

2020 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2021 WORK PLAN

February 2, 2021

Secretary, SPC on Environment, Utilities, and Corporate Services (SPC EUCS)

Re: 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Goals – Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee [CK 175-9]**Committee Mandate**

The mandate of the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC) is to provide advice on matters relating to the environmental implications of City planning, programs, policies and operations, and to identify environmental issues of potential relevance to the City of Saskatoon. SEAC provides guidance on a variety of topics including:

- Climate change and reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions;
- Waste reduction and diversion;
- Renewable and alternative energy;
- Ecological systems and green spaces;
- Energy efficiency and building codes;
- Active and alternative transportation; and,
- Water conservation and management.

SEAC Membership for 2020

Membership on SEAC for the year 2020 was as follows:

- Sara Harrison (Chair, January. February), Citizen Member
- Erin Akins (Vice Chair, March, September), Citizen Member
- Aditi Garg, Citizen Member
- Kira Judge, Citizen Member
- Anita Masse, Citizen Member
- Kathryn Palmer, Citizen Member
- Dallas Pelly, Indigenous Representative
- Brian Sawatzky, Citizen Member
- Matthew Shumaker, Saskatchewan Health Authority Representative
- Mike Velonas, Meewasin Valley Authority Representative
- John Paul Wasan, Citizen Member

Resource Members for 2020

- Councillor Sarina Gersher
- Director of Sustainability Jeanna South
- Director of Transportation Jay Magus
- Director of Building Standards Kara Fagnou
- Director of Water & Waste Operations Russ Munro
- Metering & Sustainable Electricity Manager Jose Cheruvallath
- A/Long Range Planning Manager Tyson McShane
- Committee Assistant Debby Sackmann

Goals and Accomplishments

The goals of SEAC in 2020 were as follows. Under each goal, a summary of the accomplishments of the Committee is provided. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 proved to be a quiet year for SEAC, with several meetings cancelled and minimal appearance before City Council. We look forward to ramping back up in 2021. In addition, Appendix 1 provides a summary of key topics and resolutions by meeting, and Appendix 2 provides a summary of 2020 expenditures.

1. Environmental Leadership

- ***Encourage City Council to take a leading and innovative stance in Municipal issues in relation to the environment***

SEAC reviewed the Sustainability Report: Towards a Healthy, Resilient and Regenerative Saskatoon and is glad to see the City of Saskatoon is building organizational structures to support its stated sustainability goals.

SEAC also reviewed and provided feedback on the Corporate Climate Adaptation Strategy and recognizes the need to anticipate climate change impacts on operations and services.

- ***Continue to advise City Council in the implementation of the Low Emissions Community (i.e. mitigation) Plan***

SEAC is excited to see this plan continuing forward as it provides a foundation for greenhouse gas reduction actions within the Community. SEAC stayed up to date on activities supporting the plan, including updates to the Renewable Energy Strategy.

SEAC also reviewed the Internal Auditor Follow-up on Carbon Reduction Initiatives which identifies the critical need to resource the initiatives outlined in the Low Emissions Community Plan.

- ***Continue to advise City Council on Waste Reduction and Diversion files***

SEAC stayed updated on waste diversion efforts, including organics and recycling programs. SEAC reviewed a report on Curbside Residential Recycling and provided feedback to EUCS on Regulatory Approaches to Enhance Waste Diversion in the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Sector.

- ***Continue to advise City Council in their adoption and implementation of the Triple Bottom Line Policy and update of the Official Community Plan***

SEAC reviewed the components of the Official Community Plan related to environmental topics before the update was approved by Council and was glad to see the inclusion of updated environmental policies throughout multiple sections of the updated Official Community plan.

To support the Triple Bottom Line Policy, SEAC reviewed and provided feedback on the establishment of a new Environmental Reserve and how it should be aligned with the objectives of the Triple Bottom Line Policy.

2. Sustainable Growth

- ***Advise on the protection of natural areas, including the Swales, through initiatives such as the Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Natural Capital Asset Valuation file***

SEAC stayed up to date on progress related to the Green Infrastructure Strategy by reviewing and discussing the strategy as well as the Natural Capital Asset Valuation pilot. SEAC was glad to see good initial progress on this relatively new strategy.

3. Moving Around Sustainably

- ***Continue to support the progression of a Bus Rapid Transit system and implementation of the Active Transportation Plan, which are critical components of the Saskatoon Low Emissions Community Plan.***

SEAC has been encouraging greater connectivity between sustainability and transportation planning efforts by recognizing the important role public transportation networks play in greenhouse gas reduction efforts. The Committee reviewed the proposed revisions to the Bicycle Bylaw.

4. Quality of Life (Community Engagement)

- **Continue to support community and education initiatives, such as the Student Action for a Sustainable Future**

SEAC continued its support of the Student Action for a Sustainable Future. Over the last seven years, this program has involved over 3,000 students. The Student Showcase provides an opportunity for students to tell their own environmental success stories, highlight the results of their projects, and demonstrate how Saskatoon youth can become leaders in achieving greater sustainability.

- **Support the Environmental Cash Grants program**

Each year, SEAC supports Administration in the evaluation of applications for the Environmental Cash Grants Program. In 2020, 23 applications were received and reviewed. 15 project applications were selected to be awarded funding across five themes: general, water, waste, transportation and events. A total of \$44,000 was awarded in 2020 to support environmental projects in the community.

- **Maintain our education-based social media presence**

SEAC continued to be active on social media. Facebook followers grew from 314 to 401 through 2020. The Committee contracted Megan Van Buskirk to support organization and preparedness for a social media campaign, which released content throughout 2020. The focus of SEAC's social media campaign in 2020 was Climate Change & Environmental Responsibility. Planning for social media activities in 2021 is currently underway.

Figure 1. SEAC Facebook Engagement 2020



Reports and Communications in 2020

Reports/Recommendations Submitted to City Council:

1. Letter to EUCS on the Corporate Climate Adaptation Strategy, February 2020
2. Letter to EUCS on Regulatory Approaches to Enhance Waste Diversion in the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Sector, March 2020
3. Letter to City Council on the Environmental Sustainability Reserve, September 2020

Communication by Committee Representatives (Chair, Vice-Chair, or designate) to the local media:

- No communications with local media in 2020

WORK PLAN FOR 2021

The 2021 membership on SEAC is as follows:

- Erin Akins (Chair), Citizen Member
- John Paul Wasan (Vice Chair), Citizen Member
- Sara Harrison, Citizen Member
- Kira Judge, Citizen Member
- Brett Maerz, Citizen Member
- Anita Masse, Citizen Member
- Christina McRorie, Youth Representative
- Alasdair Morrison, Citizen Member
- Kathryn Palmer, Citizen Member
- Matthew Shumaker, Saskatchewan Health Authority Representative
- Mike Velonas, Meewasin Valley Authority Representative

Resource Members

- Councillor Sarina Gersher
- Director of Sustainability Jeanna South
- Director of Transportation Jay Magus
- Director of Building Standards Kara Fagnou
- Long Range Planning Manager Tyson McShane
- Metering & Sustainable Electricity Manager Jose Cheruvallath
- Environment Projects and Protection Manager Dan Gauthier
- Committee Assistant Debby Sackmann

Work Plan Goals for 2021

In 2021 SEAC will do the following, aligned with the City of Saskatoon strategic plan:

1. Environmental Leadership

- Encourage City Council to take a leading and innovative stance in Municipal issues in relation to the environment and environmental justice.
- Continue to advise City Council in the implementation of the Low Emissions Community (i.e. mitigation) Plan, including renewable energy and supporting infrastructure.
- Continue to advise City Council on Waste Reduction and Diversion files.
- Advise City Council on water quality and quantity management topics.
- Continue to advise City Council in their adoption and implementation of the Triple Bottom Line Policy.

2. Sustainable Growth

- Stay informed on all components of the Plan for Growth and encourage City Council to ensure it is environmentally sustainable.
- Advise on the protection of natural areas, including the Swales, through initiatives such as the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Natural Capital Asset Valuation file.
- Support food security efforts that relate to sustainable development and citizen-engaged green infrastructure programs, such as community gardens and urban agriculture.

3. Moving Around Sustainably

- Continue to support the progression of a Bus Rapid Transit system and the implementation of the Active Transportation Plan, which are critical components of the Saskatoon Low Emissions Community Plan.

4. Quality of Life (Community Engagement)

- Continue to support community and education initiatives, such as the Student Action for a Sustainable Future.
- Continue to support the Environmental Cash Grants Program.
- Maintain our education-based social media presence.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 – 2020 Meeting Summary
Appendix 2 – 2020 Expenditures

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Akins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "E".

Erin Akins, Chair
Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee

Appendix 1 – 2020 Meeting Summary – Key Topics and Resolutions

Meeting	Summary – Key Topics and Resolutions
January	<p>Reports from Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning & Design Newsletter, Fall/Winter 2019 edition. <p>Report from Council or Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bicycle Bylaw Update - Proposed Revisions - Additional Information for Curbside Residential Recycling for 2020 and Beyond - Corporate Climate Adaptation Policy <p>Motions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That S. Harrison be appointed Chair and E. Akins appointed Vice-Chair for 2020 - That SEAC provide feedback to the EUCS on the Corporate Climate Adaptation Strategy <p>GHG Subcommittee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K. Palmer has volunteered to lead Subcommittee for 2020
February	<p>Reports from Council or Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official Community Plan Redesign – Environment - Regulatory Approaches to Enhance Waste Diversion in the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Sector <p>Motions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the GHG Subcommittee be tasked with drafting a feedback letter to EUCS on Regulatory Approaches to Enhance Waste Diversion in the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Sector. - That JP Wasan serve as the SEAC representative for 2020 Environmental Cash Grants Program. - That SEAC proceed with issuing an RFI regarding its social media content on Climate Change & Environmental Responsibility for selection of a proponent.

<p>March</p>	<p>Referrals from Council or Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability Report: Towards a Healthy, Resilient and Regenerative Saskatoon - Internal Auditor Follow-up: Carbon Reduction Initiatives - The Green Infrastructure Strategy: Towards an Interconnected Green Network <p>GHG Subcommittee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal to engage social media support for 2020 based on the evaluation of proposals received and evaluated using a rubric. <p>Motions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That Erin Akins and Sara Harrison be allowed to switch roles and that Erin be appointed Chair and Sara be appointed Vice-Chair for the remainder of 2020. - That SEAC enter into a contract for 2020 for \$3,000 with M. Van Buskirk to develop and implement social media content.
<p>April – June</p>	<p>Cancelled due to COVID-19</p>
<p>September</p>	<p>Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P. Belcher, SASF Coordinator regarding funding request <p>Reports from Administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning & Design Newsletter, Spring/Summer 2020 edition. <p>Referrals from Council or Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural Capital Asset Valuation – Pilot Project Update - Renewable Energy Strategy Update - Environmental Sustainability Reserve <p>GHG Subcommittee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updates provided on social media. Facebook is proving useful but limited traction on Twitter.

	<p>Motions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- That SEAC contribute \$1,800 from its 2020 budget to support the SASF Program for 2020/2021.- That the GHG Subcommittee be tasked with drafting a feedback letter to City Council on the Environmental Sustainability Reserve.
October- November	Cancelled due to Civic Election.

Appendix 2 – 2020 Expenditures

Date	Description	Amount
June 30, 2020	Megan Van Buskirk - Social Media Support (Contract)	\$3,000
March 20, 2019	Student Action for a Sustainable Future for 2020/2021	\$1,800
	Total	\$4,800
	Budget	\$7,800
	Difference	\$3,000 surplus