



Environmental Task Force Minutes

9:00 AM - Tuesday, October 28, 2025
Council Chambers

Present: Councillor Roy Huetl (Chair); Deputy Mayor John Inglis; Councillor Fred Fowler; Paul Asselin; Bruce Moore; Marlene Spruyt; Mike Ward; and Katie Surra

Also Present: Tara Mieske, Clerk/Planning Manager, Dipl.M.A. Dipl.M.M., and Darwyn Sproule, Public Works Manager, P. Eng.

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 noted.

4. Environmental Task Force Notes

- a) ***Notes of the Environmental Task Force Meeting dated September 30, 2025, as approved via email and being considered by Council at the October 31, 2025 Regular Meeting of Council.***

No comments.

5. Business Arising

- a) ***Quarterly Newsletter***

Deferred.

6. New Business

- a) ***2026 Work Plan***

Deferred.

b) *Work Plan Update*

1. Battery Storage Opportunities - John Inglis, Paul Asselin and Marlene Spruyt

The Task Force discussed the public comments received through email and at the Special Council Meeting on October 24, 2025 regarding the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). Asselin advised concerns were raised regarding noise and the potential implications on Mississagagon Lake properties. These concerns are based on the downslope from the proposed location to the lake; no natural barrier because the forest has been removed due to the high-voltage hydro corridor; and that noise spreads across water. When noise is studied the threshold is 40 dBa measured to the closest residence. It was noted the properties on Mississagagon Lake are not the closest but due to the above noted factors may be impacted more than the neighbouring properties that are buffered by natural forested barriers. They noted this could be a risk and may need to be mitigated. It was suggested the acceptable noise levels be reduced and include measurements along the shore of Mississagagon Lake. It was the consensus of the Task Force the thresholds could be established at this time and addressed during the design of the project.

There were also concerns with fires caused by BESS and forest fires that could impact BESS. The new technology reduces the risk of fire and thermal runaway. There is also a fire safety plan to address any potential risks which includes training. The property is part of an active waste site which is considered industrial and is already monitored due to the use of the property.

There are financial benefits for the Township including lease payments, Community Benefit Agreement dollars and taxation but it is not the only benefit. It was also noted the overall environmental benefit of a BESS project has been lost. It reduces the need for energy production because it stores energy when demand is low and stores it for when demand is high.

The permitting stage includes studies to determine if environmental or noise issues are unresolvable or what mitigation measures are needed. The Task Force concluded that many issues, like discharge, fire risks, and noise, can be addressed later during the detailed design stage.

The Chair advised he would bring the noise concerns raised to Council on Friday and recommend a reduced noise threshold be considered as well as it being measured to the closest properties and the properties on Mississagagon Lake.

Note: Work Plan Updates of the remaining items were deferred.

c) *Resignation of Ange Defosse, Task Force Member*

Councillor Huetl advised the Task Force of Ange Defosse resignation due to personal commitments. He noted Ms. Defosse is willing to assist with the preparation of the quarterly newsletters or policies if required.

Note: Marlene Spruyt left the meeting at this time.

d) Meeting Dates for 2026

Deferred.

e) Sub-Committee Protocol

Members of the Task Force are approved by Council and must attend meetings in-person or electronically. You are not permitted to have someone sit in on the meeting on your behalf. Any member of the public can attend a Task Force meeting but would only be permitted to participate at the leave of the Chair.

Sub-committee's are established by the Task Force based on the workplan and members of the Task Force volunteer to be members of the sub-committee. The sub-committee can invite subject matter experts to attend the meetings to provide advice. These individuals are not members of the sub-committee. Concerns have been raised that in some sub-committees expert witnesses are too influential and the members of the sub-committee are not adequately represented. The information provided to the Task Force from the sub-committee needs to reflect the opinions/advice of the entire sub-committee. Also, when information is provided to the Task Force from a sub-committee, the Task Force may wish to make changes or request additional information before providing a recommendation to Council.

7. Adjournment

a) Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

8. Recommendations

Be It Resolved That Council receives for information the notes of the Environmental Task Force dated October 28, 2025;

And That Council accepts the resignation of Ange Defosse from the Task Force and thanks her for her contributions.

Councillor Roy Huetl, Chair