



# City of Port Moody

## Minutes

### Environmental Protection Committee

Minutes of the electronic meeting of the Environmental Protection Committee held on Monday, November 16, 2020 via Zoom.

#### Present

Councillor Amy Lubik, Chair  
Margaret Birch  
Andrew MacLellan  
Gregory Pepler  
Damian Regan (joined at 7:18pm)  
Jutta Rickers-Haunerland  
Connie Smith  
Judy Taylor-Atkinson

#### Absent

Councillor Meghan Lahti, Vice-Chair  
Elaine Golds  
Javney Mohr

#### In Attendance

Philip Lo – Committee Coordinator  
Julie Pavey-Tomlinson – Director of Environment and Parks

#### Also In Attendance

Jason Emmert – Metro Vancouver  
Dr. Melissa Lem – Director of the BC Parks Foundation's  
Parks Prescriptions program  
John Lindner – Metro Vancouver  
Ronna Schneberger – Association of Forest and Nature  
Therapy Guides

#### 1. Call to Order

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:09pm.

#### 2. Adoption of Minutes

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#### Minutes

##### 2.1 EPC20/020

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

**THAT the minutes of the Environmental Protection Committee meeting held on Monday, October 19, 2020 be amended by removing “there is an email circulating in the community which makes assumptions about the ESA updates that may not be accurate” and adding “concerns were expressed regarding unofficial information about the ESA updates circulating in the community” in item 4.3 – Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Strategy Update;**

**AND THAT the minutes of the Environmental Protection Committee meeting held on Monday, October 19, 2020 be adopted as amended.**

3. Unfinished Business

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4. New Business

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**Air Quality in Metro Vancouver**

4.1 Presentation: John Lindner, Metro Vancouver Air Quality Planner, and Jason Emmert, Metro Vancouver Air Quality Planner

John Lindner and Jason Emmert from Metro Vancouver gave a presentation on the air quality in the Metro Vancouver region, noting the following:

- Metro Vancouver (MV) has unique authority around air quality protection and climate change;
- MV monitors and assesses greenhouse gas (GHGs) and air contaminants using 31 air quality monitoring stations from Horseshoe Bay to Hope, including mobile air monitoring units (MAMUs);
- MV identifies areas where air quality programs and regulations are needed to reduce air contaminants, and provides alerts to the public;
- the overall air quality in the region is very good, and has improved through the decades;
- MV tracks sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and ozone;
- fine particulate matters in the air are most concerning, and it has the most impact on health; wild fires contribute to this;
- climate projections to the 2050s include: longer, hotter, drier summers; warmer, wetter winters; more extreme weather events; decreased snowpack; and sea level rise;
- the *Climate 2050* plan aims to achieve carbon neutral and resilient region by 2050, and a 45% reduction of GHGs by 2030 (to achieve 1.5 degree warming target);
- GHGs are: carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and methane;
- large industrial facilities require permitting with metro Vancouver; there are currently no requirements around industrial GHG emissions;
- MV will introduce GHG reduction requirements into the permitting process;
- the carbon tax is a more influential legislation for industrial emitters;
- 15 million tons of GHGs are emitted regionally every year;
- the leading sources of regional emissions are cars and trucks (32%), buildings and heating (25%), and

industrial emissions (17%); the same sources are also leading sources of air particulate contaminants;

- the transportation network as a whole accounts for around half of all regional emissions; MV's role is constrained as operators fall under federal jurisdiction; MV's role is to push the federal and provincial governments to take greater action;
- two cement plants and a refinery in the region combine for 2 million tons of GHGs;
- volatile organic emissions is a large family of compounds that include: organic chain compounds; paints, solvents, chemical products, benzene, and toluene;
- *Climate 2050* and the *Clean Air Plan* are currently at the public engagement stage to ensure there is public support with sufficient feedback;
- MV is conducting computer modelling on potential emissions reduction based on hypothetical policies;
- transportation goals: all travel in regional is by active transportation or by zero emission vehicles;
- buildings goal: all buildings are zero emissions from heating and cooling with considerations for the types of fuel being used; sending early signals during renovations or building upgrades to think long-term to zero emission options;
- electricity (hydro power) is low-carbon and is a better option than fossil fuels; however it still has emissions impact;
- industry goals: all industrial operations to become carbon neutral;
- there are technological and natural opportunities for carbon capture and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; and
- nature and ecosystem goal is to prioritize nature-based solutions in response to climate change.

The presenters noted the following in response to questions from the Committee:

- a regulatory approach with incentives, public and private investments, and financial and educational support is the optimal approach reducing GHGs;
- technology solutions are nearly or already ready for implementation; the equipment replacement cycle (such as for longer-lasting industrial equipment) needs to be accelerated, with the challenge of determining who will bear the replacement cost;
- Metro Vancouver has a program to help stratas and strata residents to understand the process for installing EV chargers in buildings;
- the sense of urgency increased after the IPCC released its special report regarding the global warming impact of a 1.5-degree increase; the world is currently on track for a 3-degree-or-greater increase,

and the impacts are becoming more noticeable, such as with wild fires;

- Metro Vancouver's role is to continue working with member jurisdictions on initiatives, such as the climate literacy initiative which provides basic information on climate change;
- people who are less able to respond to climate change should be prioritized;
- the natural areas in Metro Vancouver absorb around 1 million tons of GHGs annually, with sequestration mostly occurring on the North Shore mountains;
- Metro Vancouver has less influence on the federal level than at the provincial level; there is staff-level contact at the federal level, but Metro Vancouver is also working through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities;
- the federal government is laying good groundwork but need to significantly accelerate their actions;
- the provincial CleanBC program is an excellent start;
- Metro Vancouver's Caring for the Air annual report summarizes emissions and contaminant levels for the previous year;
- reducing ozone level involves reducing the emission components that are then converted into ozone; and
- nitrous oxide levels decreased 15% during the initial lockdown, mostly from reduced vehicular usage, but has now returned to previous emission levels.

The Committee noted the following in discussion:

- EV charging stations are cost-prohibitive, and there are many challenges and difficulties to have them installed;
- the Province should revise the strata property act to regulate portable air conditioner units;
- the public and local governments need to apply more pressure to MLAs and MPs to instill the sense of urgency; and
- there is a need to increase the number of EV charging stations in the region in anticipation of the increased number of EVs.

**PaRx: A Prescription  
for Patient and  
Planetary Health**

4.2 Presentation: Dr. Melissa Lem, Director of the BC Parks Foundation's Parks Prescriptions Program, and Ronna Schneberger, Association of Forest and Nature Therapy Guides

Dr. Melissa Lem gave a presentation on forest and nature therapy, noting the following:

- there are many benefits of being active in nature;
- spending time in natural environments reduces stress and reduces attention spent on competing stimuli;
- one study showed that 10 more trees planted per block increased health and economic perceptions;

- one study showed that a 20-minute walk in a park helped improved the performance of children with ADHD;
- one study in England associated 120 minute-per-week spent in nature with good health and well-being;
- one study showed that spending time in nature for 20-30 minutes is associated with decreases cortisol and stress levels;
- public policy messaging focusing on personal and family health has greater motivational impact;
- health care is a major contributor to global carbon dioxide emissions; reducing reliance on health care could also reduce carbon dioxide emissions;
- children and adults with more experiences and connections to nature are more likely to protect environment;
- a “prescription for nature” can be prescribed by health care professionals governed by professional body (such as medical doctors, naturopaths, etc.);
- the Parks Prescriptions website is: [parkprescriptions.ca](http://parkprescriptions.ca); and
- program partners and endorsers including BC Parks, BC Family Doctors, UBC Faculty of Medicine, and Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC;

Ronna Schneberger noted the following:

- the program is looking for partnership opportunities;
- virtual forestry walks and other solutions are available during the pandemic; and
- personal guides can help to enhance the experience;

In response to questions from the Committee, the presenters noted the following:

- Committee members can help find local prescribers through local channels, and raise awareness of this opportunity in local parks;
- prescribers can direct people to specific places in Port Moody;
- the City can sanction the program and sponsor events on City lands; and
- the City can investigate the possibility of creating forest therapy trails in local parks, at its own expense.

The Committee noted that it can request Council to support the creation of nature therapy spaces in local parks, and that it is important to properly develop the unique natural assets in Port Moody for the benefit of the community. The Committee also expressed concerns about staff capacity to engage in this project.

Staff noted that the Urban Forest Management Strategy considers the psychological benefits of forests, and could potentially incorporate this type of project. Staff also noted

a pilot project could be undertaken in conjunction with the Recreation department;

EPC20/021

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

**THAT the meeting be extended for 10 minutes.**

EPC20/022

Moved, seconded, and CARRIED

**THAT the Environmental Protection Committee recommend that Council direct staff to explore forest and nature therapy opportunities as part of the Urban Forest Management Strategy.**

**COVID-19 and  
Environmental  
Impacts in Port Moody  
Parks**

4.3 Director of Environment and Parks

Staff noted the following:

- there has been a 160% increase in user volume across all City parks;
- solid waste volumes has increased in the parks, including a significant increase in single-use plastics and take-out food containers;
- temporary bans on reusable cups has contributed to the increase in solid waste;
- park users may be reluctant to contact garbage can handles;
- there has been an increase in plant theft;
- there has been increased trail use; over 16,000 visitors to Rocky Point Park were recorded on the first week of spring break;
- unauthorized trails are being created and used in parks, and illegal structures are being built;
- there has been increased incursion onto the mudflats;
- there has been an increase in dog walking and dog waste disposal;
- there has been an increase in pedestrian and cycling activity; and
- there has been reduced conflicts with bears in parks.

The Committee noted the following in discussion:

- park hosts noted hostility from users regarding balloons use; and
- remediation is needed on flooded trails during high tide.

5. Information

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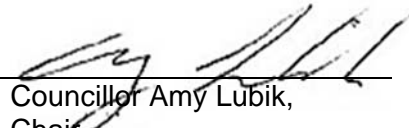
**Staff Updates**

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6. Adjournment

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The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:33pm.



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Councillor Amy Lubik,  
Chair



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Philip Lo,  
Committee Coordinator