

GREN meeting minutes – Wed. Feb. 17, 2010

Chair: John Jackson

Minutes: Susan Koswan

Election of GREN executive

- Set for March 2010 meeting
- John to send out notice for nominations to be submitted to him by end of March 31, 2010
- Following exec willing to run again: John Jackson – chair, Theo – Treasurer, Susan B, Susan K as secretary, Randy McLean stepping down as co-chair, Carole Clinch stepping down as secretary.
- GREN fiscal year will run from April 1 – March 31. Membership fees for 2010-11 are due by March 31, 2010, but you will be eligible to vote if membership was paid in 2009.

Treasurer's Report

Bank balance \$1,100.58 – website costs pd. up for 3 years

Paid members – 28, membership fees due end of March

GREN priorities for 2010

Organizational Objectives

- Website calendar not working correctly yet, Theo will follow up with ClickHost, GREN has banked significant programming time with them
- Need volunteers to maintain/update GREN website
- Theo will outline parameters for calendar listings to clearly differentiate GREN-related activities vs other activities/events

Publicity/Media

- List GREN meetings in Community Listings in newspapers
- Weekly community papers are accessible and well read
- Often difficult to get reporters for evening events, but can arrange for interviews day of
- Bob B and Susan K will work on media list, some suggestions to include are Rogers and GRAND magazine
- Bob B suggested writing profiles of GREN members – human interest angle , eg Carole Clinch for fluoride issue because it's topical
- Once GREN takes a position, to promote it to geographical area it's relevant to
- How to get the Record to get behind social innovation and retain objectivity

Membership / Meet and Collaborate

- Need to actively engage other interest groups and keep communication open – Kevin T will compile list, send him ideas and contacts kevin@gren.ca
- Continue format of having guest speaker at each meeting
- We need to expect ebb and flow of meeting attendance based on urgency of issues
- Kevin to contact Ella Haley (Brantford)
- Focus on committee-work

- Should be re-organize meetings to serve 3 purposes – general meeting, speaker and break out into committees? Should we start earlier and have more potlucks and share cost of pizzas?
- Should we only have general GREN meetings on quarterly basis?
- GREN website should be set up with info describing committees and goals to help potential members

Issues

- Pipeline
- Countryline – ROPP and City/Township Official Plans
- Municipal Election surveys
- Air Quality, including sudden “one-time” releases of toxic chemicals, Idling, committees need to assess City of Kitchener plan, for example, for weaknesses and strengths
- Cycling/Pedestrian Safety
- Water Quality – GRCA will be releasing Grand River Assessment Report 1st week of May
- Land Use Issues - parking lots, gravel pits, Hidden Valley

Committee Work Criteria:

- Basin-wide?
- Specific to one community and translatable to others?
- What level should policy be created at?
- What level should GREN insert itself?
- What recommendation can GREN make?
- Who should be accountable?
- What action is being taken?
- What other groups can be engaged?
- Each member should only chair 1 committee
- GREN reports need official format – Susan K to set up
- If other groups are involved, then GREN should connect/collaborate, not compete unless they ask us to take the lead
- Email invite to announce committees
- Need “translators” for official/scientific reports

Updates

Land Use

Kevin T attended council of councils meetings in Markham – real education re land use, bussed in Ontario Landowners’ Association to protest land use restrictions

Ontario Nature and Environmental Defence conducted surveys that showed response on how people intend to vote based on how land is developed (or not)

Kevin presented Waterloo example of agricultural land coexisting with city land

GREN members have sophisticated skills re presentations/working with councils

We need to get better at media work and political work

Recommendation to get all council votes to be recorded and all political donations to be transparent – Kevin will contact prof from York U who has studied connections between developers’ money and politicians’ voting

Should we be lobbying to stop developers donations to politicians?

LRT

Council not taking all issues into mind

Communication from Region

Region of Waterloo Greenlands Network Implementation Guidelines – consultation by April 30th, public meeting TBA - Kevin took info.

Next GREN Meeting

Moved to Thursday March 25 (was previously scheduled during March break)
POTLUCK, NOTE: 6:30 start time St. John's Kitchen, Kitchener, speaker TBA