

MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE,
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
THURSDAY, 2020-APR-09, AT 8:30 A.M.

Present: Mayor L. Krog, Chair
Councillor S. D. Armstrong (joined electronically)
Councillor D. Bonner (joined electronically)
Councillor T. Brown (joined electronically)
Councillor B. Geselbracht (joined electronically)
Councillor E. Hemmens (joined electronically)
Councillor Z. Maartman (joined electronically)
Councillor I. W. Thorpe (joined electronically)
Councillor J. Turley (joined electronically)

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
S. Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
J. Van Horne, Director, Human Resources
L. Mercer, Director, Finance (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
W. Fulla, Manager, Business, Asset & Financial Planning (arrived 9:03 a.m.)
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
J. Vanderhoef, Steno (vacated 9:35 a.m.)
S. Snelgrove, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Council Meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

Mayor Krog advised this meeting is being held in accordance with Ministerial Order No. M083.

2. PROCEDURAL MOTION TO PROCEED IN CAMERA:

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be closed to the public in order to deal with agenda items under the *Community Charter*:

Section 90(1) A part of a Council meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following:

- (a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the municipality or another position appointed by the municipality; and,
- (c) labour relations or other employee relations.

The motion carried unanimously.

S. Snelgrove and J. Vanderhoef vacated the Boardroom at 8:35 a.m.

Council moved “In Camera” at 8:36 a.m.
Council moved out of “In Camera” at 9:01 a.m.
Council recessed the Open Meeting 9:01 a.m.

W. Fulla, R. Harding, S. Legin, D. Lindsay, L. Mercer, B. Sims, S. Snelgrove and J. Vanderhoef entered the Boardroom at 9:03 a.m.

J. Vanderhoef vacated the Boardroom at 9:04 a.m.

Council reconvened the Open Meeting at 9:09 a.m. in the Boardroom.

3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Add Agenda Items 12(b) - Health and Housing Task Force Update, 12(c) - Ambassador Program and 12(d) - Farmers Market Discussion.
- (b) Add Agenda Item 12(e) - Business Licence Fees for Food Vendors.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

5. MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Krog spoke regarding:

- The City of Nanaimo fully supports farmers markets as long as they comply with the ministerial order and have a proper hygiene plan in place
- Physical distancing is still a requirement and reminded residents to set a good example by staying two meters away from each other
- Signs regarding physical distancing have been placed in parks and at trail heads and residents are reminded to only use parks and trails if they are healthy and have no symptoms of COVID-19
- Beach fires and open burning prohibitions are in place to reduce the impact of smoke on air quality
- As we approach the Easter holiday social distancing must continue and families will not be able to gather as usual, please continue to wash your hands and practice physical distancing to protect the health of all

6. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Financial Response and Recovery Framework

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, advised:

- The City is wanting to maintain service levels throughout the organization
- Last week Staff outlined a number of points regarding fiscal austerity and advised non-essential expenditures have been suspended, staffing vacancies are only filled on case by case basis, subject to Chief Administrative Officer approval
- Over 200 individuals have been impacted by layoffs at City of Nanaimo which are primarily casual workers, contractors and partime and temporary employees
- Staff are redeploying people where they can and are working closely with the union to minimize the impact and on going impact of this situation

Shelley Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services, provided Council with a presentation regarding Financial Response and Recovery Framework

- Currently the City is in an era of uncertainty regarding how long the pandemic will persist and the impacts of the pandemic

J. Vanderhoef returned to the Boardroom at 9:26 a.m.

- Police and Fire services are essential services and the City is doing everything they can to keep them robust and in place
- Many factors are beyond the City's control and a variable-driven model built for flexibility has been prepared
- Guiding principles of the model include:
 - Closed to the Public; Open for Business:
 - Key to follow Health Authority orders and guidelines
 - Maintaining service levels is the priority
 - Need capacity for responsiveness and focus on monitoring staff levels for business continuity
 - Informed and measured approach:
 - Must maintain fiscal resilience
 - Awareness that impacts will persist for years
 - Duration uncertain
 - Productivity is important and may include redeployment of Staff
 - The City, business community and community at large need to be positioned for rapid economic recovery
 - Progress critical and important capital projects to make sure assets of the City are maintained
 - Need to keep critical repairs moving forward as they contribute to economic stimulation
 - Possibly reschedule strategic projects to later in the year
- All decisions will be grounded around Council's strategic plan as a guiding document
- Revenue loss forecast
- All contracts will be reviewed to determine what is non-essential

- Staff will work with unions to make sure collective agreements are aligned with model moving forward
- Maximum distribution of grants will be analyzed
- For each relief policy put in place the City will know the financial impact it will have on the City's financial position
- Robust cash flow analysis until end of 2020 is provided in the context of not being able to collect any tax revenue
- Bylaw coming forward today is substantiated by this model
- Other considerations include:
 - Constantly monitoring Federal and Provincial policy relief
 - Be cognizant that the Provincial government could implement a tax deferral program
 - When the City can reopen closed facilities, the opening will be incremental

J. Vanderhoef vacated the Boardroom at 9:35 a.m.

- The model is built out to the end of 2020 and provides three scenarios for opening, July 1, September 1 and January 2021
- Revenue losses relate to casino, investment income, the Vancouver Island Conference Centre, building and permit fees, recreation, aquatics and arenas
- Expense reductions include the Vancouver Island Conference Centre, temporary, casual and permanent auxiliary labour as well as closed facilities
- Shortfall of 2 million dollars is projected if facilities reopen July 1st
- The projections do not include relief measures
- Staff are monitoring Canadian municipal relief programs across the country
- Nanaimo is ahead of the curve with respect to putting the utility payment due date motion forward
- Most municipalities are waiting for the Province to make a determination regarding a property tax deferral program
- Some municipalities are looking at providing relief in the event the Province doesn't take a position regarding property tax deferral
- Municipalities could provide a strong measure of relief by pushing out any penalties in the fiscal year

Council and Staff discussion took place regarding:

- The province is not currently reaching out to municipalities regarding financial support
- Municipalities are lobbying the province for tax options through the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- The City is putting forward additional grant pools which is part of the work plan coming forward April 27th for finalization on May 4th
- Staff making informed and measured responses as the City will be a main factor in leading economic stimulus
- Grant distribution includes cultural/event based grants as well as operating grants
- The City will try to distribute maximum grant amounts and permissive tax exemptions haven't been included in the model

- Staff are analyzing the 2008 recession experience to determine how it impacted the City as it is the only other global catastrophe that impacted the City in such a manner
- Current budget is in a provisional state and final approval will be in May

7. REPORTS:

(a) User Rate Billing Payment Due Date Extension

Introduced by Shelley Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services.

It was moved and seconded that Council extend the payment due date from 30 to 90 days on user rates billings issued after 2020-MAR-17. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) 2020 Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Requirements

Introduced by Shelley Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services.

It was moved and seconded that “Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Bylaw 2020 No. 7308” (To provide for temporary borrowing of funds required to meet the current lawful expenditures of the City of Nanaimo) pass first reading. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that “Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Bylaw 2020 No. 7308” pass second reading. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that “Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Bylaw 2020 No. 7308” pass third reading. The motion carried unanimously.

(c) COVID-19 and Capital Projects

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, provided Council with an update on the City's 2020 Capital Project Plan in light of the Provincial State of Emergency around COVID-19:

- Staff are taking a measured approach for strong economic recovery
- Procurement of construction is on pause to make sure the City is proceeding in a prudent manner
- Staff divided projects into those which could be deferred, were critical to proceed or strategic in nature
- Recommend to proceed with capital plan as is and consider strategic projects on a case by case basis
- Examples of critical projects include the Millstone Trunk Sanitary Sewer and Fire Station One
- Important to communicate with the public the rationale for what the City is doing
- Staff are analyzing the current workplan for 2020 and 2021 recognizing the impact of the state of emergency and how that may translate into this year's workplan and future years:
 - Downtown street lighting and wayfinding signage tender closed but could be split into two parts

- Haliburton Street multi use trail could be deferred
- Metral Drive Complete Street's project could be deferred to 2021
- Grant funding was applied for for the Front Street Cycle Track project and deferring the project puts grant funding at risk
- Contractors encouraging projects to go ahead as they are putting in safe work practices to encourage physical distancing
- Procurement policy review will take place in May
- Engineering and projects facility staff are continuing to work on projects
- In 2019 3% of total taxes were deferred

8. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) Correspondence from the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) dated 2020-MAR-20
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Introduced by Mayor Krog.

It was moved and seconded that the City of Nanaimo host the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Conference in 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

- (b) Health and Housing Task Force Update

Introduced by Councillors Bonner and Hemmens:

- Members met on 2020-APR-07 and received an update from Staff on the work they are doing in terms of reaching out with Island Health and BC Housing
- BC Housing provided update
- Set up a working group for food security needs which can't have more than five members together
- The working group will come forward with a food security plan first to the Health and Housing Task Force then to Council
- Turner Strategies provided an update and advised how they are using Helpseekers platform in Nanaimo to determine what is open and what services are being provided
- Turner Strategies plans to continue on with work they have been contracted to do
- MLAs Sheila Malcolmson, Michelle Stilwell and Doug Routley could be invited to Health and Housing Task Force meetings as participants

- (c) Ambassador Program

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture:

- Program created to facilitate the safe enjoyment of parks and provide education, reporting and cleaning services
- Ambassadors are easily identifiable and will provide general park maintenance
- Redeployed City staff will be working in the parks

Council discussion took place regarding:

- Utilizing the ambassadors to provide other information aside from park information
- Primarily present to deal with social distancing but there is potential to expand program into other areas
- Bylaw officers have no authority to enforce provincial orders unless requested to do so, and they have not been requested yet
- Public announcements to follow after this meeting

(d) Farmers Market Discussion

Council discussion took place regarding:

- Councillor Bonner has forwarded a request for funding from the farmers market to Council
- Availability of nurseries
- Indoor farmers markets and compliance with ministerial order

(e) Business Licence Fees for Food Vendors

Council discussion took place regarding:

- Various restaurants running food/catering trucks
- Cost of base business licences for restaurants is \$165
- \$365 food truck application fee which allows for food trucks at designated stalls and unlimited access to a number of parks

(d) Farmers Market Discussion (continued)

Council discussion took place regarding fragile food systems and moving forward with policies and plans to strengthen food security.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 11:31 a.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER