

MINUTES
SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2019-JAN-28 AT 12:00 P.M.

Present: Mayor L. Krog (arrived 12:45 p.m.)
Acting Mayor Councillor S. D. Armstrong
Councillor D. Bonner
Councillor T. Brown (vacated 3:31 p.m.)
Councillor B. Geselbracht
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe
Councillor J. Turley

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
R. J. Harding, Director of Parks and Recreation
D. Lindsay, Director of Community Development
B. Sims, Director of Engineering and Public Works (vacated 2:03 p.m.)
B. Corsan, Deputy Director of Community Development (vacated 3:43 p.m.)
A. Manhas, Economic Development Officer
D. Blackwood, Client Support Specialist (vacated 12:16 p.m.)
S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer
G. Whitters, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Committee of the Whole Meeting was called to order at 12:06 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

3. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Economic Development Backgrounder – City of Nanaimo

Introduced by Bill Corsan, Deputy Director, Community Development.

Bill Corsan, Deputy Director, Community Development, provided a presentation regarding economic development which included the following information:

- History of economic development in the City of Nanaimo
- Budget and function of in-house Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation
- Contracting and funding of tourism services

- Current economic development model and the departments responsible
- 2018 Economic Development accomplishments
- The City's economic development partners and their 2018 achievements
- The City's key initiatives for 2019

D. Blackwood vacated the Boardroom at 12:16 p.m.

Committee discussion took place regarding the facilitation and purpose of roundtables, how to attract skilled employees to Vancouver Island, and internships.

(b) Presentation from Dale Wheeldon and Colleen Bond regarding Economic Development

Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO, British Columbia Economic Development Association, and Colleen Bond, Partner, EDCD Consulting, provided a presentation on economic development which included the following information:

- Economic development is unique to each community
- A video was played regarding economic development
- What is economic development and who should be involved
- Correlation between economic development and community development

B. Corsan vacated the Boardroom at 12:24 p.m.

Mayor Krog entered the Boardroom at 12:45 and assumed the Chair.

The committee discussed integrating supportive housing into economic development.

B. Corsan returned to the Boardroom at 12:54 p.m.

The presentation continued regarding:

- The structure, functions and day-to-day responsibilities of economic development
- Benefits of an in-house or out-of-house program
- Importance of provincial and federal government involvement
- Length of strategic plan and annual updates
- The planning process, information sources and actions to take
- Developing a work plan based on the strategic plan
- Measuring success and evaluating plan progress

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- The Mid Island Tech Attraction Strategy
- Regional and local government partnerships and how to start collaboration
- Tourism and economic development go hand in hand
- Economic development at the Regional District of Nanaimo
- Keeping collaborations project-based to start
- Examples of projects include agriculture, film, arts and culture, mid island tech sector, Vancouver Island Coast Economic Developers Association (VICEDA)
- City to be initiator of partnerships and to reach out to other areas

- Which structure for economic development: in-house or out-of-house and their pros and cons
- Economic development organization needs a clearly defined mandate
- Trust in the economic development officer
- In-house model, requires a Director who is included with Senior Management
- Importance of communication between economic development officer and Council
- Freedom of Information requests and their impact on an internal economic development model
- How to market Nanaimo for business attraction
- Reignite economic development in the City and get buy-in from community

The Special Committee of the Whole recessed at 2:03 p.m.

The Special Committee of the Whole reconvened at 2:19 p.m.

Staff present: B. Corsan, R. Harding, D. Lindsay, A. Manhas, S. Snelgrove, and G. Whitters

J. Rudolph returned to the Boardroom at 2:21 p.m.

The presentation continued regarding:

- Essential tools for economic development include website, community profile, and social media
- How to make information more available to incoming businesses and engaging the business community
- The value of business retention and expansion (BRE)
- Why BRE is important, who is involved, what it accomplishes and how it's done
- Business walks are a quick and effective way to engage with local businesses
- Video was played regarding Abbotsford business walks
- Importance of follow-up after a business walk
- Virtual business walks

The Special Committee of the Whole recessed at 3:10 p.m.

The Special Committee of the Whole reconvened at 3:12 p.m.

The presentation continued regarding:

- Home businesses and entrepreneurship
- Why support small business and entrepreneurs
- Two videos were played regarding entrepreneurship training and pop-up shops
- Growth of pop-up shops
- Investment readiness and attraction

The Committee discussed initial contact with new businesses and the data collected for business licenses.

Councillor Brown vacated the Boardroom at 3:31 p.m.

The presentation continued regarding:

- Performing exit surveys with businesses to find out why they closed or moved
- Evaluation of Nanaimo's investment readiness according to the Investment Readiness Assessment
- Video was played regarding empty buildings
- Investment attraction strategies
- BC advantages and the City's advantages for attracting business

Councillor Turley vacated the Boardroom at 3:41 p.m.

B. Corsan vacated the Boardroom at 3:43 p.m.

- The radius of the labour force around Nanaimo
- Marketing through media and videos
- Promo video was played regarding Alpharetta, Georgia

Councillor Turley returned to the Boardroom at 3:46 p.m.

Committee discussion took place regarding:

- Which economic model would be best for Nanaimo
- The gap in business expansion and retention
- Developing strategy in sessions/roundtables with engagement from community and how to facilitate it
- Pros and cons of Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation and the Speculation Tax Report
- City Website lacking links to economic development information
- What the model will look like including funding and staffing
- Consultation with the community to have their support
- Economic advantages in Nanaimo

4. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 3:58 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER

CHAIR