

**MINUTES**  
SPECIAL FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING  
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,  
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC  
WEDNESDAY, 2021-NOV-10, AT 9:00 A.M.

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Present: Mayor L. Krog, Chair  
Councillor S. D. Armstrong (joined electronically, disconnected 12:00 p.m.)  
Councillor D. Bonner  
Councillor T. Brown (vacated 12:01 p.m.)  
Councillor B. Geselbracht (arrived 9:17 a.m.)  
Councillor E. Hemmens (vacated 12:00 p.m.)  
Councillor Z. Maartman  
Councillor I. W. Thorpe  
Councillor J. Turley

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer  
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services  
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works  
J. Van Horne, Director, Human Resources  
Supt. L. Fletcher, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP  
T. Doyle, Fire Chief  
J. Elliot, Director, Public Works  
A. Groot, Director, Facilities and Parks Operations  
B. MacKay, Director, Information Technology  
L. Mercer, Director, Finance  
P. Rosen, Director, Engineering  
L. Wark, Director, Recreation and Culture  
T. Daliran, Manager, Sanitation, Recycling and Cemeteries  
W. Fulla, Manager, Business, Asset and Financial Planning  
J. MacAskill, Manager, Facility Asset Planning  
D. Blackwood, Client Support Specialist  
B. Thomas, Assistant Manager, Transportation  
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services  
K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Finance and Audit Committee Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

3. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) 2022-2026 Draft Financial Plan Recap

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, spoke regarding growth in population increasing the need for City positions, resources and services. He noted the pressures of COVID-19, and highlighted the expectations for the upcoming budget related meetings.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Projected property tax increase of 4.3%
- Updated information regarding the RCMP contract settlement
- Received all benefit rates for 2022
- Casino revenues assumed to return to pre-pandemic levels sooner than originally anticipated
- Reserve funding allocated to reduce property tax
- Outlined items impacting change to the Sanitation User Fees
- Property tax increase impact on a typical home

Councillor Geselbracht entered the Shaw Auditorium at 9:17 a.m.

- Revised 2022 key budget drivers include the RCMP contract, wages and benefits and casino revenue
- Final BC Assessment growth number will not be received until March 2022
- Provided an overview of business cases and decision items and noted their impact on property taxation.
- Noted that the percentage increase to property taxes may be adjusted based on changes to wages and benefits

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, spoke regarding deferring decisions that have a tax implication to after the eTown Hall on 2021-NOV-15.

Committee discussion took place regarding increasing demand for service does not necessarily matching an increase in revenue and the challenge for municipalities in relying on property taxation.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The importance of the public being able to hear the budget related conversations
- The City's contribution of \$60,000 to fund National Indigenous People Day & Truth and Reconciliation Day
- Concern with pulling money from the Downtown Events Grant budget and the importance of keeping the downtown revitalized

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Manager of Financial Services and Special Projects.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Filling the vacant General Manager of Corporate Services position
- Staff currently working overtime in the Finance Department

Brian MacKay, Director, Information Technology, introduced the decision point related to Supervisor of Technical Support and spoke regarding being proactive in respect to cyber threats.

Committee discussion took place regarding the high threat of security attacks.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Police Services: Support Staff Resourcing Plan.

Supt. Lisa Fletcher, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP, spoke regarding the current challenges in the Nanaimo Detachment RCMP:

- Municipal support staff level not matching the increase in case loads
- Police Officers performing administrative tasks reduces efficiency
- Provided an overview of each of the staff positions included in the business case

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The RCMP Memorandum of Understanding
- Impact of insufficient resources
- Challenge in filling the positions if motion passes
- As the population increases so does the need for police officers and services

Supt. Lisa Fletcher, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP, spoke regarding the high case load in Nanaimo compared to other municipalities.

The Finance and Audit Committee Meeting recessed at 10:26 a.m.

The Finance and Audit Committee Meeting reconvened at 10:41 a.m.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Parkade Security Plan.

Committee discussion took place: Highlights included:

- Services provided by the RCMP
- Agreement between hotels and the City of Nanaimo
- Statistics related to security issues in the parkade can be provided

It was moved and seconded that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council add a Parkade Security Plan to 2022 of the 2022 – 2026 Financial Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Community Clean Team.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Project currently funded through reserves and no tax impact last year
- Public feedback on the Community Clean Team
- The need for this service is not going to disappear, and a desire to see higher standard in the general cleanliness of the City
- Continued reliance on reserves will place future Councils in poor positions with limited reserve capacity and ability to fulfill capital projects
- Increasing number of supportive housing and hesitant in making the Community Clean Team a permanent position
- Belief that the problem is not going to be solved and the clean team is going to be needed permanently

It was moved and seconded that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council extend the Community Clean Team Pilot project to December 31, 2022. The motion carried.

Opposed: *Councillors Armstrong, Brown, and Geselbracht*

Tim Doyle, Fire Chief, introduced the decision item related to a Manager, Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy (VIERA). Highlights included:

- Year over year increase in revenue generated through VIERA

Committee discussion took place regarding other accredited courses in the province of BC.

It was moved and seconded that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council add a Manager, Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy (VIERA) position to the 2022 – 2026 Financial Plan effective February 1, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the RCMP – Additional Bike Patrol Units.

Supt. Lisa Fletcher, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP, spoke regarding the value of having the positions dedicated specifically to downtown area to provide a consistent approach with individuals that reside in the downtown area. She noted that the four positions allow for a continuous presence.

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, spoke regarding the expected timeline of security review to be approximately three months.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Clarification regarding the new positions on top of existing members
- The risk of the four bike patrol members being reallocated from the downtown area
- RCMP being severely under resourced

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to Aquatics Development Plan.

Committee discussion took place regarding the number of lifeguards on and off deck.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to a Parks, Trails and Natural Areas Lead Supervisor.

Art Groot, Director, Facility and Parks Operations, informed the Committee that the position is intended to deal with day-to-day issues. This would allow the manager to focus on manager duties.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Responsibilities of the lead supervisor position
- Position to reduce redundancy and streamline operations

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to a Parks Maintenance Worker – Playgrounds.

Art Groot, Director, Facility and Parks Operations, spoke regarding the current position being reactive rather than proactive, and this position would focus on inspection maintenance and repair of playgrounds.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Climate Action Reserve.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Snow and Ice Control (SNIC).

It was moved and seconded that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council reduce the 2022 Snow and Ice Control (SNIC) budgets to 2021 budget levels in the 2022 – 2026 Financial Plan. The motion carried.

Opposed: *Councillors Brown and Thorpe.*

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the pavement preservation.

Committee discussion took place regarding the \$50,000 included in the budget for pavement preservation.

John Elliot, Director, Public Works, spoke regarding the deterioration of roads and the \$50,000 for pavement preservation would be used towards technology to extend the life of the roads.

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision item related to the Landscaping – Boxwood detention pond.

Art Groot, Director, Facility and Parks Operations, spoke regarding potential opportunity to work with wetland stewardship groups.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Work stopping in the detention pond if this item is removed from the budget
- A phasing strategy for maintenance

Laura Mercer, Director, Finance, introduced the decision items related to Public Art Maintenance, the Urban Design Roster and the National Indigenous People Day & Truth and Reconciliation Day.

Committee discussion took place regarding the National Indigenous People Day & Truth and Reconciliation Day and funding partnerships with other organizations.

Councillor Armstrong disconnected from the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Councillor Hemmens vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 12:00 p.m.

Councillor Brown vacated the Shaw Auditorium at 12:01 p.m.

Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer, suggested that the remainder of the decision items in the 2022 – 2026 Draft Financial Plan Recap PowerPoint could be addressed at the 2021-NOV-19 Special Finance and Audit Committee Meeting.

7. QUESTION PERIOD:

There were no members of the public in attendance to ask questions.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 12:05 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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CORPORATE OFFICER