

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE,
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2019-JUL-15, AT 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor E. Hemmens, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor S. D. Armstrong (arrived 1:01 p.m.)
Councillor D. Bonner
Councillor T. Brown
Councillor B. Geselbracht
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe

Absent: Councillor J. Turley

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer (arrived 1:03 p.m.)
R. J. Harding, General Manger, Parks Recreation and Culture
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development (vacated 3:33 p.m., returned 3:56 p.m.)
L. Mercer, Director, Finance (vacated 2:29 p.m., returned 2:45 p.m., vacated 3:33 p.m.)
P. Rosen, Director, Engineering (vacated 2:29 p.m., returned 2:44 p.m., vacated 3:32 p.m.)
J. Holm, Director, Development Approvals (vacated 2:29 p.m.)
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community and Cultural Planning (vacated 3:32 p.m.)
D. LaBerge, Manager, Community Safety (vacated 2:29 p.m., returned 2:55 p.m.)
J. Rose, Manager, Transportation (vacated 2:29 p.m.)
F. Farrokhi, Manager, Communications (vacated 2:29 p.m., returned 2:45 p.m.)
M. Koch, Parks and Open Space Planner
A. Bandurka, Real Estate Clerk (vacated 3:32 p.m., returned 3:56 p.m.)
D. Blackwood, Client Support Specialist (vacated 1:15 p.m.)
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Councillor Armstrong entered the Boardroom at 1:01 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Rudolph entered the Boardroom at 1:03 p.m.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC on Monday, 2019-JUN-10 at 3:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORTS:

a. COMMUNITY WELLNESS/LIVABILITY:

1. Downtown Nanaimo Information Session

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, introduced the Downtown Nanaimo Information Session and outlined the schedule of topics for discussion. Mr. Lindsay asked Councillors to write down their top three priorities for the downtown area and provided these notes to Alyssa Bandurka, Real Estate Clerk, to compile Council's top five priorities for discussion later during the meeting.

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, noted that Madeline Koch, Parks and Open Space Planner, would be taking notes regarding discussion topics on a large drawing board throughout the information session.

D. Blackwood vacated the Boardroom at 1:15 p.m.

1. 1 Port Drive (Short/Long Term Plans)

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, spoke regarding the following:

- 1 Port Drive was purchased from Canadian Pacific Railway in 2013
- Some of the previous goals were to stimulate waterfront redevelopment, provide accessibility and a transit exchange location
- Originally thought this would be a long term hold but Sea Span has moved
- A substantial amount of environmental and archeological work has been done on the site

- Lots of demolishing has been done on the site to clear for development
- Update on status of Port Drive Master Plan is scheduled to come before Council in coming weeks
- Interim uses for the site: markets, basket ball courts, parking etc.

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Use of the site and environmental limitations
- Allowing public access to waterfront through the property
- An interim walkway which will provide access to the cruise ship terminal

2. Maffeo Sutton Park Master Plan Update

Richard Harding, General Manger, Parks Recreation and Culture, spoke regarding the following:

- Previous Council received the Draft Maffeo Sutton Park Master Plan in late 2017
- Described the review process done thus far
- Previous direction eliminated zoning for condos and created parkland within Maffeo Sutton Park
- Snuneymuxw First Nation owns a piece of property on the site
- Playground update has begun this year
- Public engagement highlighted desire for: amenity improvements, improved access to transit and parking, improvements to waterfront walkway access, improved performance space, water fountains, more food options, more public art programs, pre-ecological improvements in the Millstone area, and naturalizing the lagoon area

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Reason behind condos not moving forward and site remaining as parking spots
- Parking challenges for large events
- Howard Johnson site being an alternate access site for parking
- Water quality for swimming
- Events promoting recycling and providing bins
- Working with transit for large scale events

3. Social Issues

Dave LaBerge, Manager, Community Safety, spoke regarding the following:

- Crime rates in Chicago and Baltimore and urban congestion

- History of collapsed downtown core 15 years ago, 50% vacant store fronts, lease rates in downtown core were 1/3 of other areas in the City, prominent organized crime presence and 16 liquor establishments in the area
- Types of businesses and social services that were focused in the downtown core tipped the activity towards poverty, crime and drug use
- Downtown has improved by comparison to 15 years ago, but is starting to tip back
- Homelessness on the west coast is driven by moderate climate and the high cost of living
- The City of Nanaimo had the largest tent city in British Columbia
- Estimates Nanaimo's homeless population to be approximately 300 to 500 people
- Concentration of homeless in the downtown core is due to proximity to public spaces, food, shelter and harm reduction services
- Addictions and mental illness are prevalent in homelessness resulting in open drug use, weapons, petty theft, soliciting, discarded needles and bizarre behaviour
- Fire hazards increased due to homelessness
- Stress on daytime public services during cold weather
- Social services need to be organized in a thoughtful way to ensure they do not create more issues by focusing services in one area
- Urban dead zones: areas that lack program uses or robust street activity
- Need for interactive facilities to reduce urban dead zones through positive balanced usage
- Keeping areas clean and well cared for is a deterrent to neglect

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Gangs arising from grouping of homeless people in Toronto and Vancouver and the potential for similar issues in Nanaimo
- Safe consumption sites and additional stress on resources
- Number of dead zones and tipping points around the City

Mayor Krog vacated the Boardroom at 1:58 p.m.

- Being notified of problem areas/dead zones and receiving recommendations on how to mitigate or remove them
- Cleaning up of streets to improve appearance
- Terminology of "homelessness" being used to describe issues downtown when addiction problem is the bigger issue
- Anti-loitering bylaws in other municipalities

Mayor Krog returned to the Boardroom at 2:03 p.m.

4. Active Transportation

Jamie Rose, Manager, Transportation, spoke regarding the following:

- Transportation Master Plan focuses land use on mobility hubs
- Promoting active transportation through better conductivity, better support of transit and cycling routes and making public spaces inviting to draw people to the downtown core
- Downtown night market
- Ideas for engaging downtown: Cycling loop around downtown, improving intersections, transit focal point downtown

S. Gurrie vacated the Boardroom at 2:06 p.m.

- Downtown mobility project is aimed at supporting various projects downtown
- Types of engagement used to gather information and feedback on projects
- Report regarding downtown mobility project planned for Fall 2019

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Timeline for transit exchange moving downtown
- Will Council be able to prioritize projects when the report is provided in the fall
- Engaging with transit regarding bus stop locations

S. Gurrie returned to the Boardroom at 2:13 p.m.

5. Downtown Opportunities

Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services, spoke regarding:

- Community Policing Station topic will be coming before Council as a report in the near future
- Report done in 2002 focused on moving people back into the downtown core
- Investment has been increasing in the downtown core
- A high density city requires a high amenity city
- Sidewalk and street usage downtown
- Thinking about public realm and improvements
- Redevelopment of key properties in the downtown to improve the overall impression of the City
- Council's top five priorities:
 1. Public realm improvements/beautification
 2. 1 Port Drive
 3. Redevelopment of key sites

4. Social issues
5. Mobility Front Street/Waterfront Walkway

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Safety concerns within the downtown
- Diana Krall Plaza being more people friendly
- Quick fixes and temporary fixes
- Discussion related to property acquisitions being a topic for In Camera

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting recessed at 2:29 p.m.
The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting reconvened at 2:41 p.m.

Staff in attendance: A. Bandurka, L. Bhopalsingh, B. Corsan, S. Gurrie, R. Harding, M. Koch, D. Lindsay, J. Rudolph, B. Sims and J. Vanderhoef

5. Downtown Opportunities (continued)

Committee discussion continued regarding:

- Dealing with graffiti and “broken window syndrome”
- Requested examples of public realm improvements: sidewalks, public plazas, parks, areas where people congregate

P. Rosen returned to the Boardroom at 2:44 p.m.
F. Farrokhi and L. Mercer returned to the Boardroom at 2:45 p.m.

- Operating within an opioid crisis and creating a new strategy for development and beautification
- Redevelopment of key sites
- Integrated mobility strategy to improve connectivity
- Seeking public input in trial projects
- Developing a sanction tactical urbanism policy with associated grant stream for implementation in the downtown
- Timeframe for Council to provide direction on topics

D. LaBerge returned to the Boardroom at 2:55 p.m.

- Efficient/economical methods of implementing improvements
- Diana Krall Plaza beautification
- Maintenance of store fronts and incentives for businesses to beautify their sites
- Creating a water feature to provide swimming in the summer and skating in the winter
- Improving the appearance of 1 Port Drive with grass
- Previous issues with Diana Krall Plaza which resulted in removal of benches, flowers, etc.

- Plans are in place for major projects Council needs to implement them
- Requested that Staff return at next opportunity with suggestions on quick wins, temporary projects and next steps that could be completed on smaller budgets
- Strategy around social services and addressing concerns of opioid crisis and homelessness
- Proposed a coffee shop or food truck in Diana Krall Plaza
- Business investment incentives
- Potential for increased loitering in Diana Krall Plaza through beautification and benches
- Hamilton, Ontario, using a campaign called “Just Cool Little Things” to approach small changes
- Requested that Staff return with a report outlining suggestions for some quick fixes for the top five priorities outlined today

A. Bandurka, L. Bhopalsingh and P. Rosen vacated the Boardroom at 3:32 p.m.

B. Corsan and L. Mercer vacated the Boardroom at 3:33 p.m.

b. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Draft Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning Document

Introduced by Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer.

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding round two of the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings. Council has been provided with the bulk of the information/background on topics. Ms. Gurrie provided a list of potential topics as suggested by Staff for future GPC agendas, with the intent that Council add items to the GPC meetings and schedule/prioritize when items come forward. Ms. Gurrie noted that there are three meetings scheduled as Committee of the Whole meetings for 2019 and suggested potential additional GPC meeting dates.

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Clarification on what is being requested
- Large topics will need more time to prepare
- Dealing with financial issues at the Finance and Audit Committee
- Content for GPC meetings: Official Community Plan, Active Transportation Plan, Overall Addiction Strategy
- Improved communication on dates and topics on GPC agendas
- Meetings being scheduled only when necessary to avoid Staff and Council burn out

By unanimous consent the Governance and Priorities Committee added the following Governance and Priorities Committee meeting dates to their schedule:

- July 15, 29
- August 26
- September 9
- October 7, 28
- November 4, 25
- December 9

Committee discussion continued regarding:

- Staff selecting topics for meetings versus Council selecting topics
- Topics suggested being overly operational
- Public engagement and communications with the public

A. Bandurka and B. Corsan returned to the Boardroom at 3:56 p.m.

- Committee of the Whole topics going to Council meetings
- Drafting Terms of Reference for an Agenda Review Committee

Sheila Gurrie, City Clerk, noted that there are limitations on what items can go on a Council meeting agenda and some items are legislated under the *Community Charter*.

Committee discussion continued regarding:

- Agendas Committee could be comprised of the City Clerk, Chief Administrative Officer, Mayor, Acting Mayor and the next Council member in rotation for the Acting Mayor
- Topics could be submitted to the Agendas Committee for review on GPC Agendas and Regular Council Meeting Agendas

Sheila Gurrie, City Clerk, spoke regarding logistics of preparing Council meeting agendas and report deadlines.

It was moved and seconded that Staff prepare Terms of Reference for an Agenda Committee for discussion during the August or September Governance and Priorities Committee meeting; the Agenda Committee would review and prioritize agenda items for the Governance and Priorities Committee, Finance and Audit Committee and Regular Council meetings. The motion carried unanimously.

5. QUESTION PERIOD:

No one in attendance wished to ask questions.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:07 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER