Mayor's Youth Climate Leadership Team
Minutes

Wednesday, March 19, 2025
4:00 p.m.

Council Chamber, Second Floor
New Westminster City Hall, 511 Royal Avenue

Present: Mayor Patrick Johnstone, Facilitator
Leya Behra, Deputy Director of Climate Action
Erika Mashig, Deputy Director, Parks, Policy and Planning
Paolo Zenone, Youth Centre Supervisor
Juno Avila-Clark, YCLT Member
Ruqaiyah Clouden, YCLT Member
Shreeya Jagadeesh, YCLT Member
Curtis Lever, YCLT Member *(departed at 5:25 p.m.)*
Leo Li, YCLT Member
Max MacInnes-Cann, YCLT Member
Lili Mizuno, YCLT Member

Committee Clerk – Yuliya Dmitriieva

Absent: Laura Sampliner, Manager, Climate Action
Elizabeth Cavanagh, YCLT Member
Mahsa Soltani, YCLT Member
Lucille Stathis, YCLT Member
Silisha Ali, Youth Services Coordinator
Uliana Chernykh, YCLT Member
Irene Lu, YCLT Member
Justine Rosendo, YCLT Member

1. CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Patrick Johnstone, Facilitator called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. It was acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. It was recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. EXERCISES & ACTIVITIES

2.1 Project Work

The meeting began with Erika Mashig, Deputy Director of Parks, Policy and Planning, outlining the intended activities, group structures and their focus on environmental interventions, specifically rain gardens. Leya Behra, Deputy Director of Climate Action, asked participants to consider their favourite potential projects and long-term actions, with a focus on involving youth through the "Social Media Group" to showcase their progress.

Members were divided into two groups:

1. the Social Media Group, including Leya, Curtis, Shreeyah, and Leo, tasked to explore the use of social media to amplify youth voices, emphasizing communication and public engagement; and
2. the Natural/Water Projects Group, led by Erika and joined by Ruqaiyah, Max, Juno, and Lili, tasked to review past environmental projects like sewage systems and explore the feasibility of rain gardens and storm water management.

The Social Media Group considered the city's current communication structure and discussed ways to enhance outreach, focusing on accessibility, sustainability, and resilience. They also brainstormed strategies to prioritize authentic engagement and ensure community-driven content.

The Natural/Water Projects Group considered challenges such as proximity to schools and discussed potential use of public land for these initiatives.

E. Mashig, Ruqaiyah, Max, Juno, and Lili left the meeting (4:25 p.m.).

Natural/Water Projects Group stepped outside to examine storm water infrastructure, gaining insights to improve project planning. Following their review, they emphasized the importance of public education on gardening and sustainability.

E. Mashig, Ruqaiyah, Max, Juno, and Lili returned to the meeting (4:35 p.m.).

Both groups then discussed drafting a council report, emphasizing collaboration on content and the importance of structuring the project presentation as well. Key deadlines were set for final project plans and reports to be submitted by late April 2025.

Curtis Lever left the meeting and did not return (5:25 p.m.).

Discussions continued on the 5th Street Rewilding Project, addressing public concern and the need for better transparency in making meeting records accessible.

Engineering aspects were discussed, particularly regarding infrastructure like pipe installations and signage, as well as ensuring accessibility in public spaces. The group reviewed potential challenges in implementing the social media strategy, including budget constraints and the need for engaging content that resonates with the public.

Project planning and presentation development were emphasized across all groups. Erika shared strategies for structuring project proposals, ensuring that presentations were clear, concise, and would resonate with the council. The final plans would be submitted two weeks before the scheduled Council meeting on May 12, 2025.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 6:02 p.m.