



## MINUTES

### SPECIAL MAYOR'S LEADERS' TABLE

Friday, May 16, 2025, 8:32 a.m.  
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre  
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

Present: Mayor L. Krog, Chair  
Donna Hais, Chair of Board of Nanaimo Port Authority  
Richard Horbachewski, Chief Advancement Officer and AVP  
External Relations, Vancouver Island University  
Bob Moss, Partner, Tectonica Management  
Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer, Nanaimo Ladysmith Public  
School District 68  
Dave Witty, Past Chair, Nanaimo Airport Commission

Absent: Erralyn Joseph, Councillor, and Assistant Negotiator, for  
Snuneymuxw First Nation

Staff: B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works  
N. Vracar, Deputy Corporate Officer  
N. Sponagle, Communications Advisor  
K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

#### 1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m.

#### 2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEM:

(a) Agenda Item 5(d) Roundtable Discussion – Add Agenda Item 5(d)(1)  
Discussion re: Housing.

#### 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 Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Friday, 2025-MAR-21 at 8:30 a.m. be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

#### 5. **AGENDA ITEMS:**

(a) Coordinated Strategic Planning for Nanaimo's Key Institutions - Discussion Continued from 2025-MAR-21 Meeting

Donna Hais, Member, Mayor's Leaders' Table, introduced updates to the chart titled "Who is Nanaimo" since the 2025-MAR-21 Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting which included the addition of the Mid Island Business Initiative (MIBI) and Nanaimo Foundation.

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Considerations regarding the following additions to the "Who is Nanaimo" chart:
  - Adding the Nanaimo Art Gallery to the Arts and Culture section and the understanding that a City representative is the culture champion for the entire community
  - Adding the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) under the Transportation section
- Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation (NPC) is partnering in this coordinated strategic planning process
- Sharing the benefits of the Doughnut Economics model with the private sectors
- The objective is to have all key partners sign a "Community Charter" agreeing to work together on this process

(b) Charter Definition and Potential Application in Nanaimo

Dave Witty, Member, Mayor's Leaders' Table, spoke regarding his research on the potential use of a "Community Charter" to guide the Mayor's Leaders' Table and provided an overview of the document titled "Charter Definition and Potential Application in Nanaimo" as attached to the agenda.

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Suggestion to use the term "accord" rather than "charter"
- D. Witty will work with City Staff to put together a "Nanaimo Accord" document as a framework

- This process will need approval from the boards of various organizations and an understanding that there may be challenges getting boards to sign especially with the short timeframe
- There may be opportunities that cannot be identified until all parties are talking at the same table

(c) Work Plan to Develop a Charter

Donna Hais, Member, Mayor's Leaders' Table, outlined the anticipated work plan for the proposed "Nanaimo Accord". Highlights included:

- Anticipated roll out of the Nanaimo Accord (Accord) by the end of 2025 with a launch in January 2026
- Correspondence will be sent to key partners introducing them to the concept of the Accord and its intended outcomes
- Suggested two strategic sessions with the first being an initial meeting with the key partners, invited by the Mayor's Leader's Table, to discuss the process as well as any concerns before moving into a more formalized process
- The second strategic session would be a longer facilitated event including project definitions and agreement on main issues
- Public consultation has previously happened through the Reimagine Nanaimo engagement process
- Anticipated cost of \$50,000 to \$60,000 to prepare the work plan. The NPC has funding available in their budget for this project
- The key partners will not be asked to contribute funding for this process; however, it was acknowledged that the outcomes of this process will likely require funding in the future

Colin Stansfield, Chief Executive Officer, NPC, provided a verbal presentation regarding the phases of the work plan. Highlights included:

- Bringing together shared visions of multiple organizations into one collective document
- The Accord aligns with the NPC mandate
- In-kind contributions (meeting spaces, graphic design, etc.) may be ways that organizations can contribute to the process
- Plan to complete Phase 1: "Building the Accord and Early Opportunity Discovery" by October 2025, in time for the Vancouver Island Economic Summit in Nanaimo

- Phase 2: “Portfolio Development and Prioritization” includes building upon the previous Mayor’s Leaders’ Table Infrastructure Ask Working Group’s work to create a living systems approach

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- While Reimagine Nanaimo is a vision, the Accord would be a way to provide direction
- Being able to tie pieces back to the City Plan would give Council some leverage when dealing with other levels of government
- Suggestion to reflect the core functions of each of organization on the “Who is Nanaimo” chart
- The work plan is intended to be a living document that will allow changes and growth even after the Accord is signed
- There are no other communities on Vancouver Island with accords or charters, and most municipalities just have their Official Community Plan
- The importance of getting out of silos in order to thrive as an entire community
- Next steps include forming a recommendation for Council’s support that can also be presented to various boards in the community
- Acknowledging that while the City is helping to support and drive the process, the City would only be one member of the Accord
- Once there is momentum from key partners signing on, others will feel compelled to sign on as well

It was moved and seconded that the Mayor’s Leaders’ Table recommend that Council endorse in principle the proposed work plan to develop the “Nanaimo Accord” as attached to the Mayor’s Leaders’ Table agenda dated 2025-MAY-16. The motion carried unanimously.

(d) Roundtable Discussion

1. Discussion re: Housing

Introduced by Bob Moss, Member, Mayor's Leaders' Table.

- Report titled “Developing a Homelessness Action Plan for Nanaimo: Finding a Way Home” was presented at the 2024-JAN-22 Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) Meeting
- Attempts have been made to expand the discussion on the topic of housing in the community

D. Witty, Member, Mayor's Leaders' Table, spoke regarding the following:

- Seeking an update from the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization (SPO) regarding the recommendations presented at the 2024-JAN-22 GPC Meeting
- The primary focus is keeping people housed and away from the street
- The success Finland has had in addressing homelessness using a Housing First model

Table and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The SPO recently provided an update to Council at the 2025-MAY-12 Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting and referenced expanding the Rent Bank Program
- Optimism with new housing units opening at 1300 Island Highway, 1030 Victoria Road and 1298 Nelson Street (former Travellers Lodge)
- Street disorder relates back to lack of housing, and people being in situations where they can slip into homelessness
- Staff have developed a document titled "Community Safety and Wellbeing: City of Nanaimo's Initiatives and Programs" which summarises the work that the City is doing to address homelessness
- Suggestion to create a senior City staff position related to housing
- The increase in building costs being driven by recent BC Building Code changes, and there are limited options for cost savings for developers
- Suggestion that the topic of housing be a standing item on the Mayor's Leaders' Table agenda

2. The Chair invited members to provide updates through roundtable discussion. Highlights included:

- School District 68 (SD68) received the capital plan response from the Ministry of Education which advised that resources are not available to replace Nanaimo District Secondary School
- Update regarding the projects included in the SD68's next capital plan submission

- The City is in a good position in terms of its debt servicing limit
- The Port of Nanaimo recently broke ground on an expansion project at Duke Point
- Seeing an increase in cruise ships scheduled to visit Nanaimo with four scheduled in 2025 and a potential for sixteen in 2026
- Nanaimo will be taking back the record for World's Largest Nanaimo Bar at Vancouver Island University (VIU) on 2025-MAY-17. The event is to raise money for new ovens for VIU's culinary arts students

**6. OTHER BUSINESS:**

(a) Next Meeting Date

The next scheduled meeting date for the Mayor's Leaders' Table is Friday, 2025-JUL-04.

**7. ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved and seconded at 10:16 a.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER