

MINUTES
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
BOARD ROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
THURSDAY, 2018-FEB-01, AT 3:30 P.M.

PRESENT: **Members:** Councillor Yoachim, Alternate Chair (vacated 4:57 p.m.)
 David Holmes
 David Lemire
 Bruce Parker
 Alexis Petersen
 Robert Whitton

Absent: Councillor Armstrong
 Muir (Thomas) Meredith

Staff: K. Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety
 Supt. C. Miller, OIC, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP
 Cpl. D. LaBerge, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP, Bike Patrol Unit
 A. Britton, Manager, Parks Operations
 S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer
 S. Griffin, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Agenda Item 7(f) Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to School and Playgrounds – Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22 – Add delegation Erin Bascom.

It was moved and seconded that Erin Bascom be permitted to address the Committee as a late delegation with a five-minute time limitation regarding Agenda Item 7(f) Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to School and Playgrounds – Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22. The motion carried unanimously.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

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

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee held in the Board Room, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Thursday, 2018-JAN-04 at 3:30 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Community Policing and Services Office (CPSO)

Delegations:

1. Kevan Shaw, Victoria Crescent Association, spoke regarding the following:
 - Recent incident with a discarded needle;
 - Opposed to closing the CPSO;
 - In favour of installation of needle boxes;
 - China Steps littered with needles;
 - Lack of Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) staff presence;
 - Assault of a City Bylaw Officer occurred;
 - Increase of violence on the street;
 - Possibility of fulltime security;
 - Business owners and staff being assaulted in the downtown;
 - Need for daily clean up in downtown core;
 - Sense of feeling unsafe; and,
 - Looking for action to get the streets under control.
2. David Lawrence, owner, That 50's Barbershop, spoke regarding concerns in the downtown core and in opposition to the closure of the CPSO. He would like to see a RCMP and VIHA presence to help clean up the issues arising from the homeless in the downtown core.
3. Cliff Wiltshire spoke regarding issues with homeless in the downtown core which included:
 - Daily removal of the homeless from doorways, removing trash, blankets, needles and human waste;
 - Relocating his business out of the downtown;
 - His staff feel unsafe coming to work;
 - His staff have been accosted by homeless upon entering work;
 - Opposed to closing the CPSO as it would not be a benefit to business owners in the downtown core;
 - Daily removal of shopping carts;
 - Need to have the downtown core revitalized;
 - Wants a proactive solution for the downtown area; and,
 - Needs support from City to help with the situation.

It was moved and seconded that Peter Letts be permitted to address the Committee as a late delegation with a five-minute time limit regarding Agenda Item 7(a) Community Policing and Services Office (CPSO). The motion carried unanimously.

4. Peter Letts, Quality Assurance Manager, Nanaimo Association for Community Living, spoke regarding the following:

- Increase in the homeless over the past year;
- Staff member assaulted;
- People on the street camping in front of office;
- Removing clothes and human waste around business;
- Daily occurrence with people in doorways of businesses;
- Street issues should be addressed as health and safety issues; and,
- Looking into installing cameras for staff safety.

It was moved and seconded that David Frost be permitted to address the Committee as a late delegation with a five-minute time limit regarding Agenda Item 7(a) Community Policing and Services Office (CPSO). The motion carried unanimously.

5. David Frost, Manager, A&W Restaurant Victoria Crescent, spoke regarding the following:

- Has worked in the downtown core for 8 years;
- He removing tire irons and machetes for patrons;
- Female staff feeling unsafe coming to work;
- Opposed to closing CPSO;
- Not all homeless causing the problem;
- Drug addicts and dealers cause problems;
- Arrests are made but then people are released within hours;
- Possibility of expanding the Salvation Army;
- More outreach workers needed; and,
- Possibility of a rehabilitation centre located in the CPSO.

Kaven Shaw, Victoria Crescent Association, addressed the committee thanking them for listening to their concerns.

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, spoke regarding the Core Services review of the building and the current uses of the CPSO. She encouraged the Public Safety Committee to make recommendations to Council on how to better use the site.

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, advised the committee that the motion made at the 2017-DEC-07 meeting recommending Council write a letter to the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Judy Darcy, MLA, for support in providing an emergency response team be based Nanaimo was completed. Nanaimo will now be 1 of 17 municipalities that will receive funding in the amount of \$100,000.00 for community action.

Committee discussion took place regarding uses for the CPSO which included:

- Rapid response team working from location;
- Station outreach worker from John Howard Society;
- RCMP presence out of building;
- Family support workers;
- Create new support worker positions with varied work hours; and,
- Relocate Bylaw.

Cpl. Dave LaBerge, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP, Bike Patrol Unit, spoke regarding the issues in the downtown core and advised part of the problem is lack of housing or transitional housing.

Committee discussion continued regarding the CPSO which included:

- Keeping CPSO open;
- Making recommendation to Council;
- Finding better resources for CPSO;
- No longer leasing the building it is on a month to month basis; and,
- Recommended security be located in CPSO.

It was moved and seconded that considering the current state of the crisis on the street, the Public Safety Committee recommends to Council that the Community Policing and Services Office remain open, be renamed Community Office and be resourced to address street issues and further that City staff assist in identifying and developing resources. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) Access to Cannabis for Medicinal Purposes Regulation (ACMPR)

Robert Whitton spoke regarding medical marijuana licences that allow people to grow marijuana in their homes and concerns regarding the following:

- Number of licences in Nanaimo;
- Who is licenced and allowed to grow plants in their homes;
- Modifications being made to homes to facilitate a grow op;
- Modifications made without a permit or inspection; and,
- People renting or buying homes that were previously a grow op without notification.

It was moved and seconded that the Public Safety Committee ask that Staff submit a Freedom of Information request to Health Canada to ascertain how many Access to Cannabis for Medicinal Purposes Regulation (ACMPR) licences have been issued in Nanaimo in the past five years. The motion carried unanimously.

(c) Public Engagement – Public Safety February 28

Introduced by Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety.

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, spoke regarding a Community Engagement Event to be held at Beban Park on February 28, 2018.

By unanimous consent the Public Safety Committee recommended the following topics be considered at the Public Engagement Event to be held 2018-FEB-28:

- Bylaws to be amended or written;
- Future use of the Community Policing and Services Office;
- Daytime program for the homeless;
- Empty buildings and spaces in the downtown core;
- Drug paraphernalia at schools;
- Drug paraphernalia in the downtown core;
- Education for children re: drinking and drugs; and,
- Home safety.

(d) Bylaw Review

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, advised that the bylaws will be reviewed during the Public Engagement Event to be held 2018-FEB-28.

(e) 2018 Public Safety Committee Strategic Priorities Discussion

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, advised the public engagement session will help determine the Public Safety Committees 2018 strategic priorities.

(f) Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to Schools and Playgrounds (Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22)

Introduced by Councillor Yoachim.

Councillor Yoachim vacated the Board Room at 4:57 p.m. and Alexis Petersen assumed the Chair.

Delegations:

1. Alison Evans spoke regarding safety concerns around Ecole Pauline Haarer School which included:

- Discarded needles on school and City property;
- Frequency of call to the RCMP;
- Homeless people in playground area;
- Safety of children in relation to needles and garbage in the playground area;
- Night security from School District #68 has helped;
- Placing fencing around the Scout Hut;
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED);
- Use of lighting as a deterrent;
- Requesting help from the City of Nanaimo; and,
- Requesting committee look at ways to keep children safe.

2. Erin Bascom spoke regarding playground surfaces at Comox Park and replacing the wood chips with a rubber like surface that would make it easier to identify drug paraphernalia, dangerous trash and bodily fluids.

Allan Britton, Manager Parks Operation, advised that City Staff are doing daily sweeps of the area starting at Ecole Pauline Haarer in the morning and Bylaw Officers are patrolling the area two to three times a day as well as RCMP bike patrol. The City of Nanaimo has authorized Footprints Security to patrol the park and are looking at fencing off the Scout Hut area.

The committee was advised that needle boxes had previously been placed near the Scout Hut but upon request were removed. The City is now looking at the possibility of installing a needle box at the entrance way of the Scout Hut and not on school property.

It was moved and seconded that the Public Safety Committee recommend that:

1. City staff identify schools, parks and spaces that experience a high volume of drug paraphernalia, feces, urine, condoms and other associated debris;
2. develop resources to address these issues and security issues; and,
3. explore the option of implementing a contract with the John Howard Society for needle pick up at Ecole Pauline Haareer Playground (Comox Park).

The motion carried unanimously.

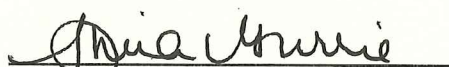
The Committee requested that a follow up on these issues be placed on the next agenda for the Public Safety Committee to held on 2018-MAR-01.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:31 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.


CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:


CORPORATE OFFICER