

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Executive Committee

**MEETING:** November 5, 2019

**FROM:** Kim Fowler  
Manager of Long Range Planning,  
Energy & Sustainability

**FILE:** 5825-01

**SUBJECT:** Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Regional District of Nanaimo create a Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee.
2. That the Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee terms of reference be approved.
3. That \$80,000 and a two year term 0.5 full-time equivalent position be in each of the proposed 2020 and 2021 budgets to establish and support the Committee.
4. That a report be prepared to the Board on the future of the Committee after the Committee has operated for 2 years.

## SUMMARY

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) 2019-2022 Board Strategic Plan (the Strategic Plan) has an action item to create a Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee (the Committee). A draft Terms of Reference for the Committee and a discussion of the financial implications of the creation of the Committee are provided (Attachment 1).

The principal mandate of the Committee will be to provide actionable responses to questions and directions from the Board regarding specific immediate, short-term, and long-term issues that the RDN may mitigate or adapt to address climate change.

On July 11, 2019, the Executive Committee reviewed the proposed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee and referred the TOR back to staff to include the following criteria:

- include additional directors;
- not compensate members; and
- examine membership criteria

In response, two options are provided for consideration by the Executive Committee to either add more directors to the Committee or for the Committee to be comprised entirely of directors.

## BACKGROUND

The RDN has a number of advisory committees in place to provide advice about specific policy and service areas, such as the Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Liquid Waste Management Plan Monitoring Committee, and the Solid Waste Management Plan Monitoring Committee. Projects are underway in Emergency Management to respond to climate influenced hazards and Climate Adaptation Sea Level Rise mapping and floodplain management bylaw amendments are underway in Long Range Community Planning. The Official Community Plans throughout the region also speak to preparation for and mitigation of the impacts of global climate change.

In acknowledging the seriousness of climate change, the Strategic Plan provides the following:

### *1.0 Climate Change*

#### *1.1 Strike a technical advisory committee to develop and advance the RDN climate change strategy and recommend immediate action towards adaptation and mitigation.*

The opportunity for the RDN to receive specific and actionable recommendations from a group of subject-area experts offers new opportunities for more immediate progress in a variety of RDN policy and service areas. This Committee and resulting actions by the RDN will form part of the RDN's response to climate change that is a key area in the Strategic Plan.

Likely areas where the RDN Board may wish to consult the Committee could include feedback on the Regional Growth Strategy, opportunities for local renewable energy generation, changes to utility operations, vehicle fleet carbon reductions, and solid and liquid waste management. As other areas of emphasis or opportunity arise, the Board will have the discretion to consult with the Committee on an as-needed basis.

The Committee must include one member of the Board pursuant to Section 218 (4) of the *Local Government Act*, but the recommendation is for three Board Directors.

After a period of two years, the Board may wish to assess the work of the Committee and to consider the future of the Committee.

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- include additional directors;
- not compensate members; and
- examine membership criteria

In response, two options are provided for consideration by the Executive Committee:

- Option 1: Add two more Directors to the Committee for a total of three Directors. No changes to the seven technical experts is recommended given the urgency of the climate change crisis and the need to rely on scientific and professional data, analysis and recommendation.
- Option 2: The Committee be comprised entirely of five Directors. This would enable more detailed discussion and review of climate change issues with recommendations back to the Board.

The first option is recommended and is included in the updated TOR (attached).

The following other changes to the TOR are recommended:

- Adding an asset management specialist to the list of professional areas

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. That the Regional District of Nanaimo create a Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee.
2. That the Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee terms of reference be approved.
3. That \$80,000 and a two year term 0.5 full-time equivalent position be in each of the proposed 2020 and 2021 budgets to establish and support the Committee.
4. That a report be prepared to the Board on the future of the Committee after the Committee has operated for 2 years.
5. That the Board provide alternate direction.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

With a full roster of appointees and full attendance at Committee meetings, compensation for Committee members, including three RDN Directors, would reach \$20,800, as scheduled in the Committee's Terms of Reference. Given the Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee's need to rely on the retention of expert advice, additional consulting costs may need to be incurred. Creation of a new committee will require ongoing staff support of a 0.5 Full Time Equivalent planner position (\$50,000). The RDN can anticipate an annual budget impact of approximately \$80,000 for this Committee. This new cost will be considered the 2020 RDN budget.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

Climate Change - Strike a Technical Advisory Committee to develop and advance the RDN Climate Change Strategy and recommend immediate actions towards adaptation and mitigation.



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November 5, 2019

Attachments:

1. Climate Action Technical Advisory Committee Draft Terms of Reference