

# Markham Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes

July 29, 2024, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
Council Chamber

Sub-Committee Members	Regional Councillor Alan Ho, Chair Councillor Karen Rea Councillor Andrew Keyes Mayor Frank Scarpitti (Ex-Officio)
Regrets	Councillor Amanda Collucci Deputy Mayor Michael Chan (Ex-Officio) Regional Councillor Jim Jones (Ex-Officio) Regional Councillor Joe Li (Ex-Officio)
Council Members	Councillor Isa Lee
Staff Members	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer Alice Lam, Director, Operations Eddy Wu, Director, Environmental Services David Plant, Senior Manager, Parks, Horticulture & Forestry Rob Muir, Manager, Stormwater Zahra Parhizgari, Engineer, Environmental Services Erica Alligood, Election / Committee Coordinator Rajeeth Arulanantham, Assistant to Council / Committee

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Markham Sub-Committee meeting was called to order at 9:06 AM with Regional Councillor Alan Ho in the Chair.

### INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We begin today by acknowledging the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples and their commitment to stewardship of the land. We acknowledge the communities in circle.

The North, West, South and Eastern directions, and Haudenosaunee, Huron- Wendat, Anishnabeg, Seneca, Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit peoples. We share the responsibility with the caretakers of this land to ensure the dish is never empty and to restore relationships that are based on peace, friendship, and trust. We are committed to reconciliation, partnership and enhanced understanding.

## **2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

## **3. SWAN LAKE REPORT AND PRESENTATIONS (STAFF)**

Eddy Wu, Director, Environmental Services, introduced the presentation as the annual update on the ongoing Swan Lake water quality improvement program. Director Wu introduced Rob Muir to deliver a presentation.

Rob Muir, Manager, Stormwater, and Zahra Parhizgari, Environmental Engineer, delivered a presentation.

Dr. Tammy Karst-Riddoch, Senior Aquatic Scientist, AECOM, Consultant, was in attendance and available for questions.

The Sub-Committee asked if the proposed flood diversion scenarios outlined would have any impact on the work on the Markham Village Flood Implementation Program. Mr. Muir clarified that part of the flow diversion feasibility study would involve the investigation of necessary upsizing of any existing infrastructure to rectify bottlenecks while also looking at storage options to further mitigate flood risks. Mr. Muir clarified that the diversion study will not recommend any scenarios that would put at risk any other downstream systems.

## **4. FOCUSED ON REHABILITATION OF SWAN LAKE AND SWAN LAKE PARK (FOSLP)**

Fred Peters, representing Friends of Swan Lake Park (FOSLP), provided a presentation on the proposed rehabilitation objectives and measures for Swan Lake and Swan Lake Park. Mr. Peters indicated that FOSLP is aiming to raise \$60,000 to hire a consultant for a technical study by raising \$15,000 from residents and corporations, \$30,000 from the Lions Club, and requested that the City contribute \$15,000 to this fundraising goal.

Ali Asgary and Satinder Brar, York University, presented on the Swan Lake Citizen Science Lab and the Centre International de Formation des Autorites / Acteurs Locaux (CIFAL). A drone program was proposed to collect visual inspections of the lake, which could be interpreted using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and produce water quality reports and story maps. No funding was

requested from the City; however, it was indicated that York could use space in a community center.

Peter Miller, deputant, resident of Amica Swan Lake, expressed support for improvements of the trail system surrounding Swan Lake to ensure opportunity for use from members of the public, including those with disabilities. Mr. Miller expressed support for the proposals of Friends of Swan Lake Park and the work being proposed by York University.

William Dewberry, deputant, and past president of the Markham Lion's Club, outlined the work done by the Markham Lion's Club with respect to Swan Lake Park. Mr. Dewberry suggested that there may be additional funding available from Lion's Club International to go toward enhancing Swan Lake and improvement of the water quality.

Pamela Nitert, representing Amica Swan Lake, expressed support and endorsement for the proposal by Friends of Swan Lake Park, reiterating the importance of accessibility and the recreational nodes to ensure full enjoyment of the area by members of the public and residents of Amica Swan Lake. Ms. Nitert advised that Amica Swan Lake is working with Friends of Swan Lake Park to understand what they can do to assist with further fundraising. Emily Hess, General Manager of AMICA Swan Lake, expressed appreciation for the water quality improvement at Swan Lake since 2016.

The Sub-Committee provided the following feedback:

- Sought clarification on the pH levels indicated of 8.4 to 9.3, asking if this is within normal range. Dr. Tammy Karst-Riddoch noted that a pH of 7 is considered neutral, which would not be expected for natural freshwater systems. Dr. Karst-Riddoch explained that Swan Lake has a higher pH as a result of algae, which has improved after chemical treatments were undertaken to reduce algae. Questions about color and Dissolved Organic Carbon (DOC) were discussed. DOC in water is not harmful, and color is not a measure of water quality degradation. It is being measured to identify trends.
- Asked if extensive testing needs to continue on the lake given the improvements in water quality. Dr. Karst-Riddoch explained that maintenance of water quality is important for sustainability long term, noting that the City would undertake a review of the lake management plan for Swan Lake next year to evaluate what efforts could be more staggered and what should be continued on a regular basis. Dr. Karst-Riddoch also indicated that as a shallow urban lake, Swan Lake will always need some level of maintenance.
- Sought clarification from Friends of Swan Lake Park on the requested \$15,000, given the City's existing commitment and investment into the project. Mr. Peters explained that additional funding from the City could assist Friends of Swan Lake

Park in retaining technical support needed for their work going forward, with additional funding which may be contributed by the Lion's Club. The Sub-Committee indicated that the City is investing in technical studies, and there are other ways for collaboration with residents.

- Asked about the costing of lookouts surrounding the lake. David Plant, Senior Manager, Parks, Horticulture & Forestry, advised that Staff have engaged the TRCA with respect to shoreline improvements, noting that Staff have not recommended adopting viewing nodes at this time due to cost and with consideration for City-wide equity. Mr. Plant explained that two viewing nodes would have an estimated cost of \$600,000 to \$700,000 and that Operations has taken the position that the City instead pursue shoreline goose exclusion fencing which is related to water quality improvement and has received Council approval.
- The Chair indicated that he would like to have a public meeting in the next three months to allow for further discussions of FOSLP's ideas, and to have feedback from staff.

The Sub-Committee thanked Friends of Swan Lake Park for their work over the years and thanked York University for the presentation of the CIFAL proposal.

Moved By Councillor Karen Rea

Seconded By Councillor Andrew Keyes

1. That the report entitled "Swan Lake- 2023 Water Quality Status and Updates" be received; and,
2. **That the deputations from Fred Peters, Friends of Swan Lake Park, Ali Asgary and Satinder Brar, York University, Peter Miller, William Dewberry, and Pamela Nitert, Amica Swan Lake, made to the July 29, 2024 Markham Sub-Committee be received; and,**
3. **That the funding request by Friends of Swan Lake Park and the CIFAL proposal, as well as the request for shoreline viewing nodes be referred to Staff to report back in the future; and,**
4. That Staff continue to implement the Long-term Management Plan for Swan Lake approved by Council in December 2021, including advancement of submerged aquatic vegetation, research into chloride treatment, and flow diversion evaluation (previously in Phases 2 and 3 of the Plan); and,
5. That Staff report back annually on water quality results and evaluation of adapted Core and Complementary measures for consideration in Phase 2 of the Plan through the Markham Sub-Committee with the participation of the Friends of Swan Lake Park; and,

6. That the next review of the Plan will be in 2025 (after the completion of Phase 1 and other measures as listed under item 2) with consideration for a workshop in 2026; and further,
7. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved By Councillor Andrew Keyes

Seconded By Councillor Karen Rea

That the Markham Sub-Committee meeting adjourn at 10:53 AM.

**Carried**