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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

SPECIAL FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 29, 2020

A special meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee was held on Wednesday, January 29, 2020 in Meeting Room 1-A, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 9:00 AM

Present: Councillor Foster, Chair
Councillor Collier, Vice-Chair
Councillor Ashe
Councillor Drew
Councillor Leahy
Councillor Mulcahy
Regional Chair Henry

Also

Present: Councillor Anderson
Councillor Barton
Councillor Bath-Hadden
Councillor Highet
Councillor McLean
Councillor Mitchell
Councillor John Neal
Councillor Roy
Councillor Smith
Councillor Wotten

Absent: Councillor Nicholson

Staff

Present: S. Austin, Director, Corporate Policy & Strategic Initiatives
E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Beaton, Commissioner of Corporate Services
B. Bridgeman, Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development
W. Holmes, General Manager, DRT
J. Hunt, Director, Legal Services, Corporate Services – Legal
T. Lavery, Manager, Corporate Communications
I. McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Office of the CAO
N. Taylor, Commissioner of Finance
R. Walton, Regional Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
M. White, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
S. Penak, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Delegations

2.1 Brian Kelly, Durham Resident, re: Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration

Brian Kelly appeared before the Committee in support of the Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

B. Kelly stated that Regional Council adopted mitigation targets for the Durham Region community back in 2010.

B. Kelly offered the following recommendations which he stated were consistent with current science:

- 2025 Short Term Target -25% reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
- 2030 Mid Term Target -50% reduction of GHGs;
- 2040 Long-Term Target -75% reduction of GHGs;
- Net zero emissions by 2050;
- Based on a new base year of 2020;
- Need to create a new greenhouse gas inventory for 2020 and complete them more rapidly; and
- Each decade from now until 2050 GHG emissions need to be halved.

B. Kelly advised that the Region must move quickly to embed appropriate mechanisms and procedures in its decision-making and resource allocation in order to make climate a priority.

2.2 Sari Sarieddine, on behalf of Land Over Landings, re: Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration

Sari Sarieddine, Chair, Land Over Landings Youth Wing, appeared before the Committee in support of the Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

S. Sarieddine stated that he is worried about the future his generation is inheriting, and the pivotal role for change belongs to all levels of government and that now is the time to act.

S. Sarieddine further stated that Pickering's crops, watersheds, and trees act as a carbon sink, converting carbon into biomass and helping to stabilize the emissions tally, therefore, their first demand would be an end to the Pickering Airport.

S. Sarieddine referenced a section of the declaration that states, “climate change considerations will be embedded across all elements of Region business” and stated that bodes well for the health of North Pickering.

S. Sarieddine advised that he does not want the airport fight to reach a fourth generation.

2.3 Adeline Cohen, on behalf of Friday's for Future Whitby, re: Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration

Adeline Cohen appeared before the Committee in support of the Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

A. Cohen stated that climate change should be the Committee's number one priority. She referenced climate change related events such as the sinking that is happening in Jakarta where her mother's family is from and the fires in Australia where father's family is from.

A. Cohen stated that the Climate Change Emergency Declaration is about preserving our society before it's too late and added that 63 million people have already been displaced from their homes because of climate change. She stated that in her opinion the current problem will only be made harder because of climate change.

A. Cohen stated that the Declaration is about being part of the solution, and saving our planet is worth our time.

2.4 Suzanne Elston, Durham Resident, re: Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration

Suzanne Elston appeared before the Committee in support of the Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

S. Elston stated that climate change is both an environmental and economical issue. She stated that it is time that we recognize that the economy and the environment cannot work in isolation but need to work collaboratively. She advised that the impacts on Regional infrastructure are significant, and that there is a significant economic impact to the Region because of climate change.

S. Elston stated her support for the Declaration and her support for the recommendations that the delegate, Brian Kelly, made earlier in the meeting.

Staff responded to questions regarding why the Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration was brought forward to a Special Meeting of the Finance & Administration Committee.

3. Advisory Committee Resolutions

3.1 Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change Committee

A) Resolution regarding Durham Region Climate Change Emergency Declaration

Moved by Councillor Leahy, Seconded by Councillor Mulcahy,
(14) That we recommend to Council:

WHEREAS in 2009 Durham Regional Council unanimously adopted the position that “Scientific evidence overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that human activities are fundamentally altering the conditions for life on earth. Climate change and associated global warming is recognized as a severe threat to global systems with the potential for catastrophic outcomes”; and

WHEREAS in the more than ten years since adopting that position, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the national and global level have continued to increase, such that the international community is on the brink of missing the opportunity to limit global warming to levels needed to maintain a climate system that is able to sustain human civilization; and

WHEREAS communities in Durham Region are already experiencing the impacts of climate change, including but not limited to: flooding, emergence of invasive species, increased number of high heat days, and the rise of vector borne diseases. Future climate projections for Durham Region indicate that these impacts will become more intense and severe over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS municipal governments have a crucial role to play in responding to the threat of climate change through policies, programs and capital investments that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build adaptive capacity to extreme weather events; and

WHEREAS Durham Region has developed community climate action plans - in partnership with local area municipalities and other key stakeholders - to guide the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient Region while realizing significant economic benefits including household cost savings and job creation; and

WHEREAS Durham Region can join the Government of Canada and more than 400 Canadian municipalities (including several local area municipalities in Durham, the City of Toronto, and other Ontario upper-tier municipalities such as Peel Region, Halton Region, Waterloo Region, Essex County, and Prince Edward County) that have declared climate emergencies and are implementing programs to drastically reduce their communities’ contributions to global carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS the Durham Community Energy Plan articulated the opportunity for climate action to stimulate economic growth in the Region and create job opportunities in the emerging low-carbon economy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the Regional Municipality of Durham declare a climate emergency for the purposes of naming, framing, and deepening our commitment to protecting our economy, our ecosystems and our communities from climate change;

THAT in response to this emergency declaration, the need to reduce overall emissions from Durham Region, as well as to continue to prepare for Durham Region's future climate, are deemed to be high priorities when considering budget direction and in all decisions of Regional Council;

THAT Region staff be directed to review current corporate plans related to climate change, and develop an overarching Corporate Climate Change Master Plan that:

(1) establishes near-term (2025), mid-term (2030) and long-term (2050) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets for the municipal corporation that position the Region as a leader in the community-wide effort to reduce GHG emissions;

(2) identifies near-term corporate climate action priorities for the next 5 years (2020-2025) and requirements to support implementation; and

(3) identifies how climate change considerations will be embedded across all elements of Region business;

THAT staff be directed to review the low carbon pathway in the recently approved Durham Community Energy Plan and:

(1) establish near-term (2025) and mid-term (2030) community GHG emissions reduction targets; and

(2) report on a near-term (2025) implementation plan, including concrete actions and resource implications (staff and financial), as well as necessary roles for various levels of government, individual residents, and the business community, to achieve stated GHG emissions reduction targets;

THAT staff be directed to report back on a plan for the recently established Climate Change Mitigation and Environment Reserve Fund to meet identified corporate and community-facing implementation priorities;

THAT environmental sustainability and climate change be recognized as a strategic priority in the Regional Strategic Plan for the remaining Term of Council, in the updated Regional Official Plan; and

THAT staff be directed to work with senior levels of government to accelerate ambition and action to meet the urgency of climate change and provide resources for municipalities and the public to reduce emissions and build resiliency to climate impacts.

CARRIED AS AMENDED LATER IN THE
MEETING
(See Following Motion)

Moved by Councillor Leahy, Seconded by Councillor Mulcahy,
(15) That the words 'for the remaining Term of Council' in the second last paragraph, be deleted.

CARRIED

The main motion (14) of Councillor Leahy and Councillor Mulcahy was then put to a vote and CARRIED as AMENDED.

4. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Collier, Seconded by Councillor Ashe,
(16) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 AM

Respectfully submitted,

A. Foster, Chair

S. Penak, Committee Clerk