycling Depot Operations

An overview of the Covid-19 safety protocols in place at the depots was provided. The protocols have created lines at some of the depots. However, traffic at the depots has also increased by 25% in March. The City's recycling depot contractor has worked very hard to keep the depots running well while maintaining the health and safety protocols. It was suggested that the operating budget of the recycling depots be reviewed as usage continues to increase.

Committee noted that there should be a plan for more depots as Markham's population grows and that some of the cost could possibly be covered under development charges.

9. Awarded Collection Contract

The City's new collection contract permits residents to have larger green bins, as its collection trucks will now have cart tippers to handle the larger green bins. Staff plan to sell the larger green bins at the depots for full cost recovery. A picture of the bins being considered were displayed to the Committee. The 132 litre Rehrig Pacific has a lock that is said to be raccoon proof. The Committee was asked for its input on the bins.

The Committee suggested that residents should be able to use a variety of sizes for their green bins. It also suggested that the replacement of green bins should possibly be included in the City's Lifecycle Reserve Study.

New Business

Regional Councillor Joe Li reported that he attended a very informative workshop on automated vacuums on February 23, 2021, and that he is working with Regional Councillor Jim Jones on a motion to bring to Council on making it mandatory for the installation of an AVAC system in Markham. The cost of implementing a system is approximately \$2500 per household in a new development. With Markham's population rapidly growing now is an ideal time to make the installation of the AVAC system mandatory.

Committee suggested that this project could possibly be funded under the Federal Infrastructure Grant, and requested that the business case and motion be presented to the Waste Diversion Committee prior to being introduced to the General Committee. It requested that a meeting be scheduled when Regional Councillor Li is prepared to present the motion and business case to the Committee.

Claudia Marsales advised that she would like to be involved in the discussion on the AVAC system, as she would like to provide input on the vision for its future use.

Adjournment

The waste Diversion Committee adjourned at 11:11 AM.