

MINUTES
SPECIAL MAYOR'S TASK FORCE
ON RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE MEETING
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE,
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
FRIDAY, 2020-JUN-19 AT 10:00 A.M.

Present: Mayor Krog, Chair
Councillor T. Brown
J. Byrne, Regional Managing Partner, Vancouver Island, MNP (joined electronically 11:04 a.m.)
D. Hais, Board Chair, Nanaimo Port Authority
D. Saucier, President and Vice-Chancellor, Vancouver Island University (joined electronically)
S. Madden, Executive Director, United Way (joined electronically)
I. Simpson, Chief Executive Officer, Petroglyph Development Group, Snuneymuxw First Nation

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
S. Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
K. Robertson, Deputy City Clerk
J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Mayor's Task Force Meeting on Recovery and Resilience Meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

Mayor Krog announced that the meeting would be held in accordance with the *Community Charter*, "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272" and Ministerial Order No. M139.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Special Mayor's Task Force on Recovery and Resilience Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC on Friday, 2020-JUN-05, at 9:00 a.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

4. REPORTS:

(a) Update and Discussion regarding Stakeholder Sessions held 2020-JUN-18

Introduced by Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer.

Task Force discussion took place regarding the following:

- Currently trying to provide the Task Force with consolidated information with the target of providing suggestions to Council by the end of September
- Mandate of the Mayor’s Task Force on Recovery and Resilience (MTFRR) is different than other committees as they are not expected to prepare a large report for Council, but to present recommendations to establish a path forward on next steps

Presentation:

1. Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included the following:

- Working group sessions were focused around the current economic situation
- Representatives from various sectors were invited to the sessions with eight people attending at a time due to COVID-19
- Tourism topic highlighted issues regarding the downtown core, homeless/safety issues and brand awareness

Task Force discussion took place regarding the lack of clarity surrounding Nanaimo’s branding which is causing poor perceptions..

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, continued his presentation as follows:

- Issues and opportunities that were noted regarding technology: retention of talent, opportunity to engage with Vancouver Island University (VIU)
- Land use and infrastructure topic focused primarily on the City’s permitting process and how this can be improved as the current process can deter people from coming to Nanaimo
- What defines Nanaimo’s reputation and what does “The Harbour City” mean

Task Force discussion took place regarding the following:

- Encouraging Nanaimo locals to have a positive outlook about Nanaimo
- What attracts people to move to Nanaimo and why don’t they stay
- Nanaimo has a wealth of resources and assets: parks and recreation, VIU, the hospital, and history
- Nanaimo locals are not aware of the resources available to them

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, continued his presentation as follows:

- Perception of downtown and safety/security issues
- The need for more industrial lands in Nanaimo and potential redevelopment of sites
- Investing in local assets like the hospital and VIU
- Harmac, Coastland and Hazelwood attended for the discussion regarding industry and noted a lack of supplies and high transportation costs
- Need to work on business retention and helping local businesses grow
- Business development topic highlighted the need to attract younger people to Nanaimo, opportunities for rezoning, and fibre optic infrastructure

Task Force discussion took place regarding the following:

- Telus fibre optic is designed for residential use and does not provide sufficient bandwidth to handle commercial business needs
- Ways to entice companies to install a higher bandwidth for commercial use
- Creating a knowledge park, possibly adjacent to VIU, where the bandwidth in that location would support technology and research
- Developing a knowledge park centralizes areas of higher services and encourages Telus or Shaw to bring in more infrastructure to the area
- 5G provides new opportunities by bringing considerable bandwidth wirelessly
- Other municipalities have targeted knowledge park areas as a strategic investment and usually work with a university to provide synergy
- VIU is interested in potentially moving some form of its operations downtown to help support downtown businesses and the community
- Need to shift awareness within the community to one of a university town with many international students
- Potential for Nanaimo to become a tech hub when Victoria and Vancouver are already established hubs
- Promoting the safety of Vancouver Island based on non-active cases of COVID-19
- Putting together a welcome package for employers to hand out to new staff members introducing them to local contacts, services, and resources

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, continued his presentation as follows:

- Workshop discussion regarding services highlighted the City’s slow permit process and noted that Nanaimo is not recognized by the Province for funding in healthcare – opportunities are given to Victoria yet Nanaimo’s infrastructure is older

- Opportunities to partner with other municipalities to fill gaps in the health care sector and lobby the Province

Task Force discussion took place regarding the following:

- Inviting people to vacation locally to increase awareness in local activities/packages/tours
- Topic of partnering with other strategic organizations was noted repeatedly throughout workshop discussions and the need to be efficient and coordinated to avoid lost opportunities, wasting resources, and more than one organization trying to sell Nanaimo in different ways
- Statistics regarding high school graduation rates: 71% of high school students are graduating, 34% of kids are coming from vulnerable or low/median income households
- Changing the role of the City in mitigating/supporting issues related to homelessness

J. Bryne joined the meeting electronically at 11:04 a.m.

- The City has an opportunity to be a leader by addressing the issues for our community specifically by addressing the causes in Nanaimo and seeking funding for those issues from the Province
- Mandate for the Health and Housing Task Force (HHTF) and the MTFRR relating to the homelessness issue
- Victoria’s high school graduation rate has increased from 71%-75% by programming the pathway from graduation to skilled trades
- Canadian high school graduation average is 85%
- Dual credit program available for high school students provides an addressable strategy that could be put into play in Nanaimo
- How to support people who have limited income and help them enhance their path to prosperity
- Current focus is on preventing people from losing their housing due to COVID-19
- The City coordinating requests with other local organizations like VIU and Island Health to make a stronger case for Federal and Provincial funding/resources
- Currently reacting to the problem and need to address the systemic problem to resolve the issue
- Youth being in a position to succeed and focusing on the future
- The City’s slow permit process noted as a reoccurring issue:
 - Currently takes approximately one year for permits to build and 5 months for tenant improvements by which time businesses lose their funding
 - Trade prices are only good for 30 days so they expire before permits are approved
 - Financing, leases, trades are all influenced by delays in the permitting processes

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, continued his presentation as follows:

- Issues of vacant sites downtown, loss of voices for property owners when Downtown Nanaimo Business Improvement Area (DNBIA) was disbanded, and unclear goals for Nanaimo

Task Force discussion took place regarding the following:

- Negative connotation related to homelessness
- Branding and repairing Nanaimo’s self-image to create a new perspective of Nanaimo for people to support instead of opinions based on Nanaimo’s history

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, continued his presentation as follows:

- Summary of June 18th working group session on scenario planning:
 - Three different scenarios: COVID-19 is here to stay, muted recovery, and quick recovery
 - Expectation that people continue to work from home and migration and immigration will continue
 - Business people needing to work from home increasing the need for fibre optics internet infrastructure and a steady supply chain
 - Nanaimo as a supply hub and becoming more business friendly, connecting local consumers and producers
 - Encouraging local purchasing, investing in safety and security, investing in new infrastructure and refreshing old

5. PROCEDURAL MOTION:

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 the Council meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following:

- (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public; and,

Community Charter Section 90(2):

- (b) the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.

The motion carried unanimously.

The Task Force moved “In Camera” at 11:40 a.m.

The Task Force moved out of “In Camera” at 12:12 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

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

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER