

Rough notes on Council meeting, Committee of the Whole Monday July 18, 2022

One item on the agenda:

Recommendation

That the Committee of the Whole recommend Council receive the draft Sooke2030: Climate Action Plan for endorsement in principle and direct administration to include the recommendations in this plan for consideration in the five-year financial plan with the goal of aligning it with the present and future needs of the district of Sooke.

The Sooke2030: Climate Action Plan can be found online at

<https://sooke.civicweb.net/document/71635/>

<https://sooke.ca/district-services/departments/environmental-services/climate-change/>

Present tonight were Al Beddows (deputy Mayor chairing the meeting), Jeff Bateman, Ebony Logins, Dana Lajeunesse, Tony St Pierre. Megan McMath attended virtually beginning about 15 minutes into the meeting. Mayor Maja Tait absent.

The only report presented was by Maya Carolsfeld, the climate action intern. She opened with a one-minute video about the Climate Action Plan, that she said is available on the district YouTube channel. She described the Plan and the committee work that was done to create it, as well as the impact of colonialist development in the area and the need to acknowledge that for Reconciliation. She spoke of her own age and dates in her life for context, to show how dates in the Climate Action Plan have context in our lives. She closed with another video, the second of a total of four that will be available on the district YouTube channel very soon. She spoke for thirty minutes.

Councillor McMath joined the meeting virtually during the presentation.

Al Beddows accepted the report, and asked if there were people present who wanted to address the Committee of the Whole for two minutes. Several people spoke.

Ellen Lewers of Sooke spoke against accepting the report or implementing the Climate Action Plan. She doesn't believe in Climate Change, doesn't think we're in a Climate Emergency. She spoke of a video called *Kiss The Ground*. She claimed there was no consultation with farmers, homeowners, business. How are we tracking emissions, and where do they go? Do we not have other things to do that are more important? The settler/colonialism thing really bothers her. She quoted from the Climate Action Plan with derision. She ran over time.

Beddows asked Maya Carolsfeld if farmers were consulted. She said to her knowledge, people consulted were not identified as such.

Alan Dolan of Sooke spoke in favour of the report, Maya Carolsfeld and the Climate Action Plan. He reminded council there is a climate emergency in BC and other countries.

Elisabeth Lang, of Sooke and the Climate Action Community, spoke in favour of the report and the Climate Action Plan. She spoke of her family coming to Canada, farming, and mechanizing. Our choices have been harming the living world. She thanked the Climate Action Committee

Susan Belford of Sooke spoke in favour of the report and the Climate Action Plan. She said it's time to join with other municipalities in these actions. She spoke of the plan showing how

the changes will be measured, it's well-researched and documented, with interconnected thinking.

A man said underlying all this is a question of people's values. He cautioned council to look holistically at incentives, look at incremental things, not just a mammoth plan.

Steve Anderson from Blanchard Road remember that some people are poor or just getting by and can't afford to buy electric cars or heat pumps or solar panels. He compared this action plan to digital TV signals. We all wanna save the Earth, but we can't afford it.

Ernest Klassen spoke in favour of the report and the Climate Action Plan. He pointed out that just as some mobility accommodations make it easier for Councillor Lajeunesse to get around, they make his own life easier too; the changes proposed in the CAP are similarly going to make all of our lives better, in some or many ways, be helpful and neighbourly.

A woman Corinne Borta who is moving to Sooke spoke against the report and the Climate Action Plan. She doesn't believe in Climate Change, says it's just 400-year weather cycles. She worries that if people are using electricity instead of propane, when the power goes out people will be vulnerable. She ran over time.

McMath asked to allow people to address the Committee of the Whole for a second two minutes.

A motion was made to allow people to address the Committee of the Whole for a second two minutes.

Ellen Lewers spoke again. Said having everyone on electricity is not practical when the power fails. We should be planting trees and giving incentives.

Corinne Borta, the woman moving to Sooke spoke again. She said not a single prediction about Climate Change has come to pass.

Alan Dolan spoke again, reminding council that there is a climate emergency, the consensus among scientists is that Climate Change is a fact. He pointed out that the changes proposed in the CAP are good for climate justice, and they include incentives. Even in a worst case scenario, if there is no climate change, these are still good things to do for our community.

Susan Belford spoke again, reminding that the plan includes ways for homeowners to borrow from council to install heat pumps and pay back through taxes. The plan has ways to support all kinds of residents.

At 8:10 pm Al Beddows called for councillors to pose questions.

Bateman asked Maya Carolsfeld about impacts

Logins said that the whole plan would take 22 full-time-equivalent FTE jobs. What would the most immediate 25 actions need for FTEs?

St-Pierre asked what the metrics are for measuring net zero and per capita emissions.

McMath asked the full cost of the implementation of the CAP.

McMath says this plan is the cart before the horse. She'd rather we have a budget first. Where is the money coming from for this plan?

CFO answered that these are aspirational goals, some already in progress. We're already doing them just not looking at them through that lens. The intent isn't that we need 22 new staff, but that current staff will have capacity to add some of these short term goals into their jobs, and we'll just start tracking it.

St-Pierre pointed out that people planting gardens for food security, can we work community gardens that don't trouble deer and bears?

Bateman asked about priorities for the first 25 goals.

McMath asked who will put together the actual plan with price tags attached. SFO Gray said most of the items are assigned to specific departments, and would be part of the current budget like all the other master plans are now.

McMath asked why is there a recommendation for endorsement of the plan when there aren't priorities and prices for the pieces.

Al Beddows said he'd call a bathroom break soon, but first moved to separate the motion into two parts.

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council receive the draft Sooke2030:Climate Action Plan for endorsement in principle.

And THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council direct administration to include the recommendations in this plan for consideration in the five-year financial plan with the goal of aligning it with the present and future needs of the District of Sooke.

Councillor McMath said she couldn't endorse in principle anything that wasn't saying how much it would cost the District of Sooke in future.

Forty minutes of interminable debate followed.

Beddows called for the vote for the first motion. In favour, St-Pierre, Bateman, Beddows, Lajeunesse. Against, McMath Motion passed.

Beddows called for a bathroom break and fresh air.

Beddows called the meeting to order.

He called for the vote for the second motion.

It didn't pass.