



## **GREEN ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP MINUTES**

---

**Friday, March 17, 2023**

**2:30 p.m.**

**Council Chambers**

---

### **ATTENDANCE:**

#### **Members Present:**

Councillor, Greg Hallam  
Councillor, Angela Pierman  
Bob Argue  
Jennifer Dickson  
Douglas Barr  
Gilbert Rossignol  
Peter Nelson

#### **Members Absent:**

David Poch

#### **Staff Present:**

Noelle Reeve, Planner  
Allison Playfair, Building & Planning Administrative  
Assistant, Recording Secretary  
Janie Laidlaw, Deputy Clerk (left at 2:42 p.m.)

---

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m.  
A quorum was present.

### **2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Councillor Greg Hallam was appointed as Chair of the Green Energy and Climate Change Working Group.

### **3. AMENDMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as presented.

### **4. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

None at this time.

### **5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **i) Minutes –September 16, 2022**

The minutes of the Green Energy and Climate Change Working Group Meeting held on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, were approved as presented.

### **6. DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

None.

### **7. COMMITTEE ORIENTATION**

The Deputy Clerk explained the orientation package that was handed out to the Working Group Members. The Working Group Members read the Code of Conduct and signed the forms.

The Deputy Clerk left the meeting at 2:42 p.m.

### **8. BUSINESS**

#### **i) Introductions**

The Working Group Members introduced themselves and expressed their personal areas of interest within the Terms of Reference for the Working Group for this term. These priorities included:

- implement the Climate Action Plan;
- increase recycling and composting;
- become a centre of knowledge and expertise;
- provide strong aspirational targets for the Township to aim for;
- no new fossil fuel based purchases going forward;
- educate residents.

During the introduction of the Members, it was discussed that a Member who is not able to attend in person should be able to attend virtually.

ii) **Climate Action Plan Update - Noelle Reeve, Planner**

- **Targets – Progress**

The Planner explained pie charts in the Climate Action Plan, adopted by Council in 2020, including the Municipal Green House Gas Emissions by sector on page 17 of the Climate Action Plan, the Municipal Energy Consumption by source on page 18, and the Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions by sector on page 19.

The Planner also reviewed the Essential Actions in the Climate Action Plan. She noted that the Federal government has funding to help implement the actions of the Plan.

- **Targets - Priorities Discussion**

The Planner updated the Working Group on new reports that had been presented to Council in the last few months that the Working Group can use to help the Township achieve its Greenhouse Gas reduction and energy savings goals.

**Building Conditions Assessment Report**

The Planner asked the Working Group to review the report and to offer suggestions on how any of the work proposed could be undertaken to reduce energy use and emissions. The Working Group discussed that future replacement of building components or total replacement should use the Climate Lens Tool to ensure that lifecycle costing, including the increases in the price of carbon, is provided to Council. Any suggestions the Working Group have should be emailed to the Planner who will then forward the information to the Public Works Manager.

It was noted that Lanark County had not used life cycle costing in its analysis to replace the gas boilers in three of their housing units. They had moved a motion to use gas boilers without considering the more cost effective, energy efficient alternative of air source heat pumps that also provide air conditioning in the summer and decrease Greenhouse gases. Reeve Rainer will be speaking to County Council on March 22, 2023 on this matter.

The Planner is to email the information to the Working Group for the meeting that is to be held at the County of Lanark on March 22, 2023 regarding the air source heat pumps versus gas boilers.

## Asset Management Plan

The Planner commented that the Treasurer and Public Works Manager will be presenting the Asset Management Plan to Council as well as the 10-Year Capital Plan in April. The Asset Management Plan sets out the replacement timeline for all the Township assets (e.g., vehicles, tools, equipment as well as buildings) so it is a very important document for the Working Group to be aware of so that it can provide suggestions and recommendations for energy savings and greenhouse gas reduction.

Councillor Angela Pierman recommended that the Planner create a Power Point presentation of the information discussed at today's meeting to help educate the new Council on the significance of lifecycle costing in reducing the Township's contribution to Climate Change.

- Adaptation – Where does it fit?

The Climate Action Plan was funded by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) grant to produce a mitigation plan – to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions. The other aspect of addressing climate change is adaption to increased flooding as well as increased droughts.

B. Argue pointed out that some adaption actions are also mitigation actions so are twice as valuable. Natural Asset Management is a good example (e.g., protection of wetlands). Protecting wetlands allows for carbon sequestration within the wetland (mitigating/reducing the amount of greenhouse gas in the air). Wetlands also provide adaptation to climate change impacts by soaking up rainwater (which reduces flooding) and also releasing water slowly (providing a reserve of water during droughts).

### iii) **Communications**

- Lanark County Climate Change Committee Update

The Planner explained to the Working Group that Reeve Rainer sits on the Committee with three (3) other County Councillors and that she had been appointed to be the Township's municipal representative to the Lanark County Climate Change Committee. She has not been invited to any meeting yet in 2023. Last year Working Group member Bob Argue was the representative for the Township, but the policy has been changed by the County and members of the public were no longer appointed. The Lanark County Climate Change Committee has not yet completed a Climate Action Plan.

- Should Tay Valley Declare a Climate Emergency

P. Neilson expressed concern about the postponement of the electric vehicle purchase and about the County not tendering for heat pumps in the

renovations of its housing buildings. He provided an article about the Town of Huntsville declaring a climate emergency – *attached page 8.*

The Working Group will discuss the value of declaring a climate emergency as an educational tool at its next meeting.

P. Neilson also discussed a book that is recommended by Mark Z Jacobson – No Miracles Needed. The book asserts we can use existing technologies to harness, store, and transmit energy from wind, water, and solar sources to ensure reliable electricity, heat supplies, and energy security. – *synopsis page 9.*

Working Group Members are to bring back ideas to help educate the community with doing small things to make changes to address climate change. This will be added as a topic on a future agenda.

- National Building Code Update Energy Efficiency - Doug Barr

Topic to be deferred to the next meeting.

- Update Webpage, Produce an E-news fortnightly on Energy/Climate Change Tips

The Working Group discussed different options to educate the community with easy tips to help in implementing climate change actions in their own homes. A suggestion was to have current residents share their experiences using alternative heating sources like heat pumps or solar panels, etc, and send the information in a newsfeed or post on the Climate Change webpage.

Another suggestion was to have a green festival or promote a festival in the area that is already taking place.

Also, the Climate Lens Tool was recommended to be on the webpage for everyone to use when completing purchases or renovations.

## **9. NEW AND OTHER BUSINESS**

The Working Group agreed to add the following to the Agenda under New and Other Business:

- Motion to Request that Hybrid Meetings be Permitted Again
- Three articles on climate change

i) **Motion to Request that Hybrid Meetings be Permitted Again**

The Working Group requested that the Green Energy and Climate Change Working Group meetings be held in a hybrid format on a trial basis to allow Members unable to physically attend to participate and that Councillors Hallam and Pierman draw this to Council's attention.

ii) **Three articles on climate change.**

The Planner provide information to the Working Group on the following topics:

- Journey to Sustainability presentation with ONfungi explores how fungal dominant compost builds soil life – *attached page 11* .
- Article – Opinion – What if Climate Change meant not doom – but abundance? – *attached page 12*.
- The Indicators produced by Climate Reality Project Canada would be a good visual to communicate with the public on progress implementing the Action Plan – *attached page 14*

**10. NEXT MEETING DATE AND PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS**

Next Meeting: April 14, 2023

**11. DEFERRED ITEMS**

*\*The following items will be discussed at the next and/or future meeting:*

- *National Building Code Update Energy Efficiency*
- *Declaring a Climate Emergency*
- *Suggestions for Educating Residents*

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The Working Group adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

  
**Chair**

  
**Secretary**

# **BUSINESS**

## **Town of Huntsville declares a climate emergency, aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050**

BY Dawn Huddleston, *Huntsville Doppler*, July 1, 2021

*The Town of Huntsville has signed on to do its part in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.*

Spurred on by Climate Action Muskoka—a local not-for-profit group concerned about climate change and its impacts—Huntsville councillors unanimously agreed to join the Town of Gravenhurst and District of Muskoka and declare a climate emergency.

The resolution presented at the June 28 council meeting cited a United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2018 report, which notes that the current climate heating rate "will lead to catastrophic social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts throughout the world and estimates less than 10 years before the worst impacts of climate change are experienced."

It also states that much of the financial impacts of climate change will be felt at the municipal level related to damaged roads, bridges, water, sewer and stormwater systems, and destruction of natural infrastructure.

It adds that it is not only necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions "but also to increase community resiliency in the face of climate change, and that these approaches can offer multiple benefits, including **improved health and air quality**, increased innovation, economic development and reduced costs over time. The Town of Huntsville wishes to protect its economy, community, and ecosystems from the impacts of our changing climate."

The resolution also states that a climate action plan (CAP) will be developed in collaboration with other lower-tier municipalities, and that the municipality will seek technical assistance from the District of Muskoka and seek to reduce corporate and community greenhouse gas emissions.

"This baseline CAP will be further refined by the Town of Huntsville to: identify firm, ambitious targets with a goal of greater than 50% reduction of GHG emissions by 2030 and reaching zero GHG emissions by 2050; work to become a drawdown/regenerative community; and take an active role in the repair and regeneration of our systems, including in the areas of the built environment, natural infrastructure, land use, transportation, energy, waste, health, and food security," notes the resolution.

[From:

<https://doppleronline.ca/huntsville-town-of-huntsville-declares-a-climate-emergency-aims-to-reduce-greenhouse-gas-emissions-to-zero-by-2050/>; retrieved March 16, 2023.]

Random Acts of Green:

**"649 Municipalities Have Declared A Climate Emergency In Canada"** -- March 1, 2023.

- <https://raog.ca/climate-emergency-declarations-canada/>



**No Miracles Needed:**  
**How Today's Technology Can Save Our Climate and Clean Our Air**  
**by Mark Z. Jacobson, Stanford University**

[Cambridge University Press; New edition (Feb. 2, 2023); 454 pages]

Publisher's Synopsis:

The world needs to turn away from fossil fuels and use clean, renewable sources of energy as soon as we can. Failure to do so will cause catastrophic climate damage sooner than you might think, leading to loss of biodiversity and economic and political instability.

But all is not lost! We still have time to save the planet without resorting to 'miracle' technologies. ... We can use existing technologies to harness, store, and transmit energy from wind, water, and solar sources to ensure reliable electricity, heat supplies, and energy security.

This book shows that we need to transition all of our energy to clean, renewable energy for **three major reasons**: air pollution, climate change, and energy security. These three problems, which have the same root cause (combustion of fuels), require **immediate** and drastic solutions. **The longer we wait** to solve these problems, **the more the accumulated damage**.

Find out what you can do to improve the health, climate, and economic state of our planet. Together, we can solve the climate crisis, eliminate air pollution and safely secure energy supplies for everyone.

-----

From the Foreword by Bill McKibben (pp. xi-xii):

This is among the most important books you'll ever read, because it lays out in clear and frank terms the great problem of our age, and the great solution.

**Burning things – coal, gas, oil, and biomass** – has produced the prosperous world that we in the West inhabit. It has allowed us to heat and cool our buildings when the temperature is not to our liking, to light our spaces so as to extend our days, and to move ourselves and our stuff great distances with great ease. It has liberated us, that is, from many of the constraints that had traditionally governed human life.

But we now know that those liberations have come with unbearable cost. **Breathing the smoky byproducts of all that burning kills more than 7 million of our brothers and sisters each year**, far more than Covid, or HIV/AIDS, or malaria, or war. And that combustion has filled the air with invisible greenhouse gases that now threaten the very stability of our civilizations by raising the temperature and in the process melting the icecaps, destabilizing the jet stream and the Gulf Stream, raising the sea level, and sundry other catastrophes on a scale of destruction we'd previously imagined only in connection with atomic weapons.

So replace them we must – but with what? Mark Jacobson and his team have provided, after two decades of work, all the answers we need. Wind power, hydropower, and solar power – wind, water,

1

and sun, or 'WWS' to use his formulation – are sufficient to give us more than enough energy for our needs, and to do it at a cost that should allow for quick transition. This book lays out those essential facts in interesting, accessible, and readable fashion: it is a user's manual for a planet in transition, and one that should settle the panic in anyone who thinks we lack the resources to do what needs doing.

To state it plainly: there is no longer any technical or economic obstacle to the **swift transition** of our energy system to something far cleaner, cheaper, and more rational. We have the miracle technologies we require firmly in hand. You can point a sheet of glass at the sun and out the back will come light, air conditioning, information, mobility: all the requirements of modernity. Jacobson dutifully considers the possible drawbacks – will it use up minerals we don't possess in sufficient quantity, or occupy too much land – and comes back with mathematical assurances. He has the data.

But of course winning the argument is not the same as winning the fight. Shifting in the **short time that climate science requires** will mean overcoming both inertia and vested interest, which means that all of us, even if we are not engineers, have a role to play in getting the job done.

In fact, it would be a dereliction of intellectual duty to read this book and then not take some actions to change the debate. If we had no readily available answer to the twin crises of climate change and air pollution, then I suppose we could in conscience ignore them. But the solutions are readily at hand. This book should empower you – and with **not a moment to spare!**

---

#### Some Reviews

"To those who wrongly insist we lack the tools to decarbonize our economy today, I say: read this book and be informed and engaged to help tackle the defining challenge of our time."

-- **Michael Mann**, Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric Science at Penn State University and author of *The New Climate War*.

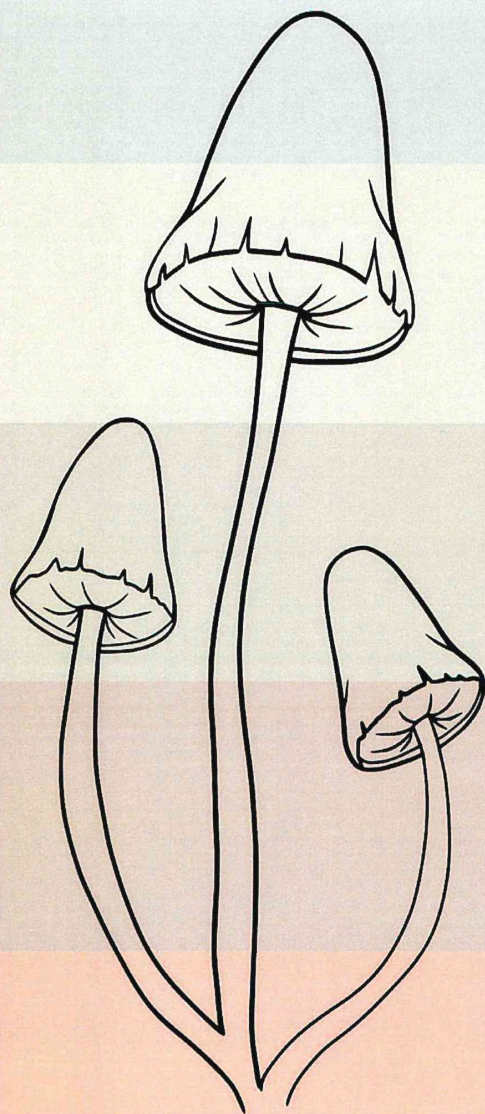
"Many people believe or fear that we can't solve the climate crisis, because we just don't have the technologies in hand to do so. This book should lay that fear to rest, once and for all."

-- **Naomi Oreskes**, co-author (with Erik M. Conway) of *The Big Myth: How American Business Taught Us to Loathe Government and Love the Free Market*.

---

#### Example: Section 8.6, "Why Not Biomass for Electricity or Heat?", excerpts from pp.173-177:

The **primary reason** biomass combustion is not proposed for use in a WWS world is that biomass combustion ... produces air pollution. The **second reason** for not including biomass is that it causes more global warming per unit electricity produced than does WWS. Biomass combustion is less efficient than even coal combustion. A **third problem** with some types of biomass, particularly energy crops, is the much greater land requirement for them than for WWS. Given that photosynthesis is only 1 percent efficient at converting sunlight to biomass energy, whereas solar PV panels are now 20 to 47 percent efficient at converting sunlight to electricity, a solar panel needs less than 1/20 the land to produce the same energy as a biomass crop."



## **Journey to Sustainability presentation with ONfungi explores how fungal dominant compost builds soil life.**

Join us via Zoom on Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm.

[Click here to register!](#)

Kelvin Hodges and Scott Hortop lead an exploration of fungal dominant compost (FDC). Learn how to make FDC and use it to improve soil, increase crop yield, boost nutrition; all by repurposing urban yard waste.



**RIDEAU  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ACTION LEAGUE**

# Opinion What if climate change meant not doom — but abundance?

By Rebecca Solnit

March 15, 2023 at 6:00 a.m. EDT

*Rebecca Solnit, a writer and historian, is the author of more than 20 books and co-editor of the anthology “Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story From Despair to Possibility,” publishing in April.*

A monastic once told me renunciation can be great if it means giving up things that make you miserable.

This vision, I think, is what has been missing when we talk about the climate crisis — and how we should respond to it.

Much of the reluctance to do what climate change requires comes from the assumption that it means trading abundance for austerity, and trading all our stuff and conveniences for less stuff, less convenience. But what if it meant giving up things we’re well rid of, from deadly emissions to nagging feelings of doom and complicity in destruction? What if the austerity is how we live now — and the abundance could be what is to come?

Look closely, and you can see that by measures other than goods and money, we are impoverished. Even the affluent live in a world where confidence in the future, and in the society and institutions around us, is fading — and where a sense of security, social connectedness, mental and physical health, and other measures of well-being are often dismal.















































































































For so many of us, being busy with work has leached away our capacity to pursue true riches. What if we were to prioritize reclaiming our time — to fret less about getting and spending — and instead “spend” this precious resource on creative pursuits, on adventure and learning, on building stronger societies and being better citizens, on caring for the people (and other species and places) we love, on taking care of ourselves?

When I was researching a book on how people respond to disasters, I was struck less by the fact that most people were brave, altruistic and able to improvise new social networks and means of survival, and more by the fact that amid these improvisations, they found something they craved *so much* that even amid death, ruin and disorder, their joy shone out.

To respond to the climate crisis — a disaster on a more immense scale than anything our species has faced — we can and must summon what people facing disasters have: a sense of meaning, of deep connection and generosity, of being truly alive in the face of uncertainty. Of joy.

This is the kind of abundance we need to meet the climate crisis, to make many, or even most, lives better. It is the opposite of moral injury; it is moral *beauty*. A thing we needn't acquire, because we already have it in us.



Municipalities	Legend	INDICATORS										INDICATORS				
		BUILDINGS		HEALTH		ENERGY	WASTE	FOOD	ROADS		TRANSPORTS			JUSTICE		
		Affordable Housing	Sustainable Building	Air Quality	Urban Greenness	Energy Mix	Landfill Waste	Urban Agriculture	Bike Lanes	Walkability	EV Charging Station	Public Transit	Shared Vehicles	Gender Equity	Municipal employees dedicated to the transition	Sustainable Jobs
																
VERY LARGE CITIES																
Ottawa																
Montreal																
Vancouver																
Toronto																
Edmonton																
Calgary																
Winnipeg																
LARGE CITIES																
Halifax																
Hamilton																
Laval																
London																
Quebec																
MEDIUM CITIES																
Brandon																
St. John's																
Burnaby																
Kelowna																
North Vancouver																
Oakville																
Victoria																
SMALL CITIES																
Charlottetown																
Prince Albert																
Whitehorse																
Yellowknife																
Nelson																
Steinbach	