

TASK FORCE CONCLUDED MINUTES UNADOPTED

MINUTES

SPECIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING
BOARD ROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
TUESDAY, 2021-JAN-19, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor Z. Maartman, Chair
Councillor J. Turley (joined electronically)
D. Backhouse, At Large Member (joined electronically)
C. Carlile, At Large Member (joined electronically)
J. Green, Community Futures (joined electronically)
W. Litchfield, Vancouver Island University Alternate (joined electronically)
J. Michell, Nanaimo Port Authority Alternate (joined electronically)
B. Moss, At Large Member
K. Smythe, Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce (joined electronically)
A. Sullivan, At Large Member (joined electronically)

Absent: C. Beaton, At Large Member
D. Devana, Nanaimo Airport
E. Thomas, Snuneymuxw First Nation

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development
A. Manhas, Economic Development Officer
S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer
A. Bandurka, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Economic Development Task Force Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Add Agenda Item 7(c) – City of Nanaimo Economic Development 2021 Work Plan from Lions Gate Consulting Inc.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

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

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Special Open Meeting of the Economic Development Task Force held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Friday, 2020-NOV-06 at 9:00 a.m. be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

(a) Economic Development Strategy

Introduced by Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development.

Presentation:

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, reviewed the Economic Development Strategy. Highlights included:

- Draft Strategy was presented to Council at a Governance and Priorities Committee meeting
- Council directed Staff to speak with the Class B Shareholders for final feedback and then return to the Task Force for final approval
- Spoke to Council about the Task Force mandate and process the Task Force went through in preparing the Strategy
- Task Force existed for two reasons: prepare the Strategy and finalize details of the external Agency
- Strategy is meant to be a road map to strengthen the economic base of the region
- Importance of donut economy has been incorporated into the Strategy
- Lions Gate prepared a Current Situation report which includes data and analysis
- Strategy is focused around six Guiding Principles: Partnerships, Focus on Local, Authenticity, Equity and Reconciliation and Circular Economy
- Six Goals: Economic Capital, Business Development, Human Capital, Innovation Technology, Social and Environmental Capital and Place Making and Attraction
- Economic Capital areas to focus on include:
 - developing a community infrastructure plan
 - a land inventory was completed through the Reimagine Nanaimo process and a key issue was not having enough employment lands and a way to protect those lands
 - the Downtown and Waterfront have always been a priority
 - important to take advantage of the location of Nanaimo on the island when it comes to transportation, cargo and logistics
 - connected coast broad band initiative should be coming to Nanaimo in the next few years along with Vancouver Island University (VIU) looking at initiatives for high speed Wi-Fi
 - Section 1.6 of the Strategy will be amended to reflect the relationship of Tourism at the moment
- Human Capital areas to work on include:

- Important area for VIU and the City to focus on education, training and industry integration
- Social Capital areas to work on include:
 - Building on Strategic Partnerships, including Island Health, BC Housing, etc.
 - Health care capacity is important to focus on
- Business Development areas to focus on include:
 - City staff work hard on compiling research and data
 - Positive business climates and making Nanaimo a positive place for businesses
 - Business retention and expansion opportunities for the City and the new Economic Development Corporation to go into the community to understand the needs of businesses
 - A home-based business review was completed by the City which leads to an opportunity to connect with those businesses to discuss opportunities
 - The pandemic and wildfires in the past have shown the importance of an economic emergency preparedness and recovery plan
- Innovation and Technology areas to focus on include:
 - Connecting the tech sector
 - The ecosystem is an important part, with many people working on strengthening it
- Place Making and Attraction areas to focus on include:
 - Business attraction is important but a main focus should be getting organized first and ensure that we have an easier environment for people to come and do business
- Immediate Area of Focus:
 - Set up External Corporation
 - Passenger Ferry
 - Health and Housing Initiatives
 - Continued work at 1 Port Drive and the Waterfront Walkway
 - Development processing, Neilson Strategies is currently reviewing the process
 - Transportation and logistics hub opportunity

Task Force discussion took place:

- Strategy was unanimously supported by Council with an emphasis on the 'donut' economy
- Feedback was received from the Culture and Special Events department within the City and will be incorporated into the Strategy, with most changes aimed at including arts and culture wherever possible within the Strategy
- Add in an acknowledgement of the Task Force and Council members that worked on it

It was moved and seconded that the Economic Development Task Force recommend that Council endorse the Economic Development Strategy with revisions discussed at the 2021-JAN-19 Special Economic Development Task Force Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) Economic Development External Agency Corporation Charter

Introduced by Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development.

Presentation:

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, presented the External Corporation Charter. Highlights included:

- The purpose of the Agency is to be the economic development corporation that business, government, First Nation and community partners collaborate with to building Nanaimo's economy
- The mandate of the Agency is to maintain and update the Strategy along with develop and undertake initiatives to attract business to the community
- The Agency will be owned by the City and the Class B Shareholders: Nanaimo Airport, Chamber of Commerce, Nanaimo Port Authority, Snuneymuxw First Nation and Vancouver Island University
- The Board of Directors will have nine voting members with the representation from the six owners and three who are appointed, including one from the social sector
- The City will be the main funder with the Class B Shareholders providing \$5,000 in cash or in-kind in 2021 and from 2022 – 2025 would contribute \$10,000 in cash or in-kind, which was recommended by the Neilson Strategies report
- The board members will have no remuneration for services
- Next Steps:
 - Present the Economic Development Strategy and Corporation Charter to Council on 2021-FEB-01 for final approval
 - Have the initial meeting of the Class B Shareholders and the City of Nanaimo
 - Create the Letters of Incorporation
 - Select the additional voting members

Task Force discussion took place:

- Name of the external agency should be a Corporation instead of Agency (Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation)
- Class B Shareholders could decide the name
- A meeting with the Class B Shareholders will be required before the Boards of each are involved to finalize what documents or package should go to the Boards for their separate approvals

It was moved and seconded that the Economic Development Task Force recommend that Council endorse the Corporation Charter for the External Economic Development Agency. The motion carried unanimously.

(c) In-House and External Agency 2021 Work Plan

Introduced by Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development.

Bill Corsan, Director, Community Development, provided Task Force members with the Economic Development 2021 Work Plan.

Task Force discussion took place:

- Some items included in the work plan include the City and means the broader City as the organization as a whole and not just the Economic Development section
- The work plan has been based off of the Strategy
- The Connected Coast Initiative came from the Strathcona Regional District, who secured a large grant to circumnavigate Vancouver Island and the coast with a fibre optic connection from the harbour centre in downtown Vancouver which can provide communities with a high level of internet service and Nanaimo can be a gateway or tie in point to the north and south of the island
- Nanaimo Port Authority is willing to take part in any Tourism component of the work plan
- The section on page 6 on Urban Tourism Product will be revised based on the current situation with tourism
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6. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 1:54 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER