
Subject: Appointment of Citizen Members to the Waste Management Planning Steering Committee

Report to: Waste Management Planning Steering Committee

Report date: Monday, February 22, 2021

Recommendations

1. That the Waste Management Advisory Committee (WMAC) **BE DISCONTINUED**, effective immediately;
2. For the remainder of this term of Regional Council, the past WMAC Chair and delegate **CONTINUE** as members of the Waste Management Planning Steering Committee (WMPSC);
3. For future terms of Regional Council, a formal application process for selecting two (2) citizen members to sit on the WMPSC, **BE USED**;
4. That the existing WMPSC's Terms of Reference **BE AMENDED** to include the following composition:
 - Maximum of 12 individuals, including: the Regional Chair, up to nine (9) Regional Councillors and two (2) citizen members.
5. That a complete update to the existing WMPSC's Terms of Reference **BE COMPLETED** by Niagara Region's Clerk's Department, in consultation with Waste Management staff.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to respond to the Councillor Information Request made at the October 28, 2019 WMPSC meeting to provide information with respect to amending the WMPSC's Terms of Reference to include citizen members.
- Report WMPSC-C 35-2019 was submitted at the October 28, 2019 WMPSC meeting. It provided the recommendation to discontinue the WMAC, effective immediately. It also responded to the Councillor Information Request made at the August 26, 2019 WMPSC meeting, requesting information on options to include citizen members on the WMPSC, given that the Region received a limited number of applications for membership on the WMAC, for the current four-year Council term.
- Report WMPSC-C 35-2019 was deferred until the January 27, 2020 WMPSC meeting, in order to provide WMPSC members with additional information with respect to amending the WMPSC's Terms of Reference to include citizen members.
- Report WMPSC-C 35-2019 was amended to provide WMPSC members with additional information with respect to amending the WMPSC's Terms of Reference

to include citizen members. The amended report was submitted as WMPSC-C 11-2020 for the September 28, 2020 WMPSC meeting, however, quorum was not achieved.

- Subsequently, WMPSC-C 11-2020 was updated slightly and submitted as WMPSC-C 14-2021, for the February 22, 2021 WMPSC meeting.

Financial Considerations

Currently, two (2) Regional staff are required to attend five (5) WMAC evening meetings each year. If the WMAC is discontinued, there would be a savings associated with Regional staff no longer attending these meetings.

Analysis

Background

An independent external governance review was conducted in 2018 (CLK 05-2019 - Recommendations from Independent External Governance Auditor – First Report). As a result, a number of Regional Advisory/Steering Committees were discontinued by Regional Council in February 2019 because the Committees had not met in quite some time or their mandate was no longer relevant.

The initial intent of the WMAC was to provide input on the development of Niagara Region's long-term waste plan, which required regularly scheduled meetings. However, the content of recent WMAC meetings has mainly included reports, which were previously presented to WMPSC and/or Public Works Committee (PWC). These reports are available to all members of the public for review on-line. In addition, WMAC members and the public can attend WMPSC and PWC meetings, or request to speak/present at these meetings, if they wish to do so.

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Proposed Option for WMAC

On April 15, 2019, Niagara Region advertised for citizen members for all of its advisory Committees. Applications were taken over a two-week period. The Region received three (3) applications for membership on the WMAC before the submission deadline, and another two (2) applications were received after the deadline. Due to the minimal interest, the Region contacted these five (5) applicants and obtained their support for repurposing the WMAC into an ad-hoc committee, instead. As a result, the Region is proposing that the WMAC be discontinued, effective immediately.

The Region will call upon those interested individuals to participate in focus groups and/or attend meetings, as required by the Region, to obtain their input on various projects. This would be supplementary to the extensive communication/outreach the Region already undertakes for these projects.

Comparison of Other Municipalities

Appendix A provides an overview of the various public waste management advisory and/or standing committees at twelve (12) of Niagara Region's comparator municipalities (i.e. Cities of Guelph, Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Toronto, and Windsor, Simcoe County, and the Regions of Durham, Halton, Peel, Waterloo and York).

Based upon a review of these twelve (12) comparator municipalities:

- Seven (7) of these municipalities (i.e. Guelph, Halton, Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Peel, and Windsor) include a combination of Councillors and/or citizen members on their waste management advisory and/or standing committee.
- Five (5) comparator municipalities (i.e. Durham, Simcoe, Toronto, Waterloo, and York) do not have a waste management advisory and/or standing committee.

Options for Including Citizen Members on the WMPSC

In accordance with the current WMPSC's Terms of Reference, the WMAC Chair and another member designated by the WMAC sit as the only non-political members of the WMPSC. The WMAC members do not have a vote on legal or financial matters presented to the WMPSC, for consideration.

If the Region's proposal to discontinue the WMAC is approved by Council, there would no longer be any citizen representation on the WMPSC. As a result, the Region is proposing that for this current term of Regional Council, the past WMAC Chair and delegate would continue to remain as members of the WMPSC.

For future terms of Regional Council, the Region will advertise for interested citizen members for the WMPSC, as part of its advertisement to fill vacancies on all Advisory Committees, in preparation of the new term of Regional Council. This process includes:

- An online application would be posted on Niagara Region's website for interested citizens to apply.
- Citizens would need to demonstrate why they would like to sit on the WMPSC, and include their relevant waste management experience.
- Staff reps for WMPSC, in consultation with the WMPSC Chair (and/or Vice Chair), would review all submissions and rank them, based on a best-fit criteria.
- Two (2) citizen members would be chosen and recommended to WMPSC members, for their approval.
- These two (2) citizen members would be submitted to PWC and Regional Council, for final appointment to the WMPSC.

Amendments to WMPSC's Existing Terms of Reference

The WMPSC is currently comprised of a maximum of 12 individuals, including the Regional Chair, nine (9) Regional Councillors, and two (2) representatives from the WMAC. The representatives of the WMAC do not have a vote on legal or financial matters.

If it is the WMPSC's intention to include two (2) citizen members on this Committee, the WMPSC's existing Terms of Reference would need to be amended to provide for these citizen members, along with the following criteria for their membership:

- Citizen members will not be present during closed sessions, or receive confidential information.

This amendment would be included, as part of a complete update to the existing WMPSC's Terms of Reference, which has not been amended since February 2002. This complete update would be undertaken by Niagara Region's Clerks Department, in consultation with Waste Management staff. Subject to WMPSC's final approval of the updated Terms of Reference, a PWC report would then be developed, for their approval.

Alternatives Reviewed

The alternative to discontinuing the WMAC would be to maintain it. This is not being recommended due to available opportunities to attend WMPSC and the already limited

number of interested residents. With only five (5) members, a quorum of three (3) members would be required at each meeting, which may be difficult to obtain.

The alternative to including citizen members on the WMPSC would be to eliminate them from this Committee. This is not being recommended as there is a value in having the citizen members provide their insight to WMPSC, when making decisions on the planning and evaluation process for Waste Management programs, policies, etc.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The Region's recommendation to discontinue the WMAC supports Council's strategic priority of Sustainable and Engaging Government by promoting an organizational culture that values continuous improvement, collaboration, and innovation.

Other Pertinent Reports

WMPSC-C 35-2019 – Status of the Waste Management Advisory Committee
CLK 05-2019 - Recommendations from Independent External Governance Auditor –
First Report

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Appendices

Appendix A Comparison of Other Municipalities' Waste Management Advisory and/or Standing Committees