



TO **Committee of the Whole, City of Guelph**

SUBJECT **Quarterly progress report to Guelph City Council**

DATE January 13, 2019

Per the Service Agreement with the City of Guelph¹, this document provides a progress report on activities we have been working on since the inaugural Board meeting on July 8.

Governance and General Operations

Service agreement. The service agreement between Our Energy Guelph and the City of Guelph² was fully executed on August 15.

Board member updates. Kristen Tilley became Secretary of the OEG Board of Directors in August. Alex Ciccone was welcomed to the Board in the meeting held on November 5th.

With the resignation of Helen Loftin from the City in December 2019, we are seeking a replacement to serve as the City representative on the Board. We recommend that Helen's successor in the position of General Manager of Business Development and Enterprise continue to serve in this role.

All other board roles remain as they were in the report to Council on July 22, 2019³.

Executive Director recruitment. The posting was published in August, interviews were conducted in September, and an offer was extended to Alex Chapman in October. Alex started in the role on November 4th.

Operational funding. The City transferred the initial \$49,000 in August, and made the agreed monthly payments of \$10,500 in each of the following months.

Office space. The ED is currently hot-desking at 10C, as well as working from home. Other space options we are exploring include Innovation Guelph and the University

¹ Schedule 1, Item 3. Agreement dated July 26th, 2019.

² https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/council_agenda_072219.pdf#page=60

³ https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/council_agenda_072219.pdf#page=53

³ https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/council_agenda_072219.pdf#page=45

of Guelph. A permanent space solution will not be a priority until additional staff are hired.

Information technology. We have signed up with TechSoup, a provider of IT products for the nonprofit sector. This has allowed us to purchase products such as Google G Suite and a laptop computer at significant discounts.

Nonprofit partnerships. We have become members of both 10C, the Guelph Chamber of Commerce, and the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN). ONN membership will provide us access to their group pension, benefits, and insurance programs including Directors & Officers Insurance.

Capital funding. We are designing an entity to fund the capital projects in the pathway to net zero carbon⁴. Since the Community Energy Initiative aims to minimize the leakage of energy dollars out of Guelph, we should similarly minimize the leakage of investment returns from CEI capital projects. The guiding principle for the fund is therefore that it will mobilize local capital to fund local projects delivering local economic, environmental, and social benefit and producing local financial returns. Our next step is a summit meeting in mid-January, bringing together various local stakeholders as well as other parties from outside of Guelph with specific expertise or assets to offer in this effort.

NRCan Solar Uptake Project. We are working with Natural Resources Canada and Alectra Utilities on a tool that would improve/encourage uptake of rooftop solar photovoltaic systems. Progress has slowed due to funding constraints, but we expect that this project will regain momentum in the new year.

Funding additional staff positions. There are four distinct federal job creation programs that may allow us to add staff to manage programs such as Green Economy Canada and Random Acts of Green (see below). We continue to investigate these opportunities.

Guelph Energy Managers (GEMS)

GEMS is a community of practice of energy and environment management professionals with Guelph's largest employers. Each quarterly meeting is hosted by a member organization on a volunteer basis. The Fall 2019 event was held at City Hall. Owens Corning has volunteered to host the Winter meeting in early December, and Linamar plans to host the Spring meeting in March. Meetings consist of general information sharing, roundtable updates from each member, an "Ask the Expert" segment, and a deep-dive case study on a specific energy project that the host selects. The meetings conclude with a tour, typically highlighting the case study project.

Since GEMS has been in operation for nearly two years, a member survey was conducted in the fall to assess whether we needed to make any changes in our approach. The respondents supported keeping the meeting frequency, duration,

⁴ <https://www.ourenergyguelph.ca/cei-update-part-2/the-pathway-to-net-zero-carbon>

format, hosting approach, and leadership model as is. There was also considerable enthusiasm for sector and/or topic-specific summit meetings, the most popular being Cleantech (water, waste, renewable energy), energy storage and microgrids, renovations and retrofits, on-site power generation, and new construction.

We are currently in discussions to create a Green Economy Canada hub. This would help us to launch a program similar to the Regional Sustainability Initiative led by Sustainable Waterloo Region, focused on assisting businesses and other organizations with setting sustainability goals and executing action plans to meet those goals.

Education, Communication, Outreach and Awareness (ECO A)

Youth Action on Climate Change. Led by University of Guelph students, this group aims to channel climate-related concerns of teens (and tweens) into constructive efforts to engage political leaders and affect change in the community. Building on the success of a workshop held at the UofG Arboretum in March, the group held a second workshop in Waterloo in July⁵. The lead on YACC, Emily De Sousa, is working with City of Guelph staffer Jennifer Juste, GCAT, and OEG Chair Kirby Calvert to conduct youth-led, youth-focused research and education on awareness of and barriers to active transit. The work involves a survey and possibly participatory mapping to align with the City's Transportation Master Plan. Their first priority has been active transportation. The group executed a public survey on this topic in the fall and delivered the results to City staff and other stakeholders in October.

Random Acts of Green. Developed in Peterborough, this mobile device app⁶ uses rewards to encourage sustainable behaviours. Users log their sustainable actions and are awarded "green points", which they can then exchange for discounts at local businesses. We are currently working on an arrangement whereby OEG encourages uptake of the app as well as paid business partnerships, and in return receives a share of the resulting revenue.

My World, My Choice. This program places University of Guelph students in primary and secondary schools to mentor younger students on sustainability. Mentors lead an experiential learning exercise, then students divide into teams to execute a sustainability-focused project over the following few weeks. The program concludes with an awards event recognizing student teams that stood out. We have secured funding assistance for the program from Alectra.

Planet Protector Academy. This program uses a superhero-themed multimedia approach to engage younger students (Grades 2-4, and in some cases 5-6) in "missions" that promote sustainable living. Students bring their program workbooks

⁵ See press coverage at <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/youth-take-on-climate-change-university-waterloo-event-1.5209892>

⁶ <https://raog.ca/>

home and engage their families in completing missions such as walking or biking to school, taking shorter showers, turning off lights when leaving a room, and avoiding idling and speeding. Three City departments provide funding support, while both school boards facilitate the introduction of the program into classrooms. We are also working with the UofG Community Engaged Scholarship Institute to replace the current vendor self-evaluation with student resources providing a 3rd party evaluation. This would also examine ultimate program impacts such as reduced household energy and water consumption, as well as uptake of follow-on actions such as the eMerge Home Tune-Up.

Newsletter. We have done two initial trials of a newsletter based on the MailChimp platform. The first went to GEMS members, while the second went to alumni of the CEI Update Task Force. The feedback we've received so far has been positive.

Communications team. We plan to convene a group of OEG stakeholders with communications experience to provide direction and oversight, and we have received a proposal from ECOA team member Emily De Sousa to undertake the preparation of the plan.

ED Alex Chapman participated in a panel discussion at the UofG Lang School of Business Sustainability Conference. The discussion was very well attended, received considerable student Q&A participation, and was well received by the attendees.

Alex also delivered presentations to the Alectra Sustainability Roundtable on November 27, and to the Royal City Men's Club on November 28.

Parkade Grand Opening. OEG exhibited at the grand opening of the Market Parkade. We used this opportunity to sign up interested visitors for the OEG newsletter.

Educators summit. Given the number of people with an interest in sustainability education that have become connected to OEG in some way, we are discussing the idea of getting them all in a room to do some level setting and to brainstorm on challenges and solutions. The challenges include:

- Climate change treatment in the academic curriculum (e.g. causes are not addressed)
- Addressing the gap in our programming at the Grade 5 and 6 level (PPA ends after Grade 4, MWMC starts at Grade 7)
- Training students for “reverse mentoring” with local businesses interested in creating and/or implementing sustainability plans
- Using schools as beachheads for neighbourhood-level climate mitigation and adaptation action, including targeting local multi-unit residential buildings for GEERS retrofits

- Retraining workers whose jobs are disrupted by the Energy Transition and related trends (e.g. the shift from privately-owned, human-driven internal combustion engine cars to shared, autonomous electric vehicles)

Blog post. We published an article explaining the meaning of Net Zero Carbon⁷, partially in response to discussion at the last board meeting. A follow-up post⁸ addresses the issue of scope and boundaries in defining the details around the net zero carbon goal.

Guelph Energy Efficiency Retrofit Strategy (GEERS) Advisory Group

Convened in February, this advisory group has prepared a report to Council that will accompany this report.

Regards,

Alex Chapman, Acting Executive Director
Our Energy Guelph

⁷ <https://www.ourenergyguelph.ca/community-matters/net-zero-carbon-what-does-it-mean>

⁸ <https://www.ourenergyguelph.ca/community-matters/scoping-1-2-3>