



ADOPTED

Pender Island Waste and Resource Management Commission Special Advisory Planning Commission Minutes of a Meeting

Date: Friday, October 16, 2015 (12:30 p.m.)

Location: Pender Island Community Hall
4418 Bedwell Harbour Road, North Pender Island, BC

Members Present: Elizabeth Montague, Chair
Richard Philpot, Deputy Chair
Dale Henning
Donn Korbin
Jim Petrie
Ursula Poepel
Gordie Duncan
Michael Sketch
Davy Rippner
Michael Symons (Ex officio Member)

Staff Present: Justin Starke, Island Planner
Shannon Brayford, Recorder

Regrets: John Pollard, Commission Member

Others Present: Four (4) members of the public were present

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 12:30 Chair Montague welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

2. ADOPT AGENDA

Prior to a discussion of the proposed agenda, Member Korbin asked for clarification on how votes were going to be recorded for this and future meetings.

Planner Starke shared an overview of the policies and precedents, noting that neither provided a clear prohibition nor permission to identify members with their votes.

Member Sketch commented that a record of movers, seconders, and nay voters would be valuable to those reading the minutes, particularly when questions of conflict of interest may arise.

Returning to the proposed agenda, Member Korbin asked why agenda item 8 was included.

Member Sketch provided a brief overview of the item and noted that a motion would be presented during the discussion of that item.

NP-SAPC-2015-013

It was MOVED by Member Rippner and SECONDED by Ex Officio Member Symons
THAT the Commission adopt the agenda as presented.

CARRIED

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Henning asked that that the final line of item 6.4 be deleted from the minutes. He explained that the minutes state that Anne and Mike Burdett provided the names of Pender waste operators, when in fact, that list was created by the member himself.

By general consent the minutes of September 16, 2015, as amended, were adopted.

4. COMMENTS FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Chair Montague acknowledged North Pender Trustee Diane Barber as a member of the audience and invited any members of the public to speak.

Candis Zell shared that she had returned from a trip of sea-side areas and noted that those towns that had industrial areas were unappealing and appeared to be stricken by poverty.

5. FOLLOW UP ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Planner Starke discussed the FTP site that is hosted on the Island Trust server. She noted that unlike “the Cloud”, this site is a secure option for file-sharing. Planner Starke informed the members that the Commission had their own folder and that she had populated that folder with their documents.

Chair Montague asked whether members could upload files themselves.

Planner Starke confirmed that the members would be able to upload their own files and that she had sent an email with all of the access information.

A discussion was held regarding members identifying the source and intent of the files that they upload to provide context for other readers. Recommendations included a format for naming the files, creating an index, providing introductory paragraphs to the documents, and sending emails to members alerting them to the new file.

6. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Member Philpot commented that while the Recycling Depot had submitted data to the Commission, there is fluidity in the transportation of recyclables off of the Penders. He explained that the individual industries that create the products are responsible for determining how the recyclables ultimately leave the island. For example, while some industries collect the recyclables, others contract the Recycling Depot with transporting them.

Member Rippner added that while the Recycling Depot could provide insight on the processes right now, those processes can change and the plan will have to include opportunities for adaptation to those changes.

Both Member Philpot and Member Rippner noted that whenever there is a question, erring on the side of more space would be prudent.

7. LIQUID DISCARDED MATERIALS, MEMBER M. SKETCH

Member Sketch spoke to the Commission regarding putting a placeholder in the Official Community Plan (OCP) to hold space for permitting land use for pyrolysis, anaerobic digestion, and composting. In addition to providing an overview of such technologies, Member Sketch offered the following points:

- Such technologies can reduce the proportion of organic materials that are treated as waste, can create consumable energy, and, when the value of the products is considered, are potentially cost neutral.
- Given the value of such technologies, it is foreseeable that the LTC might wish, at a later date, to make amendments to allow for such land use.
- OCP and Land Use Bylaw amendments would be required to do so.
- Amending the OCP is a lengthy process.
- Creating a placeholder now, while there is an opportunity to amend the OCP, will make the process easier in the future.
- Such a placeholder creates an opportunity, but does not necessarily prescribe action.

A discussion was held regarding the current system for processing and disposal of human organic waste that is created on the Penders. Member Petrie commented that currently septic waste is transported, processed, and ultimately turned to garden material.

Planner Starke commented on the regulatory distinctions that are made between liquid and solid waste. She noted that the Commission's scope does not include liquid waste.

Several members echoed the concern that liquid waste is beyond the mandate of this Commission. Chair Montague disagreed, sharing her belief that this topic, as it relates to composting, is consistent with the Commission's mandate.

8. OCP/LUB PLACE HOLDING ITEMS, MEMBER M. SKETCH

Chair Montague noted that agenda item 9 would be follow item 7 with more continuity.

By general consent it was agreed to move to agenda item 9 and return to item 8 later in the meeting.

9. DIGESTERS AND RELEVANT APPLICATIONS, BARBARA JOHNSTONE - GRIMMER

Barbara Johnstone-Grimmer introduced herself and provided an overview of her education and expertise related to this topic. She then gave a brief presentation on digesters, noting the systems have the following features:

- They mitigate the risk of contaminated aquifers.
- They produce a useable biochar in addition to energy which can be put back into the grid.
- They co-digest green waste and septic waste.
- They can be built to scale, from private farm to small community.

Member Sketch reiterated his opinion that creating a place holder for these technologies will allow the Commission and the LTC to be aware of these options moving forward.

NP-SAPC-2015-014

It was MOVED by Member Sketch and SECONDED by Member Rippner THAT the Commission agrees planning policy “placeholders” be included under a Recyclable Organic Material’s Official Community Plan heading to have the effect of “the Local Trust Committee may consider land use for anaerobic digester, composting, and pyrolysis treatment for the purpose of ...” and to fill in the rest of that at some later stage.

Member Poepel requested a definition of the term “place holder”. Chair Montague defined the term as “a way of developing a category that will allow the LTC to make a change to the LUB without having to amend the OCP. It does not denote a need to act on it.”

Ex Officio Member Symons commented that although there was some overlap, liquid waste was beyond the scope of the Commission. He also expressed the following concerns with the resolution:

- The word “may” inappropriately implies that this Commission is giving permission to the LTC.
- It is not wise to create “open windows” in the OCP, as this resolution does.

Chair Montague asked Planner Starke whether the Commission could ask for the advice of Carmen Thiel, Islands Trust Legislative Services Manager, on this issue.

Planner Starke answered that this is not an issue for the Legislative Services Manager as it is related strictly to policy.

Planner Starke further expressed that although she saw the value in taking this opportunity to create a placeholder, she also saw this as a sensitive topic and noted that there are good reasons why liquid and solid waste are dealt with differently.

Member Korbin stated that he opposed the motion and felt the Commission needed to return to their work plan. He further commented that it was inappropriate to

recommend any OCP changes until the Commission had heard from the community and the Capital Regional District (CRD) representatives.

Chair Montague addressed several of the previous comments and made the following points:

- The word “may” is used in the motion to denote possibility, not permission.
- Tracking possible changes to the OCP is part of the Commission’s charter.
- It may make sense to wait to hear from the CRD before making a decision.

Member Henning stated that the Commission’s charter relates to the OCP and LUB for finding a waste transfer site only. He further suggested that the Commission was losing its focus and that Member Sketch and Ms. Johnstone-Grimmer’s presentations would be better suited to the LTC than this Special APC.

Chair Montague invited North Pender Trustee Diane Barber, a member of the audience, to comment on what the LTC would find helpful.

Trustee Barber stated that the focus for this Commission is the waste transfer site and that this current discussion was a bigger issue.

Chair Montague asked the Trustee if she would like the Commission to include their research on this topic.

Trustee Barber agreed that the research would be good and reiterated her comment that the focus was on the location.

Ex Officio Member Symons suggested that the Commission keep a catalogue of “related good ideas” that could be brought to the LTC’s attention without diverting the focus of the Commission.

Member Sketch agreed with Ex Officio Member Symons’ recommendations and asserted that the motion achieves that goal.

Member Korbin expressed concern with putting a place holder in the OCP as it may reduce the community’s ability to respond to the issue and potentially stop such a facility. He noted that such technology would be a controversial issue and that such a place holder would allow an LTC to make significant OCP changes without the consultation that such issues are due.

The motion was re-read and Chair Montague called for a vote.

NP-SAPC-2015-014

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DEFEATED
**(Members Duncan, Korbin, Henning, Philpot,
Petrie, and Symons opposed)**

Note: Chair Montague called for a short break at 1:48 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 2:01 p.m.

Chair Montague told the Commission that during the break Member Sketch spoke to her and said that he would abandon this issue with the Commission and bring it to the attention of the LTC instead. She further commented that she disagreed with this approach, but did feel that the topic should be left until another day.

10. OPERATOR SURVEY, SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Member Henning presented a nine-page survey to the Commission. The survey was created by Members Henning, Pollard, and Korbin acting as a subcommittee of the Commission. Member Henning noted that the survey was lengthy and could be shortened, but stated that it was also simple and easy.

Referring to the three-page alternative survey, Member Henning commented that it did not provide enough space for written responses, that it required some level of computer literacy to access, and that its inclusion of the liquid waste transfer issue was inappropriate.

Ex Officio Member Symons shared general comments on the surveys:

- The survey should only ask for the info that the Commission needs and should not include “nice to know” queries.
- The survey should be printed and include a return envelope with postage.
- The Commission should consider providing a level of anonymity given the sensitivity of revealing business information.

Member Sketch noted that he had contributed, with Chair Montague, to the three-page version. He commented on the nine-page version:

- The questions are based on the premise that all discarded materials are waste, which is contrary to the spirit of this Commission.
- The definitions used in the survey appear to be taken directly from a communication written by the most prominent waste transfer operator on the island.
- Some of the questions in the survey, if answered honestly, would put the operators at risk of by-law enforcement.

Chair Montague echoed Member Sketch’s concerns with the nine-page version and added that she did not believe that the Commission needed to know the source of all of the products, nor their final destinations.

Member Henning responded to the comments of Members Sketch, noting that the definitions used in the nine-page version were drawn from a CRD document. He noted that it was possible the letter Member Sketch had referred to had reflected that same document.

Member Korbin also addressed several of the previous comments:

- In a small community and with the size of the industry, the collected information would not be anonymous. For example, only one operator collects organic waste.
- The source of the waste is a relevant question for the survey in that it distinguishes residential sources from non-residential ones.

Member Petrie raised the issue of waste that is being collected, but is not transported off of the island. A discussion of the difficulties of collecting such data ensued.

Member Duncan noted that the Commission had struck a subcommittee and that they developed the nine-page version. He then asked where the second, three-page version came from.

Chair Montague explained that after working with the subcommittee's draft survey, she felt they had strayed too far from the original assignment, which was materials, volumes and truck capacity. She had informed the subcommittee that a simpler survey model would also be circulated for the commission to review if the subcommittee's amended draft was still too long and included unassigned sections.

11. OPERATOR SURVEY, IMPLEMENTATION

Deputy Chair Philpot suggested accessing Waste Composition Studies, and made the following points:

- Surveying operators does not account for waste that does not leave the island or that leaves the island in a private vehicle.
- Although a study of Pender Island does not exist, data from similar locations could be extrapolated and contacts at the CRD would be able to assist with such research.
- Operators may, understandably, not be willing to share proprietary information about their businesses.
- The Waste Composition Studies could be used in conjunction with information from the businesses that contract the operators.

Planner Starke commented that the survey could capture valuable data beyond the waste volumes.

Chair Montague asked Planner Starke for her opinion on what the Commission should ask the CRD representative at the next meeting.

Planner Starke responded that the Commission could ask what Pender would need to do in order to have the CRD develop a bylaw for the island.

Member Korbin agreed with Planner Starke and suggested that the Commission speak to the CRD before making a final decision on the survey to ensure that they were capturing the correct information.

Member Sketch responded to comments that had been made on the three-page version:

- The scale of the page and space for written responses can be easily changed.
- The three-page version meets the three data objectives that had been agreed upon in the Commission's previous meeting.
- The suggestion of Deputy Chair Philpot could be combined with the data collected through the survey.
- It may not be necessary to capture those materials that are buried on Pender because those materials are not relevant to a waste transfer site.

Member Sketch recommended that the Commission to use this survey in addition to having Deputy Chair Philpot spearhead acquiring the information that he had proposed.

A discussion was held in which Commission members and members of the public offered suggestions of who should be targeted with the survey.

Member Deputy Chair reasserted his suggestion that the Commission use Waste Composition Studies in addition to surveying businesses on the waste they create.

NP-SAPC-2015-015

It was MOVED by Member Sketch and SECONDED by Chair Montague THAT the three-page survey is applied to Pender Island as a whole, advertised in the Pender Post or through other means, in order to collect data pursuant to the questions agreed upon by the commission on September 16, 2015.

Member Korbin asked who the targets of the survey would be.

Member Sketch answered that it would target everyone who transfers waste including operators and the businesses who contract them.

Deputy Chair Philpot stated that he would not support the motion because he does not feel the survey is ready. He suggested the sub-committee be reconvened and the Commission seek the advice of the CRD.

Member Petrie expressed concern that Deputy Chair Philpot's suggestion would mean a lengthy delay in distributing the survey.

Deputy Chair Philpot offered assurance that the steps could be completed quickly.

Chair Montague noted that the survey should be completed for the Commission's November meeting. She suggested that the authors of both surveys work together to create one product.

Member Henning agreed with the suggestions, but commented that he would like the input of the CRD before making further revisions to the surveys.

NP-SAPC-2015-016

It was MOVED by Member Korbin and SECONDED by Member Rippner THAT the Commission postpone the consideration of NP-SAPC-2015-015 indefinitely.

CARRIED
(unanimous)

12. NEXT STEPS, FUTURE MEETINGS, COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES

Chair Montague noted that the CRD representatives would attend the Commission's November meeting.

Member Duncan noted that the Commission should start looking at sites.

Member Henning proposed that the Commission invite major waste management operators to the meeting for an in-camera session.

Member Sketch responded:

- The Commission needs to know the volumes and types of waste before selecting a site.
- Particular operator needs is not relevant because it will change. This makes an in-camera session unnecessary.

Chair Montague suggested reconvening the conversation at a later time. She then acknowledged that the agenda did not have an item for public comment at the end of the meeting. She called upon Anne Burdett to speak.

Anne Burdett made comment related to liquid waste transfer. She noted that their public toilet operations had received by-law complaints and offered to produce documentation to support that her operation utilized proper disposal.

Candis Zell asked for clarification on the discussion of asking operators for proprietary information. She asked the Commission why they couldn't compel operators to answer questions related to volume.

Members responded to Ms. Zell's questions:

- A Special Advisory Planning Commission does not have the authority to compel such information.
- Data collection relies on cooperation.

13. ADJOURNMENT

NP-SAPC-2015-017

It was MOVED by Chair Montague and SECONDED by Member Rippner THAT the Commission adjourn at 3:42.

CARRIED
(unanimous)

Note: Following adjournment it was brought to the Chair's attention that after moving item 9 ahead in the agenda, item 8 had not been addressed. Chair Montague acknowledged the issue and noted that the topic would be placed on the next meeting's agenda.

Elizabeth Montague, Chair

Certified Correct:

Shannon Brayford, Recorder