

Environmental Task Force Minutes

9:00 AM - Tuesday, February 25, 2025
Council Chambers

- Present:** Councillor Roy Huetl (Chair); Councillor Fred Fowler; Paul Asselin; Ange Defosse; Bruce Moore; Marlene Spruyt; Mike Ward; and Katie Surra
- Absent with Regret:** Deputy Mayor John Inglis; and Darwyn Sproule, Public Works Manager, P. Eng.,
- Also Present:** Tara Mieske, Clerk/Planning Manager, Dipl.M.A. Dipl.M.M.

1 Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2 Traditional Land Acknowledgement

We begin this gathering by acknowledging and celebrating these traditional lands as a gathering place of the first peoples and their ancestors who are entrusted to care for Mother Earth since time immemorial. We do so respecting both the land and the Indigenous People who continue to walk with us through this world. Today, the Township of North Frontenac is committed to working with Indigenous Peoples and all residents to pursue a united path of reconciliation.

3 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

None declared.

4 Environmental Task Force Notes

- a) *Notes of the Environmental Task Force Meeting dated January 28, 2025, as approved via email and received for information at the February 21, 2025 Regular Meeting of Council.*

5 Business Arising

- a) **Work Plan Update**
1. **Battery Storage Opportunities - John Inglis, Paul Asselin and Marlene Spruyt**
 2. **Net Metering - John Inglis, Paul Asselin and Marlene Spruyt**
 3. **Invasive Species - Roy Huetl, Fred Fowler and Mike Ward**
 4. **Septic Inspection Programs - Bruce Moore, Kate Surra, Roy Huetl and Fred Fowler**
 5. **Carrying Capacity of Lakes - Bruce Moore, Kate Surra. Ange Defosse and**

Mike Ward

6. **Short-term Rentals - Bruce Moore, Kate Surra, Ange Defosse and John Inglis**

1. Battery Storage Opportunities

Innergex is interested in looking at some properties in North Frontenac in the spring. They are interested in having a video conference call with the Task Force and invite the Mayor and CAO to attend. Deputy Mayor Inglis will arrange the time for the call.

Asselin advised the West Ottawa System is experiencing resistance from local residents who are concerned about ground water contamination. This is something new and can likely be addressed during the construction phase to ensure the surface is not permeable. Therefore; if there is a proposal a lot of communications will be required to address public concerns.

The storage containers have a fire retardant system within them which should self-manage the fire. Also, the companies will provide equipment and training to the municipality's fire department.

2. Net Metering

Deputy Mayor Inglis has contacted two companies and is waiting on a response.

3. Invasive Species

Councillor Huetl advised he is still waiting for a date for the meeting with Mazinaw Lake Association and federal and provincial representatives. May need to use a dual approach one being prevention in lakes that are not already impacted and methods to reduce spread or eradicate the milfoil. Consider signage at boat launches not owned by the Township on lakes where milfoil is present to advise boaters of its presence and how to avoid spreading it to other lakes. Also, to avoid areas of the lake where the milfoil is present.

The Task Force invited Megan Ward who is completing her PhD in invasive species ecology to provide a presentation on Eurasian Milfoil.

4. Septic Inspection Programs

No meeting since the last Task Force Meeting. Councillor Huetl is planning to set-up a meeting in the next few weeks with the sub-committee. Prior to the meeting Councillor Huetl do some research with realtors and Mieske do some research on how to potentially get sale information sooner. Spruyt noted the delay in sales data can be dealt with if purchasers are aware of the requirement for inspections at the time of the sale.

5. Carrying Capacity of Lakes

This item doesn't have the urgency of some of the other items being addressed. It is also outside the of the Township's capacity as it falls under the jurisdiction of the Province and other agencies and is a long-term goal.

6. Short-term Rentals

Moore is hoping to set-up a meeting of the sub-committee within the next couple of weeks. There needs to be a clear statement of why action should be taken. Also, how environmental issues are linked to short-term rentals. A lack of complaints is not a reason to not regulate short-term rentals. Huetl noted that almost all municipalities are regulating short-term rentals and therefore; Air B&B is targeting municipalities that don't regulate them.

- b) ***Earth Day - April 22, 2025***
<https://earthday.ca/>

6 New Business

- a) ***Community Action Poster/Flyer and One Earth Series at Libraries***

The Task Force reviewed the draft poster and were very impressed with the poster and thought it was a great idea. There were a few suggested amendments including adding the letter head. Defosse will provide the amended poster to be included with Notes when provided to Council. It is recommended that Council consider allowing the Task Force to publish a quarterly newsletter (one for each season) focusing on environmental issues based on the season. This can be distributed via social media, Township website, via email to Lake Associations and local businesses and posted at the Township office, Township halls and the waste sites.

- b) ***Quinte Phragmites Management Area Forum - Public Works Manager to Attend***

The Public Works Manager will provide an update to the Task Force after the forum.

- c) ***Biochar***

Asselin provided an update on a new technology where organic material is burnt so quickly the carbon is not released and the black powder remaining can be used to improve the quality of soils.

Biochar is a charcoal-like substance that's made by burning organic material from agricultural and forestry wastes (also called biomass) in a controlled process. Although it looks a lot like common charcoal, biochar is produced using a specific process to reduce contamination and safely store carbon.

<https://regenerationinternational.org/2018/05/16/what-is-biochar/>

- d) ***Community Improvement Plan Program***

Consider expanding the CIP to include funding for environmental issues. The Chair asked for this to be added to the March 25, 2025 Agenda for discussion.

7 Adjournment

a) *Meeting adjourned at 10:19 a.m.*

8 Recommendations

Be It Resolved That Council receives for information the Minutes of a Meeting of the Environmental Task Force dated February 25, 2025;

And That Council approves the Task Force creating and distributing a quarterly newsletter focusing on environmental issues based on the season.