



MINUTES

Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, April 13, 2026
City Hall Council Chambers
4:05 p.m.

Present: Ashley Nordlund
Kim Mowrey
Craig Debbo
Peter Kirby
Stephanie Charles
Councillor Lisa Moncrief
Lisa Devlin
Brie McCardle

Regrets: Ashley Shouldice, Rory McMillan

City Staff: Greg Breen, Director of Infrastructure & Operations
Heather Pihulak, Deputy CAO/City Clerk

1. Call Meeting to Order and Land Acknowledgment

Ashley Nordlund, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and read a Land Acknowledgment.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest by any members present.

3. Adopt Minutes of Previous Meetings

Motion #1 - Moved by S. Charles, Seconded by A. Nordlund & Carried: -

That the Minutes of the Regular Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting held March 2, 2026 be confirmed as written and filed.

Previous Action Items

a) Active Transportation Plan

Kim looked at the Active Transportation Plan again and was struggling with how to interconnect it into the Sustainability Action Plan. Stephanie Charles will work on it with Kim on possibilities. The plan was led by the Planning and Building department and it is intended to increase the amount of active transportation in the community. With that plan approved by Council, one of the first projects of the plan is the Minnesota Street/Parsons Street project with walking paths and bike routes built into the plan.

New Business

Composter Program – The Committee attended the next composter day on Saturday April 11th. There are 60 leftover units and staff will now coordinate how they will be distributed to the rest of the remaining list. Ashley Shouldice brought two students with her and they were very helpful. We should acknowledge Alex and Anna for their volunteer work. We will

contact who is on the list and give them a deadline to pick up their composter and then open it up to everyone if there are remaining composters. We will coordinate the customer outreach with communications.

a) Microgreens & Shoots Presentation

March 17, 2026, Fabian Velez, COO of AgriTech North, presented to the Dryden Horticultural Society at the Dryden & District Agricultural Society about Microgreens & Shoots.

Fabian intends to also release an instructional manual in the coming weeks, to assist others in growing at home or as a small business. They took the time to review our plan, and would suggest Fabian do a presentation that includes his prior content with the Dryden Horticultural Society, but builds upon it by:

- Completing a new at-home how-to manual for growing microgreens and shoots at home, safely, including "what you need" and some various options for where you may obtain those supplies (prioritizing local suppliers where possible). This will include staged photos explaining the process.
- Public presentation of the prior and new manual content, including an instructional process with the materials. This could potentially be recorded and published as part of the how-to manual and other materials.
- Development of at-home microgreen and shoot growing kit; we deliver to Kenora every week and could facilitate direct and rapid distribution at scale of these at-home growing kits, in addition to our regular product line. At a minimum it would help people get started, and as they learn the process, they are likely to start experimenting with other media or tools, which is exactly what we want to encourage! This may also become a resource for the local schools...

To complete the full scope of work, a budget of \$5,000.00 + HST + Travel.

Travel summary (Federal rates):

- Mileage to/from Kenora = 278 km @ \$0.73/km = \$202.94
- Meal per diem, one Breakfast and Lunch = \$50.10

In total, this would amount to \$5,903.04, assuming HST applies.

The committee wanted to ensure that the cost of the starter kit is financially feasible? Ashley Shouldice has this in her classroom so she should be consulted in this decision.

b) Impacts of road salt

The purpose of salt in the sand is to keep the sand from freezing in the winter. There is moisture in the sand, and when we put it in the sand dome we can't have it freeze. The minimum amount of salt over the years is 2% - 500 metric tonnes of salt that sits off to the side and we use it as minimal as possible. If it is not going to drop more than -12 we don't use it. In the grand scheme of things, it is quite minimal. Opportunities for education on the harm of salt use and educate businesses on the high volume of salt use. The sand pile is available at the Transfer Station for free and we could promote that more. It's a good education piece for the fall. Shoveling before it freezes is also a good encouragement for the public. Beet juice is worse for aquatic life than salt.

c) International trash trap network and TIDES database

Kim watched a webinar (ITTN Webinar: Using Trash Traps to Connect with Your Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2026

Community). The webinar talked about the Tides database (<https://www.coastalcleanupdata.org/>) which "includes data from year-round cleanups led by groups and volunteers around the world. Data shared with us is summarized annually in ITTN reports and Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup™ reports."

It was questioned if this is where LOWDSA reports data and does shoreline clean ups but if not, seeking thoughts on reporting the data that will be collected from the Litta Traps this summer to this database.

Bree will help out with the litta traps and analyze the components that are captured. If this database isn't good, is there another one that will help with the collection of the data.

d) City's driver's handbook -idling

Idling (Driver's Handbook)

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The unnecessary idling of vehicle engines is harmful to the environment, wastes valuable fuel, and may cause unnecessary maintenance to be performed.

PAGE 7

No employee shall cause or permit a vehicle to idle unnecessarily. If the operation of the engine is not required for the work being done, it should be turned off.

Kim's concerns:

1. The handbook does not specifically discuss the harmful effects of idling on the environment.
2. The handbook does not discuss the health impacts of idling vehicles.
3. The handbook does not define "unnecessary idling" or what it means to idle "unnecessarily" (for example, parameters like temperature and time).
4. The handbook is not a public document that would show the City of Kenora's commitment to energy conservation and reducing city fuel costs.
5. The handbook does not discuss "accountability mechanisms for both corporate and community activities" as per the sustainability action plan (although perhaps this will be updated with the tracking that will be occurring on vehicles).

Kim expressed she would prefer a policy. The handbook is a tool, it is not meant to be an educational tool for the public. The one outcome of health aspect is diesel fuel, from OHS impact, those fumes can be harmful. It is not unreasonable for us to put something forward, but we need to identify what that looks like.

Ashley had a manufacturer come and talk to the staff at her employer and it had an impact on the employee's behaviour and reduced idling in their workplace. It has gone back up now without that continued education.

Greg will bring data to the committee on the new GPS tracking system and is open to a policy if the committee would like to see that.

Other:

- **Earth Day clean up** – LOW Brewing is hosting the annual earth day clean up event. You can pick the area you are cleaning, and they provide everything to the volunteers.
- **Community Energy Plan** – it was noted that none of the energy plans are on the website. You have to have a corporate plan by Ontario regulations, and they are out of date and are not being followed. Greg reminded the Committee about resources, and we are taking steps in the right direction. We are reporting on what is regulated and the real crux of the issue is we do not have a dedicated resource to environmental compliance, and we are working hard to address environmental matters in the work we do. By Ontario Regulation, the City must have that plan. It was questioned why there is not someone on staff to deliver the priorities of the plan. There needs to be a dedicated person to the plan. There is one facility manager and 2 operators to service 110 facilities and there is not a dedicated environmental staff person.

It was questioned if the Committee can have a tour of the Jones Road landfill to understand the mechanics of it. Paul has told Peter that the landfill needs material to cover and what the life expectancy is, and how we can cut down on what goes into the landfill. We may have more life left in the landfill than we thought. There is probably closer to 25 years left, which is longer than originally anticipated. We could start with Paul coming to talk to the group as there are safety requirements to be in the landfill.

- **Solar panel roof replacement** – The tenders have come in for the Lake of the Woods Museum solar panel roof replacement and the project came in at \$250,000 over budget. It is an opportunity for the committee to contribute to the solar panel project which would help offset the overage so we can award the project. It was suggested that the Sustainability Advisory Committee receive recognition for the contribution. It could be part of the education board that the funds were provided to support the project.

Moved by K. Mowrey, Seconded by S. Charles & Carried:-

That the Sustainability Advisory Committee hereby authorizes \$65,000 be contributed from the Sustainability Committee fund to the solar panel project at the Lake of the Woods Museum; and further

That an educational component is included in the project which includes recognition of the Sustainability Advisory Committees contribution.

Next Meeting Date

Monday, May 11 @ 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.