

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
TUESDAY, 2007-OCT-02, TRAINING ROOM, CITY HALL ANNEX

Present:	Joy Cameron, Chair	Ron Brown
	Steve Earle	Margaret Henigman
	Charles Thirkill	Chris Zamora
	<u>Staff:</u>	
	Rob Lawrance	Kevin Brydges
	Cindy Hall (Recording Secretary)	Gail Pasaluko
Regrets:	Geraldine Manson	Scott Northrup
	Caroline Read	
Guests:	Kent Mullinix	Janet Irvine
	Gil Luckham	

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m.

2. Adoption of Minutes of 2007-Jul-03 and 2007-Sep-04:

MOVED by C. Thirkill, SECONDED by S. Earle that the Minutes of 2007-Jul-03 be adopted. CARRIED.

MOVED by C. Thirkill, SECONDED by S. Earle that the Minutes of 2007-Sep-04 be adopted. CARRIED.

3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items:

The Agenda was approved with the addition of:

- Making Nanaimo a Plastic Bag-free City - J. Cameron

4. Budget:

\$1,932.65 remains in ACE's regular budget.

5. Delegations:

a) Kent Mullinix, Ph.D., Project Manager, Plant Health BC: Pest Management Accreditation Program gave an overview of the program which will be implemented province-wide in the Spring of 2008. He also distributed an information package. Some of his comments were:

- The Institute for Sustainable Horticulture was requested to develop a program to accredit pest management service providers to assure they are trained in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles and committed to conduct landscape pest management in an environmentally sound and responsible manner.
- The program will be overseen by a Steering Committee balanced by industry and municipalities, and administered by a neutral third party (the Institute). There will be a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice that will be subject to a baseline audit.
- Program funding in the amount of \$212,000 will come from the Investment Agriculture Foundation. Matching funding from industry, municipalities, etc. will be required.
- The City of Nanaimo's cost, if they choose to participate in the program, will be \$2,000. [It was noted that the City and Province already follow IPM policies.] In-kind support is also expected.

- Participation is voluntary, but public marketing would result in accredited companies being rewarded with a demand for their services.
- Organizations that are accredited will be audited annually and required to generate improvement plans. As IPM is changing all the time, they will be required to constantly upgrade.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Mullinix advised:

- The program will be managed by the Institute for Sustainable Horticulture.
- Membership of service providers on the Steering Committee would not be more than 50% provincially.
- Even though the Steering Committee does not appear to have any professional ecologists, Mr. Mullinix can be considered as filling that role.
- The program will work whether municipalities have bylaws or not. However, it is preferred that municipalities have bylaws so that local application companies are required to be accredited.
- 'Cosmetic pesticide use' refers to the application of pesticides on non agricultural/non food production uses of land; e.g. lawns, gardens, golf courses.
- The cost to become accredited is \$300, plus any internal costs such as for paperwork.
- A public relations specialist has been contracted to prepare an extensive public awareness program, and the Institute will also be exploring a homeowner accreditation program.
- The program is unique to North America. However the Institute has learned what works and what doesn't work from other programs.

Mr. Mullinix advised that if the City wished, he could come back to Nanaimo to assist staff in developing a plan to present to Council. The Committee thanked Mr. Mullinix prior to him leaving the meeting.

R. Lawrance advised that in order for ACE to consider this matter further, they would first have to add it to their workplan. J. Cameron suggested that the program be considered for inclusion into next year's workplan.

b) Janet Irvine and Gil Luckham, 609 First Street spoke regarding their correspondence of 2007-Sep-07, which was addressed to the Mayor and Council, regarding toxic smoke from their neighbour's woodstove blowing into their house:

- Other jurisdictions have bylaws that address woodstove smoke, but the City of Nanaimo does not. Asked the City to liaise with those jurisdictions.
- Complimented the 'Burn it Smart' program, and Environment Canada's educational pamphlets.
- Her and Mr. Luckham's first approach with their neighbour was education, and trying to handle the problem sensitively. The situation has not changed since then however.
- Could Nanaimo's firefighters monitor woodstove smoke somehow? N. Saanich firefighters are proactive in this regard.
- Backyard burning is banned in Nanaimo. Why can't something be done about woodstove smoke?
- Washington State deals with smoke on a state level, not on a city level.
- Not looking for a solution to the problem today, but are looking for assistance and leadership.
- Get the feeling that because this problem is not happening to everyone, the City is not interested. However, one person going through it is one too many.

Some comments from staff and Committee members:

- Kelowna has a woodstove exchange program where a 15% rebate is available, but its success depends on the motivation of stove owners.
- Could house insurance regulations play a role?
- Do something with existing bylaws; i.e. nuisance properties, or the province's bylaws re air quality. Wouldn't it be easy to make it illegal to burn substances such as plastics, tires, pvc, etc. inside homes?
- Woodstoves are used for heating homes. This is different from burning brush outside the house as in the case of the backyard burning ban.

R. Lawrance will:

- contact the municipalities that have bylaws regulating woodstove smoke about the enforcement piece;
- discuss the issue with Bylaw and Fire Dept. staff and report back at a future ACE meeting;
- check what the City is permitted to do under the Charter; and
- check with the Bylaw Dept. on how many complaints are received regarding woodstove smoke. Because a bylaw does not exist, they may not be logging them as 'Calls for Service'. He will investigate whether there could be some kind of tracking mechanism for complaints. Another reason it would be useful to have that information would be to be able to target those areas for education programs.

M. Henigman will follow up on what the Province's responsibilities are in this regard.

Ms. Irvine and Mr. Luckham were advised that they were welcome to attend the next meeting. They then left the meeting.

S. Earle left the meeting.

6. Correspondence, Handouts, Notices:

- a) Letter dated 2007-Sep-07 from Janet Irvine and Gil Luckham, 609 First Street, addressed to the Mayor and Council, regarding toxic smoke from their neighbour's woodstove blowing into their house. (Considered under #5.)

7. Ongoing Business:

- a) ACE Fall Forum - Will be held on Thursday, 2007-Nov-29, at 5:30 pm in the Beban Lounge. Details regarding agenda and refreshments are still being worked out. Additions to the invite list were noted, as well as the suggestion that ads be placed so that members of the public can also attend.

8. New Business:

- a) 2007 Green Nanaimo Awards - Nominations are being accepted until 2007-Oct-11. A special ACE meeting will then be held on Monday, 2007-Oct-15 to review the nominations.
- b) Interpretative Sign Project - R. Lawrance advised that he will have the RFP terms of reference complete for review at the next meeting, and will email out the list of possible consultants to the members. Estimated completion date for the project is Feb. or March 2008.

- c) Committee Membership - When the invitations go out for the Enviro. Fall Forum, Rob will also ask if anyone would like to fill the vacant environmental rep. position on ACE.
- c) Making Nanaimo a Plastic Bag-free City - An email addressed to Council was distributed. It requested Council to make Nanaimo a plastic bag-free community, and attached an article about a small town in Devon, England which is the first place in Europe to ban plastic bags by their merchants. J. Cameron directed that this issue be placed on ACE's workplan for 2008.

9. Next Committee Meeting:

The next regular meeting date is Tuesday, 2007-Nov-06.

10. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

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