

Meeting Minutes

City of Guelph

Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee (WCEPAC)

June 12, 2018

City Hall, Meeting Room D

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

Chair: Paul McLennan (PM)

Present: Louise Cottreau (LC), Mike Darmon (MD), Grant Parkinson (GP), Patti Quackenbush (PQ), Hugh Whiteley (HW), David Worden (DW)

Regrets: Renuka Baral

Staff: Stephanie Cote (SC), Julie Anne Lamberts (JL) and Heather Yates (HY)

Agenda Items

Item 1

Welcome and introductions – P. McLennan, all

Item 2

Confirmation of last meeting's minutes (February 9, 2018) – P. McLennan

Motion: The minutes from the February 9, 2018 meeting be approved and circulated

Motion PM

Seconded DW

Carried

Item 3

Staffing changes – H. Yates

Two Water Conservation Program Coordinators have resigned. Both were valuable team members and we thank them for their contributions. A transition plan is being developed in preparation for backfilling these positions.

Item 4

Blue Built Home Program Update – S. Cote (20 minutes – presentation and questions)

Program launched May 15, final details of program update and uptake.

Attachment A: 2018-06 BBH Overview

Blue Built Home (BBH) is a certification for homes that have installed products that offer greater water savings than what is required by the Ontario Building Code. The program has been

updated and relaunched on May 15, 2018. The program is open to new build and retrofitted single-family homes, and retrofitted multi-residential buildings. There are now 3 options available to achieve BBH certification. Rebates are provided according to each option.

Discussion:

PQ: Would the Flowie fall under 'Other Water Efficiency Saving Device'?

SC: It falls under 'add-on sub-water meter'.

DW: How is the rebate calculated for 'Other Water Efficiency Saving Device'?

SC: It could be based on a percentage of the cost spent in combination with the proven water savings associated with the device.

PQ: How will other people know that your home is BBH certified?

SC: A window decal will be provided. A lawn sign provided for an extended period of time is also being considered. An on-line wall of fame to increase visibility will be developed in the fall.

PQ: Are the requirements retroactive?

SC: Yes. However, rebates would only be provided if the product or technology was purchased no more than a year ago and proof of purchase is provided.

MD: What about homes without dishwashers?

SC: Research shows that hand washing dishes uses more water than dishwashers. This program also certifies homes based on product inclusions. Not the resident's behaviors. We are certifying the home, not the people.

LC: How are you enticing builders to participate?

SC: They can offer customers greater savings through rebates and long term savings. The program is easy to participate in due to flexibility and diversity of qualifying options that builders can install directly into the home. The application process has been simplified.

PQ: Can you explain the reduction of the water stored in the pipes?

SC: The plumbing system must be built to allow no more than 0.5 US Gallons of water (1.9 litres) to be stored in the piping between the hot water source and furthest fixture.

PM: Consider advertising the success of the program within the water bill.

PM: What percentage of Guelph homes already qualify?

SC: Many homes may already qualify, or require only a few minor modifications.

LC: Someone could be BBH certified but be watering their front lawn in the rain.

SC: Yes, it is difficult to regulate indoor behavior but outdoor behaviour can be enforced through the Outdoor Water Use bylaw. Pledges and communication efforts as part of this program encourage participants to demonstrate behaviour that aligns with BBH values.

HY: Has anyone had experience with tankless water heaters?

HW: Has owned one for five years. There are challenges with it shutting off unexpectedly. It can be overcome by turning on the hot water enough to avoid low flow shut-off.

PQ: Electric hot water tankless heaters have high energy demand.

MD: Will eMERGE be completing follow-up visits to confirm water savings?

SC: Not at this time, but will consider.

Item 5

2017 Key Performance Indicators and feedback on reporting water efficiency success

– J. Lamberts (20 minutes)

Staff has been challenged to clarify calculation processes and to highlight the most appropriate way to acknowledge savings achieved through water efficiency and education. Staff would like the Committee's feedback on proposed draft metrics and graphics.

Attachment B: 2018-06 Water Conservation and Efficiency Story

Water use progress and targets data and associated graphics have been updated to include both the low and medium density residential population. There is confidence in the accuracy of the updated metric which tells the water use story of a greater portion of the Guelph community. Due to data challenges, high density has not been calculated historically. It can be calculated but there are a number of assumptions that must be made to complete the calculation.

Discussion:

Regarding Slide 1

HW: Recommend replacing the bar demonstrating water use targets with a red vertical line to better show how the results align with goals.

PQ: If you are going to start reporting using new metrics that include low and medium density residential, abandon old results and explain new calculations moving forward.

PQ: Data accuracy could be improved by subtracting the water lost during frozen services.

HW: A distortion is that you only present residential water use and do not include the water use of the Industrial Commercial and Institutional (ICI) sectors.

PQ: The employment equivalent could be used to outline water use targets for ICI. However the general public would not understand those technical terms. As such, it makes sense to present the gross target and the residential target.

HW: Outlining the water use story for ICI to provide goals for those sectors. This might encourage them to participate in City programs designed to help them meet those goals.

PQ: Businesses are encouraged to become water efficient, but it would be helpful to encourage them to be water efficient from their launch.

JL: We could review water use for specific business types (such as a mechanic) by pulling the water use data from various property codes.

Regarding Slides 6 and 7

PQ: Including large multi-residential properties with lower water use in the average will result in a lower water use average. A lower average would create more higher than average water users, allowing greater room for improvement within the residential sector.

DW: For public facing graphics, Option 2 is the right approach.

Regarding Slide 8

HW: Including energy and dollar savings associated with water savings would be helpful to demonstrate the City's efficiencies through water savings.

DW: Including infrastructure buyback in this graphic is important to communicate dollar savings.

HW: Could demonstrate dollar savings by comparing the savings to the cost of constructing a building, for example, a recreation center.

Regarding Slide 9

JL: 2018 Water Savings will grow as we move through each quarter and add program results.

PQ: Recommend using a 5 year running average (or similar) to demonstrate cumulative savings to balance the lulls and successes that result from program change and development.

General Comments

MD: The information is valuable but the graphs in the current version are not simple enough for the general public. Recommend adjusting some of the graphs to improve accessibility for use on, for example, a water bill.

Item 6

Tap Water Promotional Video – S. Cote/H. Yates (15 minutes – presentation and discussion)
Based on the new Public Education and Communications Strategy, staff is developing a plan.

Attachment C: 2018-06 Video Project Outline

Discussion:

PQ: Consider a cradle to grave environmental approach, demonstrating how Water Services is involved all along the way to supply safe drinking water. Our role starts with hydrogeologists determining the safest source. Focus on how using less water makes sense from the environmental perspective.

SC: We can better inform the public about water supply and treatment, but we must remember not everyone is environmentally motivated and the video must engage a large audience.

HY: Region of Peel produced a video in which an employee takes you through their water treatment process. We can consider this example.

LC: The public should be informed that we are a groundwater community and what that means.

MD: Is the goal creating trust around the water source?

SC: Yes, but also the extent of work required to provide a safe and reliable drinking water supply and that the City uses rate dollars responsibly by showcasing Water Services work.

DW: Consider private company's water ads for good video examples.

PM: Consider reaching out to the Water Brothers.

SC: The video can only be 2 to 4 minutes. It will be posted on the City's website, used in training and education programs, and posted throughout the community. Perhaps on televisions at City Facilities and the University of Guelph.

SC: This video is a small complement to a future project to develop an online water tour which would walk someone through the detailed process of sourcing and treating drinking water and through to the wastewater treatment process.

Item 7

Upcoming Water Efficiency Strategy research (5 minutes) – H. Yates

There are two research topics being pursued through 2018 and 2019:

1. Assess the potential for reclaiming high-quality effluent to be applied to other City applications (i.e. street sweeping, sewer flushing, and irrigation).
2. Consider the Water Energy Nexus by assessing and/or developing a calculator to determine energy savings and greenhouse gas emissions associated with reduced water demand.

There is opportunity to source reclaimed high-quality effluent from dehumidifying the City of Guelph's organics plant. Dehumidification would assist with odor management and the water might be used to offset a project that the City typically relies on drinking water to complete unnecessarily. Wastewater is also interested in finding uses for their high-quality effluent. If a business case is determined for reclaimed water use, the effluent's composition and suitability for use will be investigated before a trial project is proposed.

The water energy nexus could be pursued as a development tool through application to outline the implications for infrastructure and operational costs. Bringing energy into the water efficiency discussion may increase attention to our messaging and program participation.

Water Service's Supply team is considering energy efficiency in their operations. We would like to actively participate in the Community Energy Initiative and will review past PAC minutes.

Discussion:

MD: Do you know how much water is available for reuse?

HY: From the organics facility it could be 40 cubic meters a day.

MD: Is there concern about the dilution of the water that could end up in the river system?

HY: We need to collaborate with Wastewater to answer this question. We will be working closely with this team as we develop a business case over the next few weeks.

LC: You might also need to consider existing stigmas associated with the term "wastewater" and whether people will want to use it, or if they are concerned with reclaimed water use.

Item 8

Guelph's Community Plan – H. Yates and S. Cote (15-20 minutes)

Many communities have long-term plans to help guide the creation of municipal strategies and master plans. These long-range plans are sometimes called community plans or sustainability plans and state community-wide goals over a 10+ year time horizon. As a committee that has influenced sustainable leadership of the City, we will undertake a brainstorming activity to contribute to [Guelph's Community Plan](#).

Postponed to the next meeting.

Item 9

Clerk's Office Update: Committee reinstatement – H. Yates (5 minutes)

ACTION: Regarding committee reinstatement, letters to committee members will be arriving late July and early August. If you don't receive one, please contact Heather.

Item 10

Other Business – All

GP: Should we consider discussing critical customers within the water program?

HY: We can bring this topic forward if there is interest. The City of Guelph has developed different customer levels.

ACTION: HY to send information to GP and include in the next PAC meeting agenda.

Item 11

Next meeting date

ACTION: SC to send out a date survey for a September meeting.

Item 12

Meeting adjourned at 9:19.