

**MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL MANITOULIN  
CLIMATE ACTION COMMITTEE  
MINUTES – August 26, 2020**

A regular meeting of the Climate Action Committee was held on August 26, 2020 by video conference with the following in attendance:

Mayor R. Stephens, Councillor Scott, Katie Gilchrist, Cori Davy, Autumn Davy, Jan McQuay, Mike Wilton, Climate Change Coordinator (CCC)

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

**MOTION: C. Davy and K. Gilchrist**

That the agenda be approved as presented...carried.

There was no declaration of pecuniary interest.

**MOTION: M. Wilton and A. Davy**

That the minutes of the last regular Climate Action Committee on July 29, 2020 be approved as amended...carried.

**Standing Agenda Items:**

Youth Perspective: A. Davy

- Noted that she would like to continue helping to improve the climate and lower temperatures so that future generations can continue to enjoy and see wildlife and species

Chairs Remarks:

- Remarks centered on the climate change “big picture” citing references to the United Nations and scientific studies which demonstrate that as carbon dioxide and other
- emissions continue to warm the atmosphere, our global climate is reaching a tipping point
- To mitigate the impact of climate change we must treat climate change as an emergency and begin reducing carbon dioxide emissions drastically now

“ If we are going to limit global heating to 1.5°C, we need to demonstrate, starting this year, how we will achieve emissions reductions of 45 per cent from 2010 levels this decade, and how we will reach net-zero emissions by mid-century. Let us be very clear. We are in an unfolding climate emergency.”

- UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres

( Source: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sqsm19998.doc.htm>)

- The chair provided the committee with a one-page document entitled “Handy emissions comparison between energy types”

Key considerations for engagement that works for climate change:

- Active Involvement in Problem Solving
- Solutions with Co-Benefits
- Building public literacy on climate change and solutions
- Using multiple tools to engage people
- Addressing people’s concerns and ideas

The source also said expecting typical citizens to come to public presentations and meetings doesn’t work in mobilizing people.

## **MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL MANITOULIN**

### **CAC COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES – August 26, 2020**

**Page 2**

- The chair provided the committee with a news update/future planned announcement from the Federal government about the scheduled fall launch of a funding program to install EV charging stations in public spaces

#### **Climate Change Coordinator (CCC) Report:**

CCC provided update on CEEP progress and discussed adjusted project timelines for the release of the CEEP, carbon calculator and communications/outreach strategy.

#### **Carbon Calculator:**

- CCC noted the following considerations and comments from committee members about the carbon calculator:
  - J. McQuay and M. Wilton have gone through the tool – they found it to be a long process and it could take several hours to complete if users want to collect exact data
  - The values for carbon footprints seem very high – suggestion to look further into back calculations and accuracy of the averages being used for comparison at the end of the tool
  - GBBR has been involved on the island in the past and further investigation on past experience with this non-for-profit may need to be considered before entering into any new activities
  - The carbon calculator as is may be difficult to access for some residents because not all residents have computers in the home
  - The average citizen may not have the information readily available to complete all the sections of the calculator and this could lead to frustration and disengagement from the tool
  - The tool does not have a specific section for agriculture sector
- The CCC provided the following points of clarification about the carbon calculator to address the comments raised by committee members:
  - The carbon calculator will not be the only tool we use to engage with citizens
  - We need to spend grant funding on something, or we will lose access to the funds
  - We did not spend budgeted amounts in the first 3 milestones of the MEP grant. We have access to \$16,000 to spend on creating the plan we have spent less than 10% of this and are at risk of losing access to some of the grant money if we do not make a plan to spend,
  - The carbon calculator is not about spending grant dollars for the sake of spending them – we have recognized that the support we expected to receive from ReThink Green to collect community emissions for home, work and transportation has not lead to satisfactory/reliable data that enables the development of a CEEP that can be tracked.
  - The primary benefits of the carbon calculator will be:
    - Instead of guessing what the emissions are for home, work and transportation we will begin to capture more specific community information about community energy use and emissions from all of the sources used for home/work and transportation. The tool also goes further to track emissions from recreational activities such as boating,

## **MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL MANITOULIN**

### **CAC COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES – August 26, 2020**

**Page 3**

ATV and snowmobiling. This is not available through any other carbon calculator tool in Canada.

- The tool does capture commercial activities, including agricultural commercial activities and there will be future opportunities to improve this section of the tool after the launch and into the future
- The more municipalities that start to use the tool, the better the data and tool will become
- User friendliness is the primary goal, which is why the survey is logic based but it is absolutely recognized by the CCC that education will be a important component of engaging citizens – which is why the carbon calculator will be used as only one part of the stakeholder engagement activities

#### **Action Item**

**The CCC will continue to pursue a digital carbon calculator tool/solution. The budget that has not been approved but is expected to be approved allocates up to \$10,000 for this section of the project, maximum \$5,000 for each municipality. The carbon calculator will be included on future CAC agendas to ensure that status updates are provided regularly about this aspect of the project.**

#### **Stakeholder Engagement Activities:**

- The CCC reminded committee members that this was on the meeting agenda in July and the CCC recommended that a working group be struck to work on stakeholder engagement but the decision was to move ahead with a digital strategy, which included the carbon calculator
- The CCC expanded on bullet points outlined in the report with respect to stakeholder engagement activities noting the following:
  - Continued meetings with the Community Development and Outreach Coordinator to develop and implement a communications strategy with respect to CEEP by the end of September
  - Some communications about the CEEP will begin in September to businesses through the business email list
  - By end of September the CCC is planning on completing a list of stakeholders
  - K. Gilchrist noted she may be able to help with a list of healthcare stakeholders
  - C. Davy noted an interest in working on school engagement
  - M. Wilton noted an interest in attending any agricultural engagement meetings

#### **Action Item:**

**Prior to the next CAC meeting the CCC committed to providing committee members with a list of stakeholders. At the next meeting, this list can be discussed and committee members will be given the opportunity to volunteer to help set up and attend one-on-one stakeholder engagement meetings with Central Manitoulin business, health agencies, non-profits, schools and other community groups.**

## **MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL MANITOULIN**

### **CAC COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES – August 26, 2020**

**Page 4**

**Stakeholder engagement will appear on future agenda's as old business moving forward to ensure the committee continuously revisits status.**

#### Natural Asset Management (NAM)

- The CCC expanded on details provided in the report about NAM
- The CCC emphasized the importance of implementing NAM in this community because our biggest climate change mitigation strength is that we already have more carbon sequestration capacity in our municipality than we have emissions from human activity
- In addition, our CEEP/climate action plan must include NAM because our natural environment is the most at risk from impacts of climate change from wildfire, flood and drought
- A NAM strategy and plan will enable the municipality to value the natural environment around us and calculate the impact a loss of these assets would have on our community
- J. McQuay noted that including NAM in the climate action plan would take up time that the CCC does not have and requested how much time/space this would take up in the climate action plan
- The CCC strongly disagreed with the perspective that NAM might take up too much time/space and noted that including details in our plan to implement a NAM strategy will be included in the CEEP/climate action plan

#### **New Business**

##### CAC Survey in collaboration with the Manitoulin Expositor

- Interest to expand questions previously answered by committee members in the application process to ascertain specific goals and outcomes they would like to see from the process
- If done in collaboration with Manitoulin Expositor and Lori Thompson, it is our hope that Lori could follow up with committee members to expand on human interest stories related to climate change in the newspaper
- One committee noted that they may not participate in this type of activity because of the media relations policies they need to adhere to for their job; otherwise
- Most committee members were generally in support of trying to leverage our relationship with the newspaper to get free advertising about the climate change planning process

##### Agriculture Emissions and Land Use

- M. Wilton noted that we must not forget this significant commercial and cultural sector on the island but;
- Was satisfied with the CCC's plan to engage specifically with this group in the fall and noted his continued interest in participating in this type of stakeholder engagement
- CCC agreed – noted that GHG inventory and NAM related to agricultural sector is still an emerging field in climate change planning and that we have the opportunity take a leadership role in this area, welcoming M. Wilton's suggestion that we continue to prioritize this commercial group
- Councillor Scott remarked on the importance of grass lands management in agriculture for carbon sequestration

## **MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL MANITOULIN**

### **CAC COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES – August 26, 2020**

**Page 5**

#### **Community Transportation and Building Emissions**

- J. McQuay noted that she wanted this to be on the agenda to highlight that these two community areas have the highest emissions in our GHG inventory and present the greatest opportunity for reductions
- Generally, the committee was in agreement that these community emissions should be prioritized through the stakeholder engagement and planning process

#### **Mandate of Committee**

- M. Wilton noted that he did not intend for this to be included in the agenda and requested the committee move to the last new business item;

#### **Declaration of a Climate Emergency**

- M. Wilton requested that this be added to the agenda because he would like the committee to revisit the declaration of a climate emergency from a local context; noting:
  - Locally he was not sure that community members would perceive our climate to be in the state of an emergency and that the language of a climate emergency may not resonate with our citizens
  - Expressed a concern that the emergency language may serve to alienate people rather than engage them
  - A suggestion was made that perhaps the committee could reconsider the words we were using in the declaration
- CCC informed committee that the motion was still being considered by the Property Committee and that they would wait for J. McQuay to speak to the issue at the next meeting
- J. McQuay noted that if we don't declare a climate emergency – how will we grab the attention of people? Adding remarks about:
  - Climate change has been a known risk and existential threat to our species for over 2 decades yet action on the issue has not been implemented fast enough
  - Referenced several quotes and climate tipping point information that proves we are in a climate emergency
  - Suggested that perhaps the use of language like 'climate crisis' might be more palatable in the community but also referenced
  - Several hundred municipalities in Canada have declared a climate emergency and referenced a direct source in Sudbury who indicated that after they declared a climate emergency, they did not receive a backlash from the community as suggested
- K. Gilchrist remarked on the success of strength-based approaches used in healthcare settings; providing examples on the success of health interventions by supporting patients through the positive reinforcement of their strengths in managing chronic illnesses. Concluding that it would make sense to consider a strategy in climate change engagement that highlights our strengths at first to build trust and support for the issue. Building a trustful relationship with citizens should come first, noting that both timing/trust needs to be considered with respect to signaling a crisis
- R. Stephens referenced Council's decision to not declare an emergency throughout the pandemic this past winter/spring, even when everyone else was – just because everyone else is declaring an emergency does not mean that it is necessarily the right thing to do in our community. Echoing concerns over

# **MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL MANITOULIN**

## **CAC COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES – August 26, 2020**

**Page 6**

citizens losing interest or becoming less engaged in our climate change efforts if we declare a climate emergency.

M. Wilton expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to open discussion again about the use of language in the declaration of a climate emergency and that he thought the discussion committee discussion today was helpful. J. McQuay put forward the idea that perhaps this could be discussed further from the committee. The CCC noted that the motion was still sitting with the Property Committee and Chair person could continue discussion the matter there.

### **MOTION: R. STEPHENS and C. Davy**

That the next CAC meeting be held on September 23, 2020 from 3:30-5pm, via zoom to accommodate back to school schedule.....carried.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion from J. McQuay at 3:37pm