

District of Metchosin

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Select Committee

Tuesday, April 22, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Bill Cave, Garry Fletcher (Chair), Councillor Steve Gray (Council Liaison), Anna Hall, Merrilee Hoen, Andy MacKinnon (Recorder), Ric Perron, Erin van de Water

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions, Approval

Addition: add Westshore Bioregional Meeting under Reports.

Moved and Seconded by Steve & Bill that the Committee approve the agenda as amended.

Carried

2. Presentations

None.

3. Public Participation

Garry Lamb asked about MEASC involvement regrading environmental assessments.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Ric and Anna that the Committee adopt the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held March 25, 2025.

Carried

5. Receipt of Minutes

a) Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, March 18, 2025

Moved and Seconded by Merilee and Erin that the Committee receive these minutes.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Spongy Moth Spraying Program

No updates.

b) Race Rocks Ecological Reserve

Is Race Rocks located in the Municipality of Metchosin?

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that Councillor Gray will ask Staff to review Metchosin's incorporation documents to determine if Race Rocks is within Metchosin's municipal boundaries.

Carried

c) Environmental Groups in Metchosin, Project Criteria and Student Support

Merilee has asked Nancy Shackelford to determine student requirements that might fit with needs of Metchosin community groups. And then Merilee will convey those requirements to Metchosin groups. There are also opportunities for entire classes (rather than individual students) to participate in projects. Experience suggests that we need to ensure that students have the skills that Metchosin groups require.

Merilee will continue to follow up on this and will bring more information to MEASC's next meeting.

d) Local Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan

Steve has recently (today!) received further comments from MEASC members and is revising the Plan.

- Identification and mapping of sensitive ecosystems
- Next steps

Andy has been working with the Conservation Data Centre (CDC), and earlier this afternoon received Element Occurrence Records (EORs) for threatened and endangered species and ecosystems in Metchosin.

Moved and Seconded by Anna and Garry that Steve and Andy define the GIS capabilities that we'll require as a municipality to make the maps we need from CDC and other (e.g. marine shorelines) data.

Carried

7. Reports

a) Chair's Verbal Report

None.

b) Council Liaison Verbal Report

2025 District 5-year Financial Plan was approved with 2025 municipal tax increase (including police services) of 3.73%. Next year projected tax increase 9.6%. The following years increases are projected at 2.8%, 5.9% and 4%, respectively.

Work on the 2024 District Annual Report is underway. Councillor Gray thanked MEASC for another productive year supporting Council.

Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) is revising the regional priority invasive species list including new definitions for management priority.

MEASC recommendations on invasive species management and the use of herbicides were adopted by Council's Committee of the Whole (COW) but not Council itself. Instead, Councillor Shukin offered to prepare a draft policy on managing invasives on District property. Ric Perron will assist Councillor Shukin and MEASC will have the opportunity to review the draft before it heads back to Council's COW.

Michael Lowry, West Coast Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC) will present to Council on May 5 regarding oil spill and shoreline response. Fire Chief has been advised.

2025 AVICC endorsed Metchosin's resolution seeking provincial leadership in concert with Canadian Wildlife Service on effective management of resident Canada Geese including a cull. Resolutions supported by Metchosin on the development of a provincial strategy on feral rabbits and legislating the BC Coastal Marine Strategy were similarly endorsed. Metchosin's resolution calling for a province-wide consumer ban on fireworks was not endorsed. Thanks to Mayor Little and Councillors Donaldson and Epp who all attended AVICC earlier this month.

Anna provided us with an update regarding marine mammal and oil spill response (as related to wildlife) in central and western Juan de Fuca Strait. This project will be evaluating the monitoring and response preparedness for injured, deceased or oiled marine mammals in the waters of southern Vancouver Island (Canadian waters only), with emphasis from Metchosin to Port Renfrew. The goal is to expand the capacity, improve communication and reduce the existing lag time for wildlife response.

c) Westshore Bioregional Meeting

Merilee reported on this meeting that she and Alison Leduc attended, to develop a bioregional framework similar to the one developed by the Saanich Peninsula. She circulated materials from the meeting. A mix of people, with some municipalities (e.g., Highlands, View Royal, Sooke) not represented. A huge commitment, and based on this one meeting, it wasn't clear that they had enough support to develop a bioregional strategy.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Other Business

a) Significant Trees Policy W-100.84, Committee Review & Update

b) Schedule A of Tree Management Bylaw No. 287 (Significant Trees), Committee Review & Update

This discussion began with concern about protecting two big arbutus trees on one property in Metchosin. CAO spoke with the new landowners and they're aware of the importance of the big arbutus trees. MEASC recognizes that while protecting trees in Metchosin is important, that our existing Significant Trees list largely consists of trees that were important for the property owners some decades ago. Few (if any) of the trees have been revisited since they were placed on the list, the locations of some are uncertain, and some are almost certainly dead.

Moved and Seconded by Andy and Bill that MEASC recommends that Significant Trees be removed from Metchosin Bylaws.

Carried

c) Climate Action Plan Priorities

MEASC members will send comments about Climate Action Plan Priorities to Councillor Gray.

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting

Moved and Seconded by Erin and Anna that the Committee adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Carried

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.