

BLUE COMMUNITIES

An initiative of the Council of Canadians

PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL – March 18, 2019

On behalf of:

Council of Canadians – Northumberland Chapter

Blue Dot

Sustainable Cobourg

Environmental & Climate Change Advisory Committee (formerly Environmental Active Transportation Advisory Committee)

Presenting:

Petra Hartwig:

Gudrun Ludorf-Weaver:

1. Power Point presentation (attached)

Blue Communities is an organization providing the community for leaders to protect water through collaboration with governments to be held accountable for providing safe, clean drinking water for everyone.

What's the difference between the Blue Dot and Blue Communities?

Blue Dot is a campaign led by the David Suzuki Foundation, highlighting our right to a healthy environment and clean, accessible water. The Blue Dot resolution promotes the rights to clean air, clean water, safe food and access to nature. The Blue Dot resolutions also promote the right to know about pollutants and contaminants, and the right to participate in decision-making that will affect the environment.

A copy of the signed declaration in 2018 is attached.

The **Blue Communities** Project focuses on challenging the privatization, commodification and corporate control of water. This project promotes water as commons and focuses on the three key water issues of bottled water, the human right to water and sanitation, and keeping water and wastewater services public, community-run and not-for-profit.

The Blue Communities Project resolution on the human rights to water and sanitation call on the federal and provincial governments to enshrine these rights in federal and provincial law.

At the Municipal level, municipal council can demonstrate water leadership by passing the resolutions and raising awareness amongst residents after the resolutions have been passed.

A copy of the declaration, for Council consideration, is attached.

Alongside the phase out of bottled water, the Blue Communities Project requires that municipalities ensure that people have access to drinking water through drinking water fountains/water bottle filling stations or mobile water stations. The bottled water resolution also requires a municipal staff and public awareness campaign to support the rationale for these changes. Staff are asked to develop an implementation schedule with timelines that include an assessment of access to tap water at municipal facilities.

Meeting with Lakefront Utilities Services senior staff, Water on Wheels was tried a few years ago, but it was not as feasible as was thought. There are regulations surrounding sanitation. We researched water bottle filling stations, and LUSI is supportive in the installation of units strategically placed within the Town, and will look after seasonal start up and shut down. However, the cost of operation would be included in the budget of Parks and perhaps Public Works. It would be the municipality's responsibility to enact a "No Water Bottle Policy" at municipal events.



Waterfront Festival 2018 – Inner Wheel sold 71 cases of bottled water at \$2/bottle = \$1904. What is the carbon footprint? 952 plastic bottles, most of which end up in landfills. Looking at just the bottom line is not a way for the community to look at sustainability.

What can municipalities do to raise funds that normally would be generated by bottled water sales? The town could buy and sell reusable water bottles with the logo on it or "Water is a Human Right" slogan to replace revenue previously obtained through bottled water sales.

How much does it cost to install drinking water fountains? Where can these funds come from?

The cost of installing drinking water fountains outside varies depending on the location and suppliers. In my research, the cost is roughly \$3,500 to \$4,500 per unit in addition to installation costs, but costs will vary.

As a Blue Community you will become part of a growing movement for public water in Canada and around the world.

Resolution to Recognize the Rights to Water and Sanitation

WHEREAS nearly 750 million people around the world do not have access to clean drinking water, 4 billion people face severe water scarcity and 2.5 billion people do not have adequate sanitation; and

WHEREAS Indigenous communities in Canada have been disproportionately affected by lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation; and

WHEREAS on July 28, 2010, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution recognizing the human rights to water and sanitation; and

WHEREAS on September 23, 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and called on governments to take concrete action by developing plans of action, establishing monitoring and accountability mechanisms, and ensuring affordable services for everyone; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Council of Canadians have asked Canadian municipalities to assist in their effort to have the federal government protect water and sanitation as human rights;

WHEREAS recognizing the rights to water and sanitation is one of three steps needed to declare The Town of Cobourg a Blue Community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Town of Cobourg recognizes and affirms that water and sanitation services are fundamental human rights.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Town of Cobourg will call on the federal and provincial governments to enshrine the human rights to water and sanitation in federal and provincial law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Town of Cobourg will call on the Government of Canada to develop a national plan of action to implement the human rights to water and sanitation.

Banning or Phasing out the sale of bottled water in municipal facilities and municipal events.....

WHEREAS The Town of Cobourg operates and maintains a regulated and sophisticated water treatment and distribution system that meets some of the most stringent water quality requirements in the world; and

WHEREAS the regulatory requirements for monitoring water quality contained in single-use bottled water are not as stringent as those that must be met by The Town of Cobourg and

WHEREAS single-use bottled water is up to 3,000 times more expensive than water from the tap in The Town of Cobourg, even though bottled water can originate from municipal water systems;

WHEREAS resource extraction, packaging and distribution of single-use bottled water creates unnecessary air quality and climate change impacts, consumes unnecessary resources such as oil in the manufacturing of plastic bottles and fuel used in the transportation of bottled water to the consumer, and creates unnecessary recycling and waste disposal costs; and

WHEREAS The Town of Cobourg's tap water is safe, healthy and accessible to residents and visitors, is readily available at most indoor public facilities, and is substantially more sustainable than bottled water; and

WHEREAS when access to municipal tap water does not exist, bottled water can be an appropriate alternative; and

WHEREAS banning the sale and provision of bottled water in municipal facilities and at municipal events is one of three steps needed to declare The Town of Cobourg a Blue Community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, where access to municipal tap water exists, single-use bottled water will no longer be sold in municipal facilities, from municipally-owned or municipally administered concessions, or from vending machines in public facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT single-use bottled water will no longer be purchased and provided at municipal meetings, events or work performed outdoors where access to municipal water exists; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the availability of water jugs or water stations with municipal water will be increased at municipally-organized meetings and events (until such time that water bottle filling stations be implemented in the Town of Cobourg in public spaces); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a staff and public awareness campaign will be developed to support the rationale for these changes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT staff develop an implementation schedule with time-lines that includes an assessment of access to tap water at municipal facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT staff provide a progress report at regular intervals.

Outdoor water bottle filling stations:

environmentally friendly providing a fast, convenient way to obtain drinking water, and promotes the use of refillable water bottles

- Heavy duty stainless steel construction.
- operated by a press button to operate the water flow.
- Pre drilled flange with ground mounting plate (requires excavation)
- press button operated model can be specially ordered with an optional freeze resistant valve
- Compliant Regulations
- Stand alone or wall mounted (replace the existing one in Victoria Park)
- vandal-resistant design, engineered to withstand the elements
- \$3,500 - \$4,200 made in Ontario

Water bottle refilling stations were installed at over thirty Algoma District School Board (ADSB) schools. 2016 - saved 25,054 plastic bottles to date. Korah Collegiate has saved 65,493 plastic bottles to date! It is anticipated that over time the number of water bottles saved will be in the tens of thousands. <https://saultonline.com/2017/05/water-refilling-stations-help-students/>





UNBOTTLE IT!

Helping your community to become a Blue Community is a great way to raise awareness and take action to protect water as a commons. Learn more and download the *Blue Communities Project Guide* at www.canadians.org/bluecommunities

If you have any questions or need more information, contact bluecommunities@canadians.org, or call us toll-free at 1-800-387-7177.

YouTube short...How to turn your communities Blue ... <https://youtu.be/518U1VanK1k>

Cobourg can be a leader and a part of the solution, and pass resolutions recognizing the human right to water, banning bottled water from municipal facilities and events, and promoting public water services.

THANK YOU!