



Minutes

Friday, October 23, 2020

1:00 pm

Zoom Online Meeting

Present

Geoff Ross (Chair)
Margarete Cameron
Allen Edwards
Michael Peppard
Kevin Trimble

Patricia Arney
John Cooper
Pete LeMoine
Aaron Rusak

Sandy Cairns
George Crawford
Karen Maxwell
Peter Sale

Staff

Christy Doyle
Rochelle Jeffries

Rebecca Willison
Kevin Boyle

Samantha Hastings

Presenters

Meaghan Luis
Invasive Species Centre

Colin Cassin
Invasive Species Centre

Sarah Rang
Invasive Species Centre

Guests

Alison Brownlee
Sylvain Desjeans
Neil Stoop
Carolyn Gould
Linda Mathers
Deb Sparks

Cathy Oakden
Michelle Hudolin
Geoff Carleton
Michelle Fraser
Sarah Warren

Katherine Denune
Tamara Brincat
Gillian Mitchell
Sue McKenzie
Len Ring

Welcome

Geoff Ross called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm by welcoming everyone. Patricia Arney reported that the province has released the Muskoka Watershed Advisory Group's [interim report](#), which contains 19 recommendations on priority actions and projects to support the development and implementation of the Muskoka Watershed Conservation and Management Initiative.

Confirmation of Minutes

MOTION

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated September 25, 2020 be approved.

CARRIED (by consent)

Correspondence

- Letter to the Muskoka Steamships and Discovery Centre in support of their application for a Climate Action and Awareness Grant.

- Letter from the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in response to MWC's letter re: environmental monitoring programs and laboratory services in the Province of Ontario during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Presentation

[Invasive species resources and tools to support Muskoka Watershed Communities](#) – Sarah Rang, Meaghan Luis and Colin Cassin, Invasive Species Centre

Sarah provided an introduction to the Invasive Species Centre and its various activities and resources. Meaghan highlighted some of the impacts of invasive species, followed by Collin, who provided some of the recent developments in invasive species legislation, infestation and eradication. He highlighted a recent report on the [economic impacts of invasive species](#), particularly for municipalities. Meaghan discussed some of the resources available to municipalities for managing invasive species, including the new [Municipal Community of Practice](#). She also introduced the Invasive Species Centre Support Services with a detailed list of services available on the ISC website.

The issue of mystery snails increasingly being found in Muskoka was raised during the question period. Tamara Brincat shared a factsheet on [Chinese Mystery Snails](#) and another on [Banded Mystery Snails](#) developed by the Severn Sound Environmental Association.

Following a question and answer period, Geoff thanked Sarah, Meaghan and Colin for their very informative presentation.

Climate Action Muskoka's "Declaration of Climate Emergency"

Samantha Hastings reported that District Council considered the resolution put forward by Climate Action Muskoka and, following much discussion, passed a resolution declaring a climate emergency. She noted that a corporate Climate Change Action Plan will be released by the end of the year, and a greenhouse gas inventory for both DMM and the community are being undertaken. She highlighted the typically process undertaken to implement large-scale programs like this, for instance, the Muskoka Water Strategy. Kevin Boyle provided an update on the Muskoka Climate Change Action Plan (MCCAP) and the District's actions around climate change.

Mike Peppard noted some of the unanswered questions that follow after declaring a climate emergency, such as how do we reduce GHG emissions by 50% by 2030?

Peter Sale would like MWC to decide how to proceed on the resolution independent of what DMM is doing. Peter has an issue with the way CAM has put together their proposal. He would like to see MWC support their declaration but remain independent on the way to get there (the actions). He suggested endorsing the resolution only and not the supporting narrative.

Allen Edwards agreed with Mike Peppard that District Council is supportive of declaring a climate emergency but would like to see the MCCAP before determining next steps.

Patricia Arney noted that the "community working group" proposed in the resolution is already being undertaken by a number of community groups, like MWC and CAM. Kevin Boyle clarified what the Stakeholder Working Group would be comprised of and what the purpose would be (i.e. moving actions forward).

Kevin Trimble is struggling with the details of the CAM resolution. MWC has endorsed IWM and many of the climate actions themselves are aligned with actions that will come out of IWM, but with IWM they will be at a watershed scale. He is disappointed that watershed management isn't mentioned in the resolution.

Christy Doyle noted that CAM is seeking MWC's formal endorsement of their 8-point resolution to declare a climate emergency and not of the supporting actions.

Peter suggested that MWC issue a media release about what specifically MWC is endorsing.

MOTION

Moved by Michael Peppard, seconded by Karen Maxwell

THAT Muskoka Watershed Council endorse Climate Action Muskoka's proposed attached "[Declaration of Climate Emergency Resolution](#)", given that climate change is unparalleled in terms of its scientific certainty, scale of impacts, and the required urgency for action as outlined in international and national evidence-based work, including MWC's own "Planning for Climate Change in Muskoka" report.

CARRIED

Next MWC Meeting

Friday, November 27th at 1:00 pm through Zoom. Featuring a presentation by Dr. Ellen Field from Learning for a Sustainable Future and Lakehead University on her Climate Change Education in Canada Research Study that establishes benchmarks of Canadians' understanding of climate change, their perspectives on climate change impacts and risks, and views on the role of schools and climate change education. We will also have a presentation by three students from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board's G7 Student Summit about the TLDSB climate change action plan created by students.

Adjournment

Geoff Ross adjourned the meeting at 3:05 pm.

Declaration of Climate Emergency Resolution, developed by members of Climate Action Muskoka

WHEREAS the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2018 Report ‘Global Warming of 1.5C’ states the urgency of keeping global heating below the 1.5C goal and also acknowledges that the world is currently on track for more than 3C increase in temperature rise based on policies that are now in place; and

WHEREAS this current track of climate heating will lead to catastrophic social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts in our community and elsewhere and that the IPCC estimates less than 11 years to avoid the worst impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS many municipalities across Ontario and Canada understand the major benefits of and the need to be at the forefront of action on climate change, with many having declared a climate emergency already; and

WHEREAS much of the financial damage associated with climate change will come from impacts to municipal core infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water, wastewater and storm water systems and from destruction of natural infrastructure; and

WHEREAS it is necessary not only to reduce carbon emissions, but also to increase community resiliency in the face of climate change, and that these approaches can offer multiple benefits including improved health and air quality, increased innovation, economic development and reduced costs in the long run; and

WHEREAS many people in Muskoka have demonstrated a strong interest and commitment to address climate change and continue to make Muskoka a leader in environmental action and protection;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the District of Muskoka officially

1. Declare a Climate Emergency immediately to name and deepen the District’s commitment to protecting our economy, our community, and our ecosystems from the impacts of climate heating; and
2. Develop a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce corporate and community greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), which includes the identification of firm, ambitious targets with a goal of greater than 50% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030 and reaching zero GHG emissions by 2050; commit to becoming a drawdown/regenerative community, taking an active role in the repair and regeneration of our systems, including in the areas of the built environment, natural infrastructure, land use, transportation, energy, waste, health, and food security; and

3. Support and participate in the establishment of a Community Working Group, which will provide input to the CAP and will assist in the regular review and updating of the CAP as the science evolves. The Community Working Group should be diverse and representative of the Muskoka community; be balanced according to ethnic background, geography, economic status, gender identity, age; act in partnership with Indigenous leaders; and include scientists and other key stakeholders; and
4. Collaborate with other municipal governments, institutions and industry associations to improve standards and protocols that can positively address climate adaptation and mitigation; and
5. Seek and secure funding opportunities from both internal and external sources for 2020 and beyond to adequately finance climate actions necessary to meet 2030 and 2050 emission reduction targets; and
6. Commit to putting climate action at the forefront of all decision-making, large and small, working to achieve community wellbeing and resiliency, equity, reconciliation, and leaving no one behind. Require all future reports to council to include a section titled Climate Change Implications that will identify how the recommendations will contribute to meeting the objectives of the CAP; and
7. Work with other community stakeholders to educate the public at large about steps that can be taken by individuals and businesses to reduce GHGs; and
8. Urge both Provincial and Federal governments and opposition parties to work rapidly to deliver the GHG emission reductions needed to keep global heating below the 1.5C goal to minimize the life-threatening impacts of climate change. Forward the resolution to the Premier of Ontario, the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Parry Sound Muskoka representatives Hon. Norm Miller MPP and Hon. Scott Aitchison MP, and the leaders of the other political parties.