

MINUTES

SPECIAL GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2020-SEP-21, AT 10:30 A.M.

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

Absent: Councillor S. D. Armstrong

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
S. Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development
F. Farrokhi, Manager, Communications
C. Barr, Communications and Marketing Specialist, Communications
D. Stennes, Administrative Assistant to Mayor and Council
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

(a) Agenda Item 5(a)(1) Procedure Bylaw – Add report titled “Council Procedure Bylaw Amendments”.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

4. 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, 2020-MAR-09 at 1:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

(a) GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE:

1. Procedure Bylaw – Council Procedure Bylaw Amendments

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services. Highlights included:

- The COVID-19 pandemic provoked a number of changes to the structure of meetings to accommodate the State of Emergency Ministerial Orders
- The topic of Question Period was previously discussed at the 2020-JUL-13 Special Council Meeting and it was decided to review other sections of the “Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272”
- Amendable sections of the procedure bylaw include: Time and Location of Meetings, Order of Proceedings and Business, Petitions and Communications, Consent Items, Delegations, Question Period, Conduct and Debate, Minutes and Public Hearing Procedures
- Considerations for amending Council Meeting time include:
 - Public viewing (the majority of people work during the day)
 - Shaw is currently broadcasting the meetings and is unable to change their programing time
 - Staff overtime when attending evening meetings
- No recommendations from Staff for changes to Order of Proceedings and Business
- No recommendations from Staff for changes to Consent Items
- Amendments to delegation procedures are not recommended by Staff but may include:
 - Adjusting the allocated 5 minute speaking time for delegations
 - Restricting the number of delegations
- Potential amendment to Question Period may include:
 - Restricting Question Period to two or three minutes per person or per question
 - Restricting time for the entire Question Period
 - Eliminating Question Period altogether
 - Including a section in the chair’s script to remind the public of the expectations and rules prior to the start of Question Period
- No recommendations from Staff for changes to Conduct and Debate
- No recommendations from Staff for changes to the Minutes process

- Staff recommend changing the date of Public Hearings from the first Thursday of the month to the third Thursday of the month. This would be for notification purposes in response to changes in local newspaper schedule
- Staff will return with a draft procedural bylaw including any amendments made to the procedure bylaw after discussion

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Changing the time of the Regular Council Meeting from the evening to earlier in the day
- Daytime meetings could potentially limit opportunity for the public to attend as a large portion of the public work during the day
- There are other avenues for public interaction, such as email
- The evening meeting time was understood when Councillors agreed to the position
- The cost associated with Staff overtime to attend evening meetings

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, noted that due to COVID-19 many committee meetings have been moved to daytime hours. This reduces the amount of working time, outside of meetings, available to Staff.

- Tend to see more public engagement at Public Hearings than at Regular Council Meetings
- Maintaining a consistent meeting time
- Clarification of Public Hearing policies the City of Nanaimo website
- The possibility for the public to phone in with questions at Council Meetings

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services noted that there is not currently a process in place for the public to call in to Council Meetings to ask questions.

- Currently the five minute allocated time for questions includes both the question and the response from Council
- Restricting Question Period time limit to two minutes per person may be difficult to regulate
- Question Period does not currently present an issue

It was moved and seconded that during question period:

- Questions will be addressed to Mayor and Council;
- There will be a two minute time limit per question; and,
- There will be no time limitation to Council's response.

The motion was defeated.

Opposed: Mayor Krog, Councillors Bonner, Brown and Hemmens

Committee discussion continued regarding:

- Committee structure and community engagement suggested as a potential Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting topic for future discussion
- The availability of meeting minutes online
- Members of Council attending and participating in committee meeting discussions

2. Communications Update

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

Farnaz Farrokhi, Manager, Communications, provided an overview of the Communications Department and its role in the organization. Highlights included:

- The Communications Department team works collaboratively and cross functionally with various other departments within the City of Nanaimo
- Two streams of Government Communications include political communications and municipal communications
- The recent launch of reimagine Nanaimo offering a safe and welcoming environment for the public to share viewpoints

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, introduced an 'Activity Update' as a new communications initiative to share weekly updates for each department. This is a way to improve internal communications as well as provide information to Council.

- Council's feedback on reactivating the Nanaimo Mayor and Council Facebook page
- Introducing a monthly Council Highlights newsletter focused on Council decisions, key initiatives, and engagement opportunities

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, added that the Nanaimo Mayor and Council Facebook page would require active participation from Mayor and Council. Due to time constraints Staff could return with a report at a later date for a more fulsome discussion.

3. Council Dashboard (Voting Record)

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services. Highlights included:

- 2020-JUN-15 Council directed Staff to prepare a voting record to capture and track each Councillors' vote on motions
- The Information Technology (IT) Department was able to duplicate the City of Victoria's voting record program
- Issues with the links to eSCRIBE meeting agendas are currently being resolved

- Voting record includes user friendly search capabilities to filter records

It was moved and seconded that Council direct Staff to proceed with the Council Voting Dashboard that has been developed by our Information Technology Department to track Council's voting record for Council Meetings retroactive to July 1, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

(e) AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, suggested that time be set aside at the 2020-OCT-05 Governance and Priorities Committee meeting to review Agenda planning for the remainder of the year.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 12:24 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER