

Agenda Including Addeds

Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee

The 12th Meeting of the Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee

December 5, 2024, 3:00 PM

Committee Room #2

The City of London is situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (AUh-nish-in-ah-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ah-pay-wuk) and Attawandaron (Add-a-won-da-run).

We honour and respect the history, languages and culture of the diverse Indigenous people who call this territory home. The City of London is currently home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit today.

As representatives of the people of the City of London, we are grateful to have the opportunity to work and live in this territory.

The City of London is committed to making every effort to provide alternate formats and communication supports for meetings upon request. To make a request specific to this meeting, please contact advisorycommittee@london.ca.

Pages

1. Call to Order

1.1 Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

2. Scheduled Items

2.1 Election of a New Chair and Vice-Chair

3. Consent

3.1 Resignation of W. Brown

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3.2 Resignation of M. Blosch

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3.3 *(ADDED) Resignation of M. Toplack*

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3.4 *Hamilton Spectator Interview with Wendy Brown*

4. Sub-Committees and Working Groups

5. Items for Direction

5.1 Municipal Council Resolution - Community Advisory Committees

6

5.2 Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee - Future Meetings

6. Adjournment

November 25, 2024

Dear members of Council

RE: Item 8.1 (12)

I would like to submit to my formal resignation, effective November 26th, 2024 and will not be completing my appointment to the Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee beyond this date. I hope that you will take the time to read my letter to you, in return for the many years I have thoughtfully, and respectfully served our wonderful city in my capacity as Chair of the Committee.

Many years ago, I was asked to consider an appointment to this committee, as the city looked to acquire a "wildlife expert". I have a longstanding background as an Authorized Licensed Wildlife Custodian, and have been pleased to lend my knowledge and expertise to this committee to support municipal governance over the many years when a valuing of this committee reflected a care and concern for the welfare of animals, one held by many of our city's constituents, and one they continue to hope will be reflected by their elected officials.

I will always have tremendous gratitude to past Councils whenever I visit our City Parks, and ESA's for their "progressive" endorsement of the committee's formal recommendation "Advocating for Positive Human Wildlife Experiences" Canid signage, meeting the need of Civic Administration and the community; empowering us all with public awareness education, and strategies to reduce adverse encounters with wild canids. I will be reminded with great pride when I see "Clear Your Gear" fishing line receptacles along the Thames, as a direct result of AWCAC committee's novel recommendation, supporting anglers, and recreationists, to reduce harms to wildlife and generate awareness of impacts and ways to reduce them. I will remain extremely thankful to former Council's endorsement of the AWCAC's "Humane Urban Wildlife Policy", "Beaver Deceiver" devices, and "Nuisance Feeding" of wildlife bylaw recommendations, our significant contribution to Bird Friendly Guidelines, and the many public awareness resources.

These implementations reflected past councils moving progressively toward a greater "valuing" of our city's wildlife inhabitants, their important place in ecosystems, and to policies that "do no harm" whenever possible. I was inspired to hope that such actions could lead us to a healthier, kinder community, and heartened by an elected governance that valued this committee's work to support them and the public interests to that end. It is in this very capacity, given the overwhelming issues Civic Administration and Council must contend with, I feel will truly be the overriding "loss" to this City with its abolishment.

I will remember the tremendous respect and gratitude shown to me personally, and to our Advisory by past Councils, who corresponded with us, and in their public meetings, with positivity, respect, gratitude, and with grace through differences.

I will remain saddened that I leave my appointment within the context of a lack of sensitivity and respect in the manner by which council handled their look to advisories to somehow effect costs to tax payers and budgets. To have learned of Council members vote to "abolish" unexpectedly and indirectly through a public meeting was shocking for me, and demeaning. As with all advisories, the members of this committee have volunteered their time, and energy to fulfill their duties to Council, taking time out of busy jobs, families, and lives, and deserved the common courtesy to be informed of such intentions,

without blame to a committee who make “requests” not “budget decisions” and who do not set the Terms of Reference.

The normal course between advisories and council has been to work through issues rather than open hostility from Council members in a publicized meeting with no opportunity for this committee to address the misinformation I observed.

I leave sickened for its members at the lack of grace and gratitude of this current Council. I leave with the knowledge that this council has expressed “I don’t even know what these Advisory’s do?” A reflection directed toward the AWCAC, yet more so a reflection of a failure by Council to fulfill their duty to know; a failure to look beyond their short tenure to evaluate this committee’s accomplishments in their decision-making process. What then is the purpose of any advisory, or of the required AWCAC agenda, minutes, and report to standing committees? To Council? Or of subsequent reports and minutes by Council to Advisories?

I will remain deeply saddened by communication from Council members on public record dismissive of the value of this committee, and expressions that are bereft of gratitude, or acknowledgement for how this must feel for a long standing, dedicated committee of individuals volunteering their work for free.

In my role as Chair I have ended every AWCAC meeting by thanking staff for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend, and for the support they provide us, to the members, gallery, and to the clerks for all they do for this committee. I have always felt it important to maintain a working relationship in a positive manner, acknowledging openly, everyone’s work, time, and valued contributions.

It would be difficult to understand how I can proceed to April’s abolishment deadline when it is clear that this Council fails to provide the same courtesy, and demonstrates an obvious lack of valuing, gratitude, respect, and appreciation for this Committee.

I hope that you will consider what I have observed, and take greater care with the youth and work plans that I am pleased you will bring on board to the remaining Advisories.

Sincerely,
Wendy Brown
Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee

November 25, 2024

Mayor and City Councilors:

This letter addresses Council Agenda Item 8.1 (12). I consent to placing this letter on the Added Agenda.

The establishment of the Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee (AWCAC) was a bold step forward, and I am proud to have been a part of it. London became a progressive, compassionate city through the work of this advisory committee and under the direction of previous city councils. I feel that era has ended. I sincerely hope that the huge step backwards being taken now will not lead to the dissolution of more animal welfare initiatives and programs in the future.

The role of an advisory committee goes beyond giving advice that councilors ask for. Advisory committees also provide guidance on new initiatives. That is how progress is made. Moreover, dissolving the AWCAC is contrary to London's Strategic Plan, which clearly states that council is to "*promote*" animal welfare and "*encourage*" animal welfare initiatives (page 47).

It is deeply disappointing that the majority of council members are not troubled by tactics that dissolved an active and thriving advisory committee without the simple courtesy of notice to committee members. It is equally frustrating that the decision to dissolve the AWCAC failed to acknowledge its many successes and seems to have been made based on misinformation and inaccurate assumptions. I am saddened that an opportunity to have a more fulsome discussion was rejected.

I will continue to advocate even more fiercely for animals, but I decline to participate in the hostile environment that city council has unnecessarily created. My resignation from the Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee will be effective immediately following the next AWCAC meeting, currently scheduled for December 5, 2024.

Marie Blosch

Vice-Chair, AWCAC

November 28, 2024

Dear Members of Council,

This letter is regarding Council Agenda Item 8.1 (12).

I would like to submit my formal resignation from the Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee, effective November 29, 2024. I consent to placing this letter on the Added Agenda.

I joined the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee back in 2013 because I was passionate about creating awareness and educating the public about cat rescue and spay/neuter. It was such a pleasure to be surrounded by others who also felt compelled to speak for those who can not.

We have developed and established many initiatives over the years and had support of our Council. Our Committee would be referred to for input and City publications and we were happy to take time out of our busy lives to contribute.

It was with sadness and disappointment that I am resigning from this Committee, ahead of the dissolution.

I would like to thank my fellow members who brought their experience, knowledge, ideas and energy to the meetings and congratulate them on all they accomplished over the years.

Sincerely,
Michelle Toplack



P.O. Box 5035
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON
N6A 4L9

November 27, 2024

M. Schulthess
City Clerk

I hereby certify that the Municipal Council, at its meeting held on November 26, 2024 resolved:

That the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to undertake the following actions regarding the Community Advisory Committees (CACs):

- a) the Accessibility Community Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference BE AMENDED to align with the Accessibility, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression (ARAO) staff resources and Action Plans, specifically with the Accessibility and Inclusion Advisor;
- b) in consultation with the Accessibility Community Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Committee on Planning, the Terms of Reference for CACs BE AMENDED to specify a maximum of eleven (11) voting members and to require a youth representative as part of their membership;
- c) in response to the Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Oppression Community Advisory Committee's (DIACAC) request, DIACAC's operations BE PAUSED while a review of its Terms of Reference is undertaken by the City Clerk, in consultation with the Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression division and the Human Rights division, with a report on findings to be provided to the Manager of Labour Relations by Q3 2025;
- d) the Animal Welfare Community Advisory Committee BE DISSOLVED effective April 2025, and update the Environmental Stewardship and Action Community Advisory Committee's terms of reference to include: responsibilities related to the welfare of animals in the community;
- e) the Ecological Community Advisory Committee BE DISSOLVED effective April 2025, and an Ecological Reference Group BE ESTABLISHED by Q2 2025 to provide technical advice on matters related to the City of London's Official Plan, including the management of natural heritage systems, Environmentally Significant Areas, woodlands, and stream corridors;
- f) the Integrated Transportation Community Advisory Committee (ITCAC) BE DISSOLVED effective April 2025, and a Mobility and Transportation Working Group be established by Q3 2025 tasked with providing advice to the Civic Administration on the implementation of the Master Mobility Plan, with representation from residents, the London Transit Commission, and other transportation partners. The working group shall meet at least three times annually, with an annual progress report to be presented to the Infrastructure and Corporate Services Committee (ICSC);
- g) a by-law BE FORWARDED to a future meeting of the Municipal Council to amend the General Policy for Community Advisory Committees to:
 - i) align the Policy with the newly structured Council standing committees;
 - ii) require that an annual workplan, aligned with the City's Strategic Plan, be approved by the respective parent standing committee and that the workplan status be provided to the parent standing committee on a quarterly basis;

- iii) align the Policy with the updated Terms of Reference; and
- iv) reflect the removal of the requirement to process applications to CACs through the Striking Committee to align with recent amendments to the Council Procedure By-law;

it being noted that the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee received communications from the following with respect to this matter:

- a communication dated November 6, 2024 from Councillor C. Rahman and Deputy Mayor S. Lewis;
- a communication dated November 15, 2024 from S. Levin, Chair, Ecological Community Advisory Committee;
- a communication dated November 18, 2024 from B. Samuels, Chair, Environmental Stewardship and Action Community Advisory Committee;

it being further noted that the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee received a verbal delegation from B. Samuels, Chair, Environmental Stewardship and Action Community Advisory Committee with respect to this matter. (4.5/17/SPPC)



M. Schulthess
City Clerk
/hw

cc: S. Levin
B. Samuels
S. Corman, Deputy City Clerk
E. Skalski, Deputy City Clerk
E. Hunt, Manager, Legislative Services
H. Lysynski, Committee Clerk
J. Bunn, Committee Clerk
K. Mason, Committee Clerk
Documentation Services Representative