

## **2015 Annual Report to Council Environmental Advisory Committee**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Environmental Advisory Committee's 2015 Annual Report be accepted as information and that the Environmental Advisory Committee continue to operate as presently constituted through 2016.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### Citizen Members - January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015

Tanya Doran (Chair)	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
Brent Korobanik (Vice Chair)	Citizen-at-large	First of two year term
Ken Crutchfield	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
Victoria Neary	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
Bill Marsh	Citizen-at-large	Last of two year term
Sarah Pearson	Citizen-at-large	First of two year term
Ben Thronson	Citizen-at-large	First of two year term

The committee would like to thank non-voting members who have participated in 2015. In particular, the EAC would like to thank Wendy Vanderwel for her 7 years of service representing the post secondary sector.

#### Council Representation

In October 2014 Council appointed Councillor Gilles Prefontaine as the primary and Councillor Sheena Hughes as the alternate Council representatives for the Environmental Advisory Committee. In May 2015, Councillor Hughes became the sole Council representative for EAC until October 2015.

#### City Administration Representation

Committee assistance was obtained from Leah Kongsrude, Mike Mellross, Meghan Myers, and Erin Isaac from the Corporate Strategic Services and Environment department.

### **OVERVIEW**

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) was established through Bylaw 29/2005 to advise Council on issues related to the environment. The purpose of the Committee

is to provide advice to Council with respect to environmental policies, strategies and initiatives, especially where a public perspective is desirable. The original Bylaw was repealed and replaced with an updated Bylaw (35/2015) in November 2015.

Direction and assistance to the EAC were obtained through involvement with the City's Environment branch.

On March 16, 2015 Council provided the EAC with then following priorities for 2015:

- A. Provide advice and input on key Environmental Master Plan Projects
  - i. Environmental Policy Update
  - ii. Sustainable Building Policy Development
  - iii. Water Conservation Bylaw
  - iv. Investigate Water Conservation Block Rates
- B. Recommend Environmental Initiatives Grant Recipients
- C. Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw Review

## **ACTIVITIES**

On February 26, 2015 the EAC priorities subcommittee members (B. Korobanik and T. Doran) met with the Mayor (Mayor N. Crouse), Council's EAC representative (Councillor G. Prefontaine) and City Administration to confirm the proposed priorities for the EAC in 2015.

The Environmental Advisory Committee met nine times during 2015, meeting monthly except in July, August, and December. The Committee also went on a tour of the City's environmental projects on June 25, 2015.

T. Doran. and B. Marsh met with Mayor, Council members and City Manager at the City's annual review of Boards, and Committees on Thursday, October 15, 2015.

### Advice and Input – Progress Report

#### **Environmental Sustainability Policy (Appendix I)**

The EAC received an introduction on the Environmental Policy that was followed by a group discussion. This discussion resulted in the development of high level comments that were later refined by the Environmental Policy Subcommittee whom met on March 9, 2015.

Relevant Motion from April 23, 2015

Moved by B.Korobanik

That the advice resulting from the Environmental Sustainability Policy Review be approved and submitted to Council.

### **Sustainable Building Policy**

By the fourth quarter of 2015, Administration had not developed the Sustainable Building Policy to a point where input from EAC could be given. This priority has been shifted to the 2016 list of priorities.

### **Water Conservation Bylaw**

A key recommendation from the Water Conservation Efficiency Productivity Plan was to develop a Water Efficient Bylaw (renamed Water Conservation Bylaw) for new developments. EAC worked on the guiding principles for the draft bylaw and were approved by City Council in September 2013. In 2014, EAC met five times to discuss the Water Conservation Bylaw.

On February 26, 2015 the Environmental Advisory Committee received an update on the Senior Leadership Team direction for the Water Conservation Bylaw. The EAC completed its review and proposed a number of recommendations to amend the draft bylaw.

The key findings of the EAC included (1) The community, in particular residents, need a public education awareness campaign to be compliant with the bylaw and to achieve the environmental objective of water conservation.

Relevant Motion from February 26, 2015 EAC meeting:

#### Moved by V. Neary

That the advice on the Water Conservation Bylaw be approved and submitted to Council, subject to minor revisions as discussed.

Additional updates on the Water Conservation Bylaw were presented to EAC on March 26, 2015 and April 23, 2015. The updates pertained to Council allocating \$7000 for public engagement on the water conservation bylaw. In August 2015, Council approved an increase to the public engagement to a total of \$15,100.

Administration took the public engagement results and proposed bylaw to Council on November 23, 2015. The public engagement results were accepted as information and the bylaw was read two times. The third reading is scheduled for December 7, 2015.

### **Inclining Block Rates**

The EAC has reviewed a white paper on inclining block rates prepared by Administration and supports the implementation of smart meters as a priority before providing advice on inclining block rates. The committee believes the smart meters could provide evidence of behavior change and inform the need for additional measures to support residents to meet the water conservation goal of 200L/day.

### **Environmental Initiatives Grant Program recommendations**

In addition to the priorities identified by Council for 2015, the EAC continued with its other major function, namely reviewing applications submitted under the City's

Environmental Initiatives Grant Program (EIGP) and providing funding recommendations to Council. A one time submission of six applications was received on October 8, 2015 for the EIGP in accordance with existing Council policy. The EAC reviewed all applications and five applications were recommended for funding.

Relevant Motion from October 22, 2015 EAC meeting:

Moved by K. Crutchfield

That the Environmental Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the following Environmental Initiatives Grants be awarded:

CARRIED

Application Number	Community Group/Project	Proposed Grant
15-01	<b>Grey Nuns White Spruce Park Working Group (GNWSPWG) for Seedling Planting and Trial Reforestation Plots.</b> The GNWSPWG utilized an Environmental Initiatives Grant last year to collect and incubate approximately 10,000 white spruce seedlings. This year's funding will go towards site preparation and planting of those seedlings.	\$12,200.00*
15-02	<b>St. Albert Soccer Association for Recycling Receptacles.</b> The grant will be used to assist with the purchase of six recycling/refuse stations.	\$3,764.25
15-03	<b>Grandin Village for a Community Garden.</b> The grant will be used to purchase materials to build a community garden consisting of 18 raised beds. The garden plots will be offered first to Village residents and opened to the general public if any garden plots are unallocated.	\$5,280.00*
15-04	<b>BLESS for a Pocket Bird Guide.</b> Building on the success of the Pocket Guide to the Plants of Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park, BLESS will produce a Pocket Guide to the major birds of the park.	\$5,000.00
15-05	<b>St. Albert Bike Association for Repair Stations.</b> The purchase and installation of 2 bicycle repair stations, 1 combination bicycle and skateboard deck repair station, and 2 air pumps located strategically in the City (St. Albert Place, Bike Skills Park, and Skateboard Park). Bicycle repair stands and deck repair stations contribute to the encouragement of active transportation.	\$8000.00*
	<b>TOTAL</b>	\$34,244.25

\*Although the Environmental Initiatives Grant procedure indicates that "funding for each project shall not exceed \$5,000, unless Council, by resolution, approves funding in excess of \$5,000", the EAC believed the application by Grey Nuns White Spruce Park

Working Group, St. Albert Bike Association, and Grandin Village community group contribute to a long term vision for the environmental benefit of the City and its residents therefore, the recommended funding amount is warranted.

On November 23, 2015 Council accepted and approved the EAC Recommendations.

### **Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw Review (Appendix II)**

A subcommittee comprised of K. Crutchfield, V. Neary, and W. Vanderwel reviewed Bylaw 29/2005 and provided draft recommendations. These recommendations were discussed in further detail with EAC as a whole on May 28, 2015. The subcommittee reviewed proposed changes developed by Administration and made a recommendation for the EAC committee to support. EAC discussed and supported recommendations at its September 24 meeting.

Relevant Motion from September 24, 2015 EAC meeting:

Moved by B. Thronson

That the report of the subcommittee on the Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw be approved as presented for submission to Council on November 23, 2015.

CARRIED

The revised bylaw 35/2015 went to Council on November 23, 2015. Council approved the bylaw without amendments.

### **Other Input – Progress Report**

#### **Transportation Master Plan**

Multiple members represented the EAC throughout the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) public consultation process in 2016. T. Doran and B. Marsh attended TMP stakeholder workshops on February 24, 2015 and August 18, 2015. In addition, B. Marsh attended the May 28, 2015 TMP workshop.

#### **Urban Forest Management Plan**

The plan was delayed to 2016/2017 so no input could be provided.

#### **Waste Program Policy**

February 28, 2015 – Waste Program Policy Presentation, Christian Benson

#### **River Water Quality Index**

Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance municipal partnership updates were provided but there is not yet enough progress made on the development of a river water quality index to provide input.

#### **Greenhouse Gas Action Plan Recommendation – Energy Measurement in City facilities**

September 24, 2015 – Interim Update, Mike Mellross

The Manager, Environment provided an interim update on the facility energy and water audit and metrics project. The final report is schedule to be completed by the end of 2015.

### **Grey Nuns White Spruce Park Implementation Plan**

The Grey Nuns White Spruce Park Working Group presented on their funding request from the Environmental Initiatives Grant 2015. A summary of the implementation process was given to EAC. No input was required.

## Updates - Progress Report

Each Committee member was scheduled to discuss their professional and personal background. The following members presented in 2015: Councillor Prefontaine, B. Korobanik, B. Marsh, V. Neary, S. Pearson, W. Vanderwel, E. Isaac, B. Thronson.

The EAC considered environmental initiatives with asterisk (\*) as priority topics under Other input and received the following presentations as updates:

### **Smart City Master Plan\***

Presentation, Smart City Master Plan, Bruno Peters on March 26, 2015

### **Natural Areas Assessment\***

Presentation, Natural Areas Assessment Plan, Andrew Forrest on May 28, 2015

A second update was schedule for November 26, 2015, however the final report had not been completed and as such an update was not provided.

### **Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance research projects\***

No updates were available on research projects.

### **Air Quality Monitoring Station Development**

Capital Region Particulate Matter and Response Plan Presentation Mike Mellross, Presentation on February 26, 2015

The EAC received regular updates throughout the year on the Air Quality Monitoring Station progress. The construction phase was delayed until the late fall of 2015. An informal update was provided on the communications plan and construction timeline for fall 2015 through winter 2016 on November 26, 2015.

### **Stormwater Management Facilities Presentation**

April 23, 2015 – Stormwater Management Facilities, Kate Polkovsky

### **Environmental Liabilities Assessment**

An update was not provided for this topic.

## **Cultivating our Future: Community Sustainability Plan**

An update was not provided for this topic.

The EAC considered environmental initiatives with asterisk (\*) as priority topics under Other input.

Members of the EAC were engaged in a diverse range of environmental topics. However due to the complex nature of these topics, project progress and status, time constraints and Administration's work plans, all of the EAC priorities proposed for input, other input and updates were not addressed.

The EAC was active in several significant projects, which required additional hours to review discuss and contemplate through subcommittees. The EAC worked well together and it was the members' dedication and commitment to the various priorities, issues and topics that were encountered throughout the year, which allowed the EAC to have a successful 2015.

## **EAC ENDORSEMENT OF CITY PROGRAMS**

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) would like to acknowledge the continued support and leadership of St. Albert Council for establishing an EAC to provide advice to Council and Administration on environmental matters. The EAC supports innovative programs and encourages citizen participation in environmental responsibility as an extension of the Environmental Master Plan.

The Environmental Advisory Committee acknowledges the dedication and competency of the City of St. Albert's Strategic Services and Environment staff throughout 2015 (L. Kongsrude, M. Myers, S. Cicchini, E. Isaac, and M. Mellross) as well as their ongoing support towards the Committee. It is through the efforts of the Environment Branch, that important sustainability-focused programs are developed and put into practice in the community.

## **Appendix I – Written Advice Submitted to Council Environmental Sustainability Policy**

### **Advice for Council – Environmental Sustainability Policy**

June 1, 2015

Recommendation to St. Albert Council

#### ***Recommendation***

With reference to the Environmental Sustainability Policy, the Environmental Advisory Committee recommends the adoption of the policy as an instrument to support the City's commitment to environmental management of its operations as well as provide a guiding framework for setting environmental goals and targets and implementing initiatives that will support community environmental sustainability.

#### ***Background***

The Environmental Sustainability Policy was approved in 2003 and subsequently revised in 2009 on a 5 year review cycle. The policy supports the ISO 14001 certification, bringing environmental considerations into decision-making and day-to-day operations and provides a framework for tracking, evaluating and communicating environmental performance. In essence, the policy helps ensure that major environmental risks and liabilities are identified, minimized and managed.



## **Appendix II – Written Advice Submitted to Council Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw Review**

### **Advice for Council – Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw Review**

September 24, 2015

Recommendation to St. Albert Council

#### ***Recommendation***

With reference to the City of St. Albert Consolidation of Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw 29/2005 (Consolidated by Bylaw 12/2104 January 21, 2014) the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) recommends amending the bylaw with the proposed changes. The review of the bylaw resulted in no significant changes to the overall intent but rather minor modifications to reduce redundancies and better reflect the current practices of the committee.

#### ***Background***

The Environmental Advisory Committee Bylaw was first established in 2005 and hasn't had a significant review since that time. The committee worked with City Staff including Legislative Services to ensure the wording for the bylaw is in line with other bylaws and the intent of the clauses were being met. There were no changes to the structure (number of committee members, duration of term, or quorum requirements). The document has been modified to reflect changes that have taken place since the EAC was first formed. The section the committee proposed the most improvements was entitled Committee Roles and Responsibilities where input into the Environmental Master Plan, providing advice, and recommendations for priorities was incorporated.