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Mar 26, 2024 · 37 tweets · [adamadonaldson/status/1772622253894598673](https://twitter.com/adamadonaldson/status/1772622253894598673)

Coming up at 10 am, it's this month's regular city council meeting. Check out what's coming up on the Politico preview here:



City Council Preview – What's on the Agenda for the March 26 Meeting?

We come again to the end of the month and the regular council meeting. It's been a pretty laid back month compared to last, and this meeting's agenda fits that theme as council will rev...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2024/03/15/city-council-preview-whats-on-the-agenda-for-the-...>

Mayor Guthrie has called the meeting to order.

No closed session to report on today.

Regrets from Cllr O'Rourke thought she "may pop up later," according to the mayor.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof? Nope.

Consent agenda from CoW:

3. Committee of the Whole Consent Report

The following resolutions have been prepared to facilitate Council's consideration of various matters and are suggested for consideration. If Council wishes to address a specific report in isolation of the Committee of the Whole Consent Report, please identify the item. It will be extracted and dealt with separately as part of the Items for Discussion.

3.1 2024 Property Tax Policy, 2024-63

Recommendation:

1. That the 2024 City of Guelph property tax ratios and corresponding tax rates, as set out in Attachment-1 to the report 2024-63 titled 2024 Property Tax Policy dated March 5, 2024, be approved.

3.2 Private Tree Protection By-law Update – Key Issues and Options, 2024-11

Recommendation:

1. That the Private Tree Protection By-law Update – Key Issues and Options report, dated March 5, 2024, be received, and that staff be directed to proceed with the recommendations set out within the report.

3.3 Internal Audit Work Plan 2024-2026, 2024-106

Recommendation:

1. That the report titled 'Internal Audit Work Plan 2024–2026' dated March 5, 2024, be approved.
2. That the Internal Audit Charter Update dated March 5, 2024, be received.
3. That the Value-for-Money Audit Review Framework be approved.

There's also one additional item on the consent agenda: The waiving of parkland fees for the addition on the Stepping Stone building.

***4.1 Parkland Dedication for Emergency Shelter - 2024-158**



Recommendation:

1. That Council waive any applicable Parkland Dedication fees for the Emergency Shelter renovation and expansion planned for 23 Gordon Street

All consent items approved.

That brings us to the one item for discussion: City of Hamilton Resolution: Support for the Decision of the Ontario Energy Board to End the Gas Pipeline Subsidy.

Caron explains that this came to her attention with a letter from Environmental Defense, and that was followed up with a letter from the Home Builders Association. Caron included a backgrounder on the Ward 5 website: <https://www.ward5.ca/leanne-s-blog/our-energy-future-march-26-council-meeting>

At issue, the Ontario Energy Board said that Enbridge can not tag infrastructure costs for new developments onto Enbridge customers. The Ontario government is presently working on Bill 165, which will override the OEB decision. Caron calls it the subsidisation of fossil fuel dev.

There are five delegates for this item, but Keith Brooks will be playing the part of Adrian Currie in spot #5.

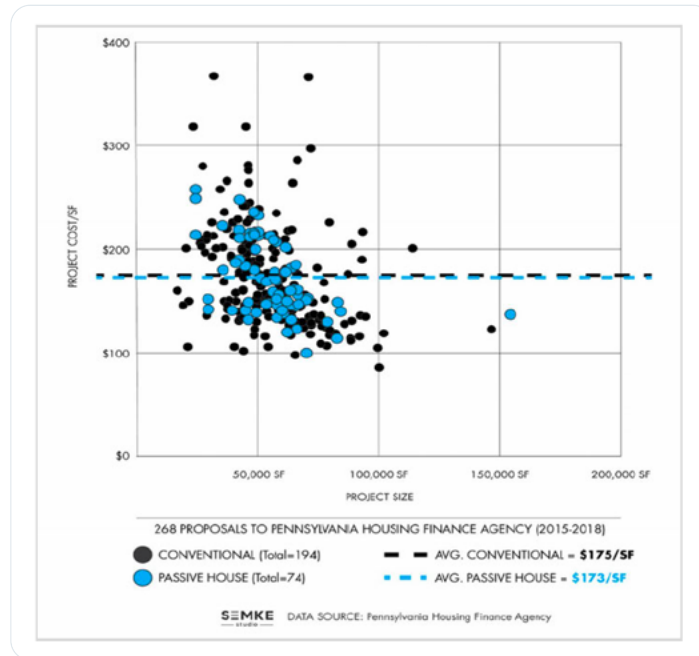
Samantha Hicks is the first delegate. She says that the Earth loves us, but is very sick right now and in need of care. One way we can show our love back is to support this motion. If this "Mother Earth stuff" is too hippy-dippy, she says just think about clear air and land.

Next is Abigail Walton and Indigo Moran, they're grade 11 students and support the motion! Supporting Enbridge, they say, is to not support the environmental goals that the City has established, and that's before mentioning the climate disaster.

They also point out that alternatives to natural gas are cheaper, and are getting cheaper, and that the OEB itself has noted that NG infrastructure is going to end up overbuilt and underused. Need to prioritise affordability (speaking as young adults).

Up next, Evan Ferrari from eMERGE. He says this is an opportunity to show climate leadership and support for an institution. The OEB is a watchdog, and not there to do the bidding of industry or partisan governance. He calls it a subsidy, customers not developers paying.

Next, Ana Gascon Marco. She wants to talk about sustainability and affordability, because they're not necessarily different things. Sustainable standards can still be affordable. She included a graph: <https://pub-guelph.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=45986>



Caron asks Marco about her technical expertise. She apparently designs buildings and is always looking at ways to build in energy conservation, and implementing policies to be more efficient.

That brings us to Keith Brooks for Adrian Currie. He with Environmental Defense, and thinks that the OEB decision is a good one. The move to override them is going to make homes more expensive and will only benefit Enbridge in the end.

Brooks says that Enbridge is acting like this is the end of gas, and though he hopes that it is, it has no impact on existing gas users, and it does not stop developers from getting gas hook ups if they want one. (Also, we should talk about banned NG.)

Allt asks about how much this will cost per household. Brooks says it's about \$4,000 per the average home owner to connect to natural gas.

Caron confirms that there's no charge to the homeowner on the new houses. Brooks says yes, Enbridge has to go to OEB to get approval to raise rates, because that's the only way that Enbridge can raise funds, which is through the fees.

Brooks adds that there's an assumption that every new homeowner is going to want NG and that they're going to want it for a long time. The OEB said that this was a false assumption and that there would end up being a lot of stranded assets.

Complete motion from Caron/Allt:

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, residents are struggling with energy bill increases and need relief;

WHEREAS, natural gas is no longer the cheapest way to heat homes because electric heat pumps are now much more efficient, can provide all heating needs even in the cold climates, and result in far lower energy bills over the long term compared to gas heating;

WHEREAS, natural gas is methane gas, which is a fossil fuel that causes approximately one-third of Ontario's GHG emissions, and must be phased out because it is inconsistent with all climate targets, while heat pumps result in the lowest GHG emissions and are consistent with a zero-carbon future;

WHEREAS, the Ontario Energy Board ("OEB") decided to end a subsidy for methane gas pipelines to be built in new construction developments, effective 2025, finding that this would lower energy bills for existing gas customers and improve affordability for new homebuyers, but this decision is at risk of being overturned by the provincial government;

WHEREAS, the OEB decision will help lower energy bills and encourage heating systems that are consistent with climate targets and plans;

WHEREAS, the construction of new methane gas pipelines, which have 60-year lifetimes, should not be subsidized because they are inconsistent with the City's climate targets and will result in higher carbon emissions, higher energy bills, higher future decarbonization retrofit costs to get off fossil fuel heating, and a continued financial drain as dollars leave the province to pay for fossil fuels extracted in other jurisdictions;

WHEREAS, Guelph City Council acknowledged the climate crisis (May 2019), passed a resolution to support the phase-out of gas-fired energy plants by 2030 (December 2020); and passed a resolution of support to the United Nations Race to Zero commitment (December 2021);

WHEREAS, transforming our existing and new buildings by supporting actions that improve the energy efficiency and GHG profile within the City is a stated goal of our Community Energy Initiative (CEI), our Official Plan and our Strategic Plan;

WHEREAS, the City of Guelph is actively working to support the decarbonization of heating and cooling systems in existing and future building stock within the community, as demonstrated by the Guelph Green Homes Energy Retrofit Program, which will provide 0% interest loans to Guelph homeowners to enable them to transition away from fossil-fuel powered heating and cooling equipment to low carbon air or ground source heat pump systems.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the City of Guelph expresses its support for the decision of the Ontario Energy Board to end the fossil gas infrastructure subsidy and requests that the Ontario Government withdraw Bill 165 and allow the OEB decision to stand; and
- (b) That this resolution be circulated to the President of Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Colin Best; Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford; Minister of Energy, Todd Smith; Minister of Finance, Peter Bethlenfalvy, MPP Mike Schreiner, and all Ontario Municipalities requesting support for the proposed changes.

Guthrie asks for questions, and says that this is a political statement. Either council agrees or it doesn't.

Gibson asks if there's a requirement to having to sources of heat in a home (asking based on own experience). DCAO Holmes says she doesn't have that info on hand. Gibson says that's fine.

Caron says in her experience the answer to that question is no, and also notes that there are no parts of a heat pump that are electrical.

Comments? Goller thanks the delegates and the people that wrote in. It's an important issue to speak up on, and this motion has his support.

Allt supports it too. Concerned about GHG, but also concerned about ONgov weighing on OEB when it comes to policy. Like MZOs.

Caton says the ONgov interfering with a regulatory body is bad policy even though it's also the new normal. Changing service models is an important part of growth, and it's important to make a change to greener economy.

Busuttill says that she knows from working with the vulnerable that the effects of climate change do not fall on everyone equally, and there's a clear affordability question with this.

Caron thanks the delegates, especially the grade 11 students because they will be grandparents by the time that this subsidy expires. There's nothing to suggest that this is going to impact housing starts, and there are affordable and green tech options for people.

Caron says that this is the simplified version for this motion, could go deep about alternatives and governance, but this is just about supporting this one decision and there are more and more cities joining the cause and coming to OEB defense.

Guthrie says this issue is more complicated and does not feel comfortable voting in favour w/o more info. Also, doesn't want to weight in while being appealed, so doesn't think it's appropriate. Does agree on the point about political interference.

Vote on the motions: Chew, Billings, Gibson and Guthrie vote against, but passes by 8-4.

Bylaws of the week approved:

- Nothing further for this meeting, so we're adjourned.



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