



metrovancouver

Environment and Energy Committee Terms of Reference

The Environment and Energy Committee is the standing committee of the Board which provides advice and recommendations to the Board on environmental and energy policy issues and how these considerations can contribute to the livability and sustainability of the region as part of the Sustainable Region Initiative.

Metro Vancouver has been delegated Provincial responsibility for certain aspects of regional air quality management. To that end, in 2005, the Board adopted a new Air Quality Management Plan and the strategies and actions required to implement that plan will be a major focus of the Committee's activities. This will include the development of regional greenhouse gas reduction objectives and actions, and the consideration of alternative energy sources and other matters related to the region's energy future.

The GVRD and GVWD own or manage significant areas of land, such as regional parks, watersheds and the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, and through the growth management strategy the Board influences the way lands held by others are used and managed. While other committees will advise the relevant Boards on the specifics of these management activities, an overall environmental perspective on land stewardship dealing with such matters as a regional biodiversity strategy and ecological reserves could usefully inform and guide these other more specific activities. It is the Environment and Energy Committee's responsibility to develop and provide these perspectives on land stewardship.

Similarly the actions of the GVRD, through parks and land use policies, the GVSDD through its activities in wastewater collection and treatment and in drainage management, and the GVWD through its intervention in the natural water cycle to provide a drinking water supply to the region, have implications for the stewardship of water in the region. The Environment and Energy Committee may be able to offer the regional Boards broader environmental perspectives on these activities to provide a regional water stewardship context and objectives to inform and guide these activities.

The Environment and Energy Committee is the forum to which staff report on broad environmental and energy issues. The Committee's responsibilities are:

- To review and monitor the annual work program for programs assigned to the committee and make recommendations to the Board, as necessary, on any changes in program scope and priorities;
- To consider staff reports on policies, projects and programs and make recommendations to the Board on the appropriate actions;
- To hear and consider public delegations on matters within the scope of the committee's purview and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Board arising out of such delegations;
- To pursue matters referred to the committee by the Board and report back to the Board expeditiously, as required.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Committee may provide advice, guidance or direction to staff as to the scope and priority of work to be carried out, including new tasks to be undertaken.

However, where such direction represents a sufficiently significant change in the previously approved work program, or a significant expenditure of funds, or runs contrary to the advice of professional staff, the Committee shall refer the matter to the Board, with appropriate recommendations, for decision by the Board.

The Committee Chair, or in the absence of the Committee Chair, the Committee Vice-Chair will usually be the chief spokesperson on matters of public interest within the Committee's purview. Some issues may be of such public profile that it will be appropriate for the Board Chair or Vice Chair to be the chief spokesperson; on technical matters or where the status is still at the staff proposal level, the Chief Administrative Officer or senior staff may be the appropriate chief spokesperson. Where necessary and practical, the Board Chair, the Committee Chair and the Chief Administrative Officer (or vice-chairs and deputy) will confer to determine the most appropriate course of action.

The CAO will assign a department manager to be 'duty manager' to the Committee. The duty manager will be responsible for coordinating agendas and be the principal point of contact for committee members.

Committee Meetings

The Environment and Energy Committee meets monthly except for August and December and has special meetings as required. A quorum of 50% plus one of the Committee membership is required to conduct Committee business.

Relationship with Other Board Committees

Matters of overall budget and financing of the programs are the purview of the Finance Committee. Expenditures within the approved budget remain the purview of the Environment Committee but items which entail significant changes to the approved budget should be referred to the Finance Committee for their recommendation to the Board as well as the recommendation of the Environment and Energy Committee.

Matters considered by the Environment and Energy Committee may have implications for issues considered by other committees, in particular the Land Use and Transportation Committee, the Water Committee, the Waste Management Committee and the Parks Committee. Similarly matters considered by other committees may have relevance for the Environment and Energy Committee.

The duty manager will attempt to keep the committee apprised of significant reports with inter-committee implications.

Committee Membership

The Chair, Vice Chair, and members are appointed annually by the Chair of the Board of Directors.