



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

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

DATE June 19, 2020

Per the Service Agreement between Our Energy Guelph and the City of Guelph, this document provides a progress report on activities we have been working on since the previous update.

Governance and General Operations

Board member updates. Antti Vilkkö joined the board on an interim basis, pending appointment of a replacement for Helen Loftin in the position of General Manager of Business Development and Enterprise.

Jonathan Knowles tendered his resignation from the board on April 19. The responsibilities of President will be shared between Chair Kirby Calvert and Executive Director Alex Chapman.

All other board roles remain as they were in the last update.

Office space. The ED has moved into office space in the Granary Building at 111 Farquhar Street, subleasing from another tenant. This location is particularly advantageous given that the Guelph Chamber of Commerce and the offices of MP Lloyd Longfield are located in the same building.

Note that the ED has been working from his home office while pandemic physical distancing measures are in place.

Information technology. OEG has been making effective use of the Google Meet video calling application, part of the G Suite package obtained free of charge by virtue of the organization's nonprofit status.

Nonprofit partnerships. OEG has participated in a number of Chamber of Commerce events, most recently the new members reception.

Capital funding. A summit meeting was held on March 4th with representation from the following organizations:

1. Meridian Credit Union

2. Addendum Capital
3. The Cooperators
4. Skyline REIT
5. 10C
6. Our Food Future
7. Government of Canada
8. Innovation Guelph
9. Ontario Agri-Food Technologies

The group agreed that the first priority should be a Property-Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) finance program, with a major community project as a close second. The group also discussed the idea of a financial vehicle allowing Guelphites to invest savings in an RRSP-eligible instrument that could be used to finance the various programs that comprise the Pathway to Net Zero Carbon, including home energy retrofits using PACE. The group concluded that the initial priority source of capital should be institutional investors, and only after projects are on track and revenues have been established should we explore building a retail/individual investor financing stream.

Guelph Energy Managers (GEMS)

The Spring 2020 GEMS meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic. The Summer 2020 is being held online, focusing on a presentation by staff from the local delivery agent of the Independent Electricity System Operator's SaveONenergy program.

Alectra Drive@Home program. Alectra Utilities is seeking participants for a new program to provide Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE - typically called an "EV charger") to participants at no cost. The program will also offer special electricity rates for overnight EV charging. As part of the program, participants will place a telematics device in their vehicle to help Alectra understand usage patterns. OEG has assisted Alectra with the program by soliciting members of the community to participate, starting with ED Alex Chapman.

Education, Communication, Outreach and Awareness (ECO A)

This group is led by OEG and helps build collaborative and mutually reinforcing action between three different kinds of participant:

- **Message.** Organizations that wish to change behaviour in the community to support specific sustainability objectives. Examples include the City of Guelph Water Services and Solid Waste Management, as well as OEG itself.
- **Medium.** Organizations that provide a program that delivers messages and fosters behavioural change, or that supports the same. Examples include Youth Action on Climate Change; My World, My Choice; the University of Guelph Office of Student Experience; and OEG, with its work to organize community events such as the Climate Change Pub Night.

- **Audience.** Organizations with responsibility for a target audience for both message and medium. Examples include the Upper Grand District School Board and the Wellington Catholic District School Board.

Youth Action on Climate Change (<https://youthactiononclimate.com/>). The Women In Climate Action lunch on March 8th, planned in conjunction with International Women's Day, was very successful. Unfortunately the Youth Climate Action Leadership Summit was postponed due to the pandemic. YACC has had some success with migrating their group meetings to an online format.

Random Acts of Green (<https://raog.ca/>). This mobile device app offers rewards to encourage sustainable behaviours. It will offer benefits to local customer-facing businesses, by providing a platform for them to promote their products and services. It will also offer benefits to other larger organizations by signing up staff en masse and using participation as an employee attraction, engagement, and retention tool. It will further benefit such organizations by encouraging adoption of sustainable - and hence money-saving - practices in the workplace as well as at home.

OEG signed an agreement in March to act as the local sales agent for the program, and expects to receive a modest revenue stream as a result. Social media and the OEG newsletter have been used to promote the application. Unfortunately the pandemic has inhibited our ability to execute as we had planned, but we expect this to improve with the gradual reopening of the economy now in progress.

My World, My Choice (<http://myworldmychoice.org/>). The group drew a capacity crowd for its student symposium on March 11, presented in collaboration with the Management Students Association and Enactus (a sustainability entrepreneurship student club). Further events and programming have switched to online options, including a new plan for a competition to select "Canada's Next Top Sustainability Leader".

Planet Protector Academy (<https://planetprotectoracademy.com/>). The vendor is exploring options to deliver the program online. Since it is primarily multimedia content delivered via the internet, the main issues will be logistical, including how to integrate teacher-led portions of the program.

Newsletters. We are now issuing two newsletters using the MailChimp platform. The first is a monthly general newsletter delivered to a broad audience of subscribers. The second is for GEMS members, and is delivered in conjunction with their quarterly meetings.

Communications. ED Alex Chapman performed community outreach activities as follows:

- Guelph Wellington Men's Club, January 7 (presenter)
- Green Drinks, January 15 (presenter)
- Kortright Hills Public School, Cathy Dykstra's Grade 5 Class, January 22 (guest and student project reviewer)
- Northwind Electricity 2020 Invitational Forum, January 30 (presenter/panelist)

- Ward 2 Town Hall, February 8 (presenter)
- Climate Change Town Hall presented by MP Lloyd Longfield and students from the Headwaters class, February 12 (exhibitor)
- Canadian Home Builders Association Net Zero Leadership Summit, February 26 (presenter/panelist)
- Climate Change Pub Night, February 5 (exhibitor/organizer)
- Youth Climate Action Panel, March 9 (mentor/participant)
- UofG Lang School of Business student symposium, March 11 (panelist)
- UGDSB Headwaters class, April 14 (recorded presenter)
- Quality Urban Energy Systems of Tomorrow (QUEST) Community Energy Planning Virtual Working Group Meeting, May 13 (online presenter/session facilitator)
- McMaster University Faculty of Engineering, W. Booth School of Engineering Practice and Technology, Energy and Policy Course led by Dr. Zobia Jawed, June 1 (online presenter)

Blog post. An article describing the ED's experience with purchasing an electric car during the pandemic was published on the OEG website, and was later edited and carried on the national news site *Electric Autonomy Canada*. Note that the ED also serves on the editorial board for that site, and has been invited to provide regular articles on matters related to the transition to shared, autonomous electric vehicles.

Property-Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)

OEG presented its revised program proposal (previously called GEERS) to Council in January. This resulted in a unanimous decision to proceed with the next step of having the City Finance department determine their costs for administering the Local Improvement Charges (LIC) mechanism in the role of billing and collections agent. All other program elements are to be executed by OEG and/or its partner organizations.

Community Efficiency Financing funding opportunity. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has issued a call for applications for its new Community Efficiency Financing (CEF) program under the Green Municipal Fund. The first application window, closing June 30, offers loans up to \$10 million and grants up to \$5 million for a total possible funding amount of \$15 million. This funding would allow OEG to launch the PACE program, build momentum, and then transition to full funding using private capital.

OEG intends to make a submission for this funding, in collaboration with PACE Atlantic Community Interest Corporation (CIC¹). PACE Atlantic CIC is led by the originator of the Halifax Solar City program, one of the most successful PACE programs in the country. PACE Atlantic CIC is currently delivering PACE programming in Nova Scotia using the same model that OEG proposed in January. It is also the only Canadian entity capable of expanding its delivery agent operations

¹ A Community Interest Corporation is a legal entity that exists only in Nova Scotia and British Columbia, occupying a middle ground between for-profit and not-for-profit enterprises.

into other jurisdictions. PACE Atlantic CIC was already in the process of preparing a submission on behalf of a consortium of four Atlantic Canada municipalities, so OEG will be able to leverage much of that work for its own proposal.

If successful, this funding will help Guelph to move toward its net zero carbon goal. More immediately, it will also deliver a much-needed economic stimulus, providing new, well-paying jobs in the construction industry and in areas such as building supplies, program design, and administration. This will provide a direct contribution to Guelph's recovery from the effects of the pandemic.

FCM rules require 20% of funding to be from local sources. To maximize the funding available under the program, we are working to identify a total of \$3.75 million in local contributions, be they cash or in kind. Examples include:

- The funding the City has already agreed to provide to OEG
- Incentive funds from Enbridge, the Independent Electricity System Operator, and City of Guelph Water Services
- Program staff time contributions from Alectra
- Bulk discounts from suppliers and installers of various products that will be offered through the program

Note that the CEF program is targeted at low-rise buildings, so we have pivoted from our initially-proposed emphasis on multi-unit residential buildings. We expect to be able to resume that focus within three years as momentum is established and additional capital is sourced from private investors.

PACE Canada. Our Energy Guelph has participated in the creation of a new nationwide nonprofit, PACE Canada. OEG ED Alex Chapman is serving on the board of directors for the organization, and has also participated in its governance and bylaws working group.

PACE Canada aims to encourage action at the federal and provincial level to support communities that are establishing PACE programs. It also aims to support PACE program development and implementation. Further, it will provide an advocacy platform for all of the entities that stand to benefit from propagation of the PACE model - municipalities, partner organizations like OEG, program administrators, First Nations, contractors, energy auditors, suppliers, utilities, realtors, building managers, and investors.

Regards,

Alex Chapman, Executive Director
Our Energy Guelph