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The Regional Municipality of Durham

Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2026

A regular meeting of the Durham Environment & Climate Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, January 15, 2026 in Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:04 PM.

J. Cuthbertson assumed the Chair.

1. Roll Call

Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.
* all individuals participated electronically.

Members

Present: J. Cuthbertson, Member at Large, Chair
K. Lui, Member at Large, First Vice-Chair
B. Basztyk, Brock, Second Vice-Chair
S. Brouwer, Uxbridge
O. Chaudhry, Pickering
C. DeAbreu, Youth Member
K. Murray, Clarington
M. Nasir, Ajax
B. Widner, Whitby

Also

Present: G. Carpentier, Scugog
P. Cohen, Post-Secondary Student
D. Stathopoulos, Oshawa

Members

Absent: Councillor Shahid

Staff Present: A. Bathe, S. Dessureault, R. Inacio, and I. McVey

2. Election of Officers for 2026

Election of the DECAC Chair

S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee.

Moved by K. Lui, Seconded by B. Basztyk,
That J. Cuthbertson be nominated for the position of Chair of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee.

Moved by B. Widner, Seconded by S. Brouwer,
That nominations be closed.

Carried

S. Dessureault asked if J. Cuthbertson wished to stand. J. Cuthbertson indicated that he would stand.

J. Cuthbertson was acclaimed to the position of Chair.

Election of the DECAC First and Second Vice-Chairs

S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, called for nominations for the positions of First and Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee.

Moved by O. Chaudhry, Seconded by J. Cuthbertson,
That K. Lui be nominated for the position of First Vice-Chair of the
Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee.

Moved by O. Chaudhry, Seconded by J. Cuthbertson,
That B. Basztyk be nominated for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the
Durham Environment and Climate Advisory Committee.

Moved by M. Nasir, Seconded by S. Brouwer,
That nominations be closed.

Carried

S. Dessureault asked if K. Lui and B. Basztyk wished to stand. K. Lui and B. Basztyk indicated that they would stand.

K. Lui and B. Basztyk were acclaimed to the positions of First and Second Vice-Chairs respectively.

J. Cuthbertson assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by O. Chaudhry, Seconded by B. Widner,
That the agenda for the Thursday, January 15, 2026 Durham
Environment & Climate Advisory Committee (DECAC) meeting, be
approved.

Carried

4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

5. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by K. Lui, Seconded by O. Chaudhry,
That the minutes of the regular DECAC meeting held on Thursday,
November 20, 2025, be adopted.

Carried

6. Presentations

- A) Richard Gilbert, Chair, Board of Directors, The Boltzmann Institute
Re: The Illustrative Ontario Thermal Energy Planning Program
-

R. Gilbert, Chair, Board of Directors, The Boltzmann Institute, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Illustrative Ontario Thermal Energy Planning Program.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- The Strategic Challenge
- Core Principles and Methodology
- Program Overview
- Jurisdictional Eligibility
- Phase 1: Digital Twin and Baseline (Months 1-9)
- Phase 2: Quantify Local Low and No-Carbon Supply (Months 10-17)
- Phase 3: Target Scenario for 2050 (Months 18-24)
- Phase 4: Implementation Strategy (Months 25-30)
- Industry, Cooling and Domestic Hot Water (DHW)
- Funding and Budget
- Implementation Timeline (2026-2029)
- Potential Impacts
- Draft's Conclusions
- Some of the Comments on the Draft

R. Gilbert responded to questions from the Committee regarding whether the Boltzmann Institute is aware of the amount of energy that the Region of Durham produces through water daily at Ontario Power Generation (OPG); and whether the thermal energy plan is an alternative energy source to nuclear power plants.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of inviting an international specialist with expertise in the thermal energy planning field to assist with analysis and implementation.

Staff advised that the Region of Durham is in the process of developing a Heat Master Plan which will be presented to the Committee in the coming year.

7. Items for Action/Discussion Items

- A) DCCAP Update – Community Climate Impact Workshop (J. Cuthbertson)
-

J. Cuthbertson advised that he attended the Community Climate Impact Workshop on Monday, January 12, 2026. He advised that the workshop focused on an overview of the findings of the new Sustainability/Environmental Needs or Natural Asset (SENNA) assessment for the Region of Durham. He further advised that the goal was to discuss impacts that changing climate has on communities.

B. Basztyk and K. Lui advised that they also attended the Community Climate Impact Workshop and provided an overview of their experience at the workshop.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee regarding whether a similar workshop would be held in the future to discuss actions and solutions related to community climate impacts.

B) 2026 Pollinator Seed Distribution Project Planning (A. Bathe)

A. Bathe provided a brief update on the 2026 Pollinator Seed Distribution Project planning.

K. Murray advised that her students would assist with packaging the seeds.

Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of the seed distribution project and what the 2026 seed distribution would look like.

8. For Information

A) Report #2025-INFO-85: 2024 Waste Management Annual Report

A copy of Report #2025-INFO-85 of the Commissioner of Works was received.

B) Report #2025-INFO-89: Durham Resilient Agricultural Lands Program – Marginal Lands Initiative

A copy of Report #2025-INFO-89 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development was received.

C) Report #2025-INFO-92: 2025 Durham Fall Climate Forum and Durham Environmental Achievement Awards

A copy of Report #2025-INFO-92 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development was received.

D) Report #2025-INFO-93: Monitoring of Growth Trends

A copy of Report #2025-INFO-93 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development was received.

E) Report #2025-CG-14: Regional Response to ERO #025-1257 – Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities

A copy of Report #2025-CG-14 of the Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development was received.

F) Conservation Ontario Submission to ERO #025-1257

A copy of the Conservation Ontario Submission to ERO #025-1257 was received.

G) Town of Ajax (Page 11) – Durham Meadowway Shared Services MOU and Funding Request

A copy of the Town of Ajax's Durham Meadowway Shared Services MOU and Funding Request was received.

H) Town of Ajax (Page 29) – Update on Bike Friendly Communities Gold Status

A copy of the Town of Ajax's update on their Bike Friendly Communities Gold Status was received.

I) Town of Ajax (Page 6) – Sustainability and Climate Change Updates

A copy of the Town of Ajax's Sustainability and Climate Change updates was received.

J) Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition's Protect Our Plan: From Good Goals to Practical Progress

A copy of the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition's Protect Our Plan: From Good Goals to Practical Progress was received.

Moved by K. Murray, Seconded by B. Basztyk,
That Information Items 8. A) to 87. J) inclusive, be received for
information.

Carried

9. Other Business

A) DECAC Working Group

B. Basztyk requested that DECAC participate in an informal, in-person meeting to allow the Committee to develop ideas for potential new projects and future directions.

Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of the working group and meeting could be arranged.

Staff advised that they would provide further details regarding the arrangements for the meeting with the Committee.

B) Staffing Updates

I. McVey advised the Committee of staffing changes within the Community Growth and Economic Development department.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled DECAC meeting will be held on Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

11. Adjournment

Moved by K. Murray, Seconded by S. Brouwer,
That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM

Respectfully submitted,

J. Cuthbertson
Chair

S. Dessureault
Committee Clerk