

District of Metchosin

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Select Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Councillor Steve Gray, Garry Fletcher (Chair), Anna Hall, Bill Cave, Ric Perron, Merrilee Hoen, Erin Van de Water (Recorder)

Regrets: Andy MacKinnon

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

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval

- Amend the agenda to add “Ian Bourhill - Shoreline Planning” under item 2.a

Moved and Seconded by Ric Perron and Steve Gray

THAT the Committee approve the agenda as amended to include item 2.a “Ian Bourhill - Shoreline Planning”.

Carried

2. Presentations

a) Ian Bourhill – Shoreline Planning

- Ian discussed some of the work he was involved with in contributing to the “Colwood Waterfront Plan” during his time as a Planner with the City of Colwood.
- Targeting objectives is key, which could be helpful to consider when updating DOM’s “Sharing Our Shorelines” document.
- Ian’s biggest takeaways from doing this work are:
 - 1) Long term thinking is really important;
 - 2) There is a lot of systems type thinking but lacking in Operational – need to integrate hazard, disaster, ecological, and public management; and
 - 3) Respecting the people who believe nothing should change, while also considering the imminent influx of visitors into Metchosin and surrounding shoreline areas while maintaining access and managing environmental factors.
- Worse case scenario is 5m sea level rise, seismic factors, tsunami risk and planning for post-tsunami are more impactful concerns presently.
- Colwood is the most studied shoreline in Canada with a large archaeological site.
- Colwood Waterfront Plan involved a great deal of local First Nations’ input.
- Colwood Plan was for approximately 50-60 years but could use 150-200 or more years for plan objectives.
- Most municipalities have failed in implementation with their development of hard rules against development along the shoreline.
- Green Shores Program throughout Canada used as protocol for municipalities to follow.
- Corporate data sources can be used to gain visitor information more info on visitors and the key areas of shoreline that have public access.

Committee Discussion:

- Clarification regarding potential development;
- Erosion of the cliffs between Witty and Taylor;
- Large parcels of land help with protecting shorelines; and
- Pressure for development.

3. Public Participation

None

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Anna Hall and Bill Cave

THAT the Committee approve the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026.

Carried

5. Receipt of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Merrilee Hoen, and Ric Perron

THAT the Committee receive the Minutes of the Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee meeting held on Wednesday, April 29, 2026.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Biodiversity and Natural Assets Planning – Open House Event Update

- The Chair sought committee input:

Committee Discussion:

- Staff suggest proceeding with a view to engage on themes and actions. The action items are worthy of consideration in the context of an OCP renewal, bylaw review and budget process.
- Not to be held in summer months.
- Cluster development, changing the OCP and/or Land Use Bylaw could support biodiversity and green infrastructure goals.
- MEASC table at Metchosin Day to focus on a biodiversity and natural assets planning theme.

b) Mapping Sensitive Ecosystems Update

- Presentation by the “Action for Adaptation” team from the Coastal Douglas-Fir Conservation Partnership and UBC Botanical Garden is planned for Council.
- It would be great to emphasize mapping on the smaller Garry Oak Ecosystems.

c) MUSE Article Submissions on Metchosin's Response to Climate Crisis

- MEASC acknowledged Bill Cave for his work.
- Article has been submitted for publication.
- Discussion around efforts of individuals vs large corporations and government.

Moved and Seconded by Steve Gray and Ric Perron

THAT MEASC send Bill's articles to Council and Staff for their interest.

Carried

d) Shoreline Planning Update

- Update needed for 2013 Shoreline Report.
- Use of development permits, bylaws, coastal covenants, buffer zones to protect shoreline.
- Education preferred to regulation.
- Diverting runoff from farms.
- Evaluating threats to shoreline.
- Updating the 2013 report to include Elephant Seals at Race Rocks.
- There is a 4H educational event called 'From Abalone to Agriculture' planned for June 21st at Pearson College from 2-4:30 p.m.

Action Item: Councillor Steve Gray to send digital copy of the 2013 Shoreline Brochure to MEASC members for review.

Action Item: Anna Hall to send poster of 4H event 'From Abalone to Agriculture' to MEASC members for circulating and posting on District website.

7. New Business

- None

8. Reports

a) Chair's Verbal Report

- None

b) Council Liaison Verbal Report

- Dark Sky Update:
 - Opposition to Dark Skies Certification was mainly due to the way the document is written – some confusion with the wording divided into unincorporated and incorporated districts; and
 - Committee recommends that certification should be a voluntary process with no change to Metchosin bylaws.
- Roadside Ditching vs. Naturalized Roadside
 - Hybrid approach recommended to staff via COW Councillor's Update.
- Green Crab Survey at Witty's Beach lagoon underway led by Bilston Watershed Habitat Protection Association.
- Buffer Land Update
 - Park Designation Bylaw pending;
 - Financial Reserve established (\$15,000 per annum) from taxation collection from Langford to Metchosin.
- Invasives management update:
- Neil West, MISC has inquired about volunteer invasive removal in Metchosin Parks.
- This is included in MEASC draft Biodiversity and Natural Assets proposal.

Moved and seconded by Steve Gray and Garry Fletcher
THAT MEASC recommend Council direct staff to facilitate volunteer invasive species control and habitat restoration efforts on District parks and properties.

Carried

- MEASC Succession planning

Action item: For discussion at our next meeting

9. Correspondence

a) Wildlife Conservation Society Canada, Invitation to Review Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) – East Sooke Coastline and Matheson Lake East

Action Item: Garry will respond to the KBA survey.

Moved and Seconded by Garry Fletcher and Anna Hall
THAT Metchosin take steps to include the archipelago of Race Rocks Reserve as an additional KBA

Carried

10. Other Business

a) Invasive Species

- Firesmart funding is limited, so alternative for invasive species removal and disposal needs to be explored.

Action Item: Councillor Steve Gray to inquire about options for disposing invasive species

11. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

Moved and Seconded by Bill Cave and Erin Van de Water
THAT the Committee adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Carried

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.