

Meeting Minutes

City of Guelph

Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee

February 8, 2018

City Hall, Meeting Room D

From 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Chair: Paul McLennan (PM)

Committee Membership: Grant Parkinson (GP), Mike Darmon (MD), David Worden (DW), Hugh Whiteley (HW).

Regrets: Patty Quackenbush (PQ), Louise Cottreau (LC), and Renuka Baral (RB)

Staff: Heather Yates (HY), Stephanie Cote (SC), and Jennifer Gilks (JG)

Presenters: Kirk Stinchcombe (KS) (Econics), Rebecca Mersereau (RM) (Econics) and Bill Gauley (BG)

Agenda Items

Item 1

Welcome and introductions – P. McLennan, all

Item 2

Confirmation of last meeting's minutes – November 29, 2017

Motion: The minutes from the November 29, 2017 meeting be approved and circulated.

Motion Approved by PM

Seconded MD

Carried

Item 3

Public Education and Communication Strategy (PECS) Draft Key Message Discussion –

K. Stinchcombe

Three draft key messages and associated supporting messages developed with Econics were presented to the committee for feedback. Once finalized, they will be included in a strategy for the City of Guelph to apply them within water conservation programs.

Attachment A: 2018-02 PECSU Key Messages

Key messages are not the content of communications, but overarching messages a company wants to convey. For example, the Goldfish© cracker ad suggests this product is a healthy and fun snack, although it isn't stated outright. The Converse© ad communicates that their shoes allow for creativity and expression of style.

Guelph's water conservation messages need to mature, with the audience's needs. Residents know they should conserve, feel they are doing their part and have minimal water quality concerns. There is a desire to understand why they should conserve.

The three key messages have the following overarching themes:

1. More standard water conservation messaging aimed to support efforts to make water conservation a social norm.
2. Highlights why water conservation is important, with a big picture focus.
3. Communicates water as part of our individual and collective community identity.

Key message testing via focus group, moderated by Metroline, with both more and less conservation-oriented community members reaffirmed the key messages developed. Key messages two and three were most impactful.

Discussion:

HW: Interested in how representative the focus groups were.

KS: The groups were biased towards single family homes. Participants needed to be a resident of Guelph over 18 years of age who was a home owner and paid a water bill.

HW: Identifies key messages as important for community building and suggests that, widely, the City should emphasize that Guelph cares about water.

HY: This is reflected in Guelph's community plan; A strategic plan that outlines various pillars that form our community and encourages dialogue on "What is my Guelph?".

HY: From your experience and participation in the development of our programs and strategies, are these the right messages? Is there anything we are missing?

HW: I wouldn't worry too much about being conventional. There is growing conversation about One Water and the need to integrate discussion on water services. The second and third key messages are in line with the One Water approach.

BG: Agree with the importance of the One Water approach, recognizing that all of Guelph's water is connected. Impacts to one water system impacts them all.

DW: Agree that the second and third messages are the most resonating.

HW: Recommend offering a water-specific package to new residents, fairly soon after they move in, that outlines the importance of water to their new community.

HY: Great recommendation. There has been some effort through the Enviroguide and Welcome Wagon. We are currently working on connecting through immigration services.

PM: It could be sent out to someone who has set up a new water account. Maybe if they are moving within the city they don't get it, but do if they are a new resident.

Item 4

Canada Water Week and H2O Go Festival Planning – J. Gilks

Overview of the events taking place during Canada Water week including their purpose and design. An opportunity for brainstorming and feedback on ideas for these events based on PECS key messages.

Canada Water Week events include a "Water Wednesday" event at the main library branch where we will host activities and provide public education on water treatment, distribution and

the importance of conservation. Also, at the Guelph Civic Museum, camp groups will participate in educational hands on workshops on water efficient gardening and water conservation.

H2O Go! Festival is happening again this year! It coincides with several other downtown events in celebration of World Water Day. There will be children's games, face painting, workshops, and interactive exhibitors (including the Guelph 360, Wellington Water Watchers and the Grand River Conservation Authority). It will take place alongside the Resilience Festival by Transition Guelph, and the Eco-Market by eMERGE Guelph on Saturday March 24th at Old Quebec Street Mall. John McCrae school will host a "Syrup in the City" event. A passport will be provided to encourage attendee's to participate in all four events. Last year there were over 4000 visitors.

Discussion:

HW: Suggested a project that groups will report on at the next year's event.

JG: At H2Awesome 300 grade 8 students conducted projects they will present to Council in May. There may be opportunities to conduct something similar with the community.

HW: It could be connected to the former annual water conservation awards ceremony. Seeing others receive awards for efforts related to water conservation would likely motivate others.

HY: Each year, conservation picks a theme for advertisements during Canada Water Week. The theme is typically advertised throughout the year. This year it is "Fix a Leak" to get people reengaged with this maintenance practice at home and work. We will also communicate City of Guelph efforts to fix leaks. Kitchener has developed some great infographics.

This year the theme for World Water Day is 'Nature for Water' and about using nature to overcome water challenges. This theme connects well to One Water.

Item 5

Blue Built Home (BBH) Program Update and Associated Research – S. Cote, B. Gauley

An introduction to proposed program changes and the progress to date.

Attachment B: 2018-02 BBH Update Summary to Date

The Blue Built Home (BBH) program is being expanded to include existing homes and the multi-residential community. Efforts are ongoing to plan administrative process, connect with key stakeholders, develop a communications plan, and outline terms and conditions and certification requirements. Bill Gauley researched water efficient products and worked with Water Conservation staff to develop draft certification requirements.

Certification requirements were developed with goals to make BBH a valued designation, move the marketplace towards greater efficiencies, and encourage program participation. Simple, flexible and easy to implement requirements are recognized as important to key stakeholders. The program requirements presented are applicable to all property types.

Four BBH qualification options are recommended. Installation of a rainwater or greywater harvesting system results in automatic qualification. Otherwise, various primary and secondary water efficient products are listed. At least three of these products must be installed, of which, at least two must be a "primary" option. If showerheads or toilets are selected, all items within the home must be efficient. A Healthy Landscapes Visit is included for cross promotion and the program's large water saving opportunities.

Discussion:

BG: It is difficult to motivate people to take shorter showers, but water can be saved by reducing the flow rate. For example, a massaging showerhead that introduces air into the flow

pulses over 60 times per second so it saves water but doesn't feel different. Managing personal preferences can also be challenging.

HW: With on demand water heaters you get a sharp cold because of the shut off.

BG: Water efficient showerheads may not work with tankless water heaters because there is not enough pressure to indicate that hot water is required from the tank.

DW: Will the program be revised if the building code changes again? What direction will the program take as water savings are harder to achieve with increased efficiencies?

SC: We would increase the focus on targeting behaviour change. We are aiming to incorporate some behaviour change components in this update as well (e.g. pledge).

HW: It might be worthwhile to look to Germany, where they use 90lcd, as an example.

GP: It is good that the program is flexible and that people will respond positively.

MD: Is the eMERGE visit important to the program?

SC: Yes. It informs water services what residents currently have installed in their home and whether or not they already meet program requirements. Additionally, during the home visit the resident will be walked through the program and informed exactly what they need to do to become certified and access our rebates.

HW: Should communicate that values are based on 2.3 persons per house occupancy.

BG: Values are not determined by occupancy. The goal is 150 litres per person per day.

GP: Are builders aware of and interested in this update?

SC: Attended the Home Builders Association Industry and Product night and spoke with builders. Found there is significant interest in updated program assuming it is cheap, easy, and flexible. Builders are seeing more demand for such certifications.

HW: While high-rise buildings are not currently in the program, there should be opportunity for discussions with them to communicate ideas and feedback. Let the highrise multi-residential community know that they can contact you for opportunities.

SC: This is a great suggestion. Multi-residential buildings will be integrated through a second phase. That being said, we have room to be flexible and certify multi-residential buildings by working collaboratively with them.

PM: What happens when someone moves out of a Blue Built Home?

SC: City will be meeting with staff to discuss how notifications can be made when people move out of their BBH. The new owners would perhaps have to complete an application form and maybe conduct the behavioural component of the program for recertification.

MD: There is no mention of water softeners.

BG: There is no reliable information on associated water savings. This technology could be added into the program in the future however.

HY: The next meeting with the Water Softener Study test group for Guelph is on Tuesday and we will have more to report at the next committee meeting.

PM: Agrees with the new direction of the program and added flexibility for existing housing stock to qualify.

MD: Liked the changes.

Item 6

Update on multi-residential audit, sub-metering, and Water Smart Business programs

– J. Gilks, H. Yates

Progress report including current successes, challenges and steps moving forward.

Attachment C: 2018-02 Multi-Res Audit Update.

Attachment D: 2018-02 Residential Submeter Update.

Multi-Residential Water Audit:

A contractor has been secured (Water Matrix partnered with Clean Cut Energy and eMERGE Guelph) and the communications plan is being rolled out. The website is live, including an online survey and program update and application form. Mail-outs will be sent regarding this program to the 55 largest multi-residential water users.

Discussion:

HW: Is the period of monitoring at least a month?

JG: Monitoring is 24-48 hours, but ideally supplemented with water use data from one to three years of billing data. Building demographics would be considered (e.g. mostly a student building)

HW: Is it too laborious to arrange site visits with building managers to promote the program?

JG: Networking, including meetings and phone calls, are key to promoting this program.

HY: The contractors have developed a large network within the multi-residential community to the program's advantage.

HW: Is there some kind recognition you could offer participants? Similar to BBH?

SC: Participating in a water audit is a requirement for achieving Blue Built Home certification. This connection can be used to promote the audit.

Sub-Metering Rebate Program:

Rebates are now available for permanent and removable sub-meters. Installation of submeters could be a recommendation coming from a multi-residential water audit.

Discussion:

HW: This can be combined with emergency shut off when high flow rates are detected.

HY: There is competitive technology out there with this option build in.

HW: I would stress targeting leaks in communications instead of high water users.

GP: Are there substantial savings from insurance claims?

JG: Yes from some companies, but not all.

GP: It might still be a good thing to advertise to encourage participation. The City can also advertise their DMAs which is a similar project but on a larger scale.

Water Smart Business Update:

New, collaborative relationships are being built with internal and external stakeholders. Steven has been connecting with local businesses via letters and in person. He is also working with Partners in Project Green (Toronto and Region Conservation initiative), which supports

municipalities in accessing funding pools and professional networks to support ICI water programs. We have been invited to participate in an eco-cluster with Waterloo Region and TRCA's municipalities to assess all Industrial, Commercial and Institutional water conservation programs, evaluate what is "best in show", create the preferred audit process and apply the model to various case studies. More information to come regarding this opportunity.

Item 7

Committee Succession Planning – P. McLennan, H. Yates

Expressed appreciation for the four longstanding members approaching the end of their 8-year term. To maintain continuity, exceptions may be made by staff recommendation to Council. Clerk's advised that likely up to two Committee members may be put forward to Council by staff recommendation to ensure Committee's continued success. Due to the timing of the committee application process and fall election, the Clerk's office has advised against a staggered departure from the Committee.

ACTION: All members will receive a letter from Clerks in late spring/early summer asking members if they wish to be reconsidered for the committee. For those completing their term, there will be a question asking if you would be willing to stay on for another year. Please indicate whether you wish to resign, or would be willing to remain on the committee for another year.

ACTION: Heather will follow-up with Clerk's regarding committee members who might be interested in taking a break from a committee with the goal of being eligible to reengage with a committee, including this one, after a year.

Item 8

Next meeting dates – All

A date survey will be sent out to schedule a meeting for early May.

Item 9

Adjourned on 9:49pm.