



## MINUTES

### FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, December 17, 2025, 9:00 A.M.  
Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre  
80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC

- Members:
- Mayor L. Krog, Chair
  - Councillor S. Armstrong
  - Councillor H. Eastmure
  - Councillor B. Geselbracht\* (joined at 9:01 a.m.)
  - Councillor E. Hemmens
  - Councillor J. Perrino
  - Councillor I. Thorpe
- Absent:
- Councillor T. Brown
  - Councillor P. Manly
- Staff:
- D. Lindsay, Chief Administrative Officer
  - L. Bhopalsingh, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
  - L. Mercer, General Manager, Corporate Services
  - B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
  - W. Fulla, Director, Finance
  - S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
  - D. LaBerge, Director, Public Safety
  - D. Osborne, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture
  - C. Davis, Deputy Director, Parks and Natural Areas
  - A. Breen, Manager, Culture and Special Events
  - C. Wood, Manager, Social Development
  - J.B. Sine, Recreation Coordinator – Cultural Services
  - A. Chanakos, Zoom Moderator
  - K. Lundgren, Recording Secretary

\* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

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

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

**2. 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 a 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,
- (n) the consideration of whether a Council meeting should be closed under a provision of this subsection or subsection (2).

The motion carried unanimously.

The Finance and Audit Committee Meeting moved In Camera at 9:00 a.m.

The Finance and Audit Committee Meeting moved out of In Camera at 9:03 a.m.

**3. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:**

- (a) Agenda Item 8(c) Hub Relocation, Funding and Service Delivery Update – Add the following delegations:

- 1. Diana Mcgivor
- 2. Kevin Williams
- 3. Alexander Marback, ARC-Addiction and Recovery Clinic
- 4. Naomi Woodland, Director, Community Impact and Investment, United Way British Columbia
- 5. Sydney Robertson, South End Community Association
- 6. Gail Murray
- 7. Collen Middleton

**4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

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

**5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

It was moved and seconded that the following minutes be adopted as circulated:

- Minutes of the Special Finance and Audit Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Friday, 2025-NOV-21, at 9:00 a.m.
- Minutes of the Special Finance and Audit Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2025-DEC-03 at 9:00 a.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

## **6. PRESENTATIONS:**

### **(a) KPMG Preliminary Audit Presentation**

Introduced by Laura Mercer, General Manager, Corporate Services.

#### Presentation:

1. Liette Bates-Eamer, Lead Audit Engagement Partner, KPMG, provided an on-screen presentation included in the agenda package and outlined the KPMG Audit Planning process.

## **7. REPORTS:**

### **(a) Park Amenity Improvement Requests Under the Partners in Parks Program**

Lisa Bhopalsingh, General Manager, Community Services and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, noted that the Partners in Parks (PIP) Program has been in effect since 2008, and the two community groups requesting funding from the 2025 budget allocation for park amenity improvement projects are the Nanaimo BMX Association and Kinette Evergreen Park (451 Ninth Street).

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding the vandal-proof storage area that would be installed at Kinette Evergreen Park.

It was moved and seconded that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve the allocation of the 2025 Partners In Parks Program funding for amenity improvements at the following locations:

1. \$20,000 for improvements to the Beban BMX Park; and
2. \$10,000 for storage at Kinette Evergreen Park.

The motion carried unanimously.

(b) Culture and Events Grants 2026 Recommendations

Introduced by L. Bhopalsingh, General Manager, Community Services and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Darcie Osborne, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture, provided an overview of the Culture and Event Grant 2026 Recommendations. Highlights included:

- Each year the City of Nanaimo invests in arts, culture, and downtown events by providing funding to eligible organizations through three grant streams
- By the deadline of 2025-OCT-07, the City received 21 Operating applications, 18 Project applications, and 30 Downtown Events Revitalization Fund (DERF) applications
- An interdepartmental staff committee reviewed the applications based on the grant criteria and assessment matrix

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding Staff's work with the organizations both before and after the application process, and there are a number of factors taken into consideration in prioritizing organizations if there are returned funds.

It was moved and seconded that the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve 2026 Cultural Grant funding (Operating, Project, Downtown Event Revitalization Fund) recommendations of \$705,421 as outlined in Attachment 'D' of the report titled "Culture and Event Grants 2026 Recommendations" dated 2025-DEC-17. The motion carried unanimously.

(c) Hub Relocation, Funding and Service Delivery Update

Introduced by L. Bhopalsingh, General Manager, Community Services and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Christy Wood, Manager, Social Development, provided an update on the Hub relocation, funding and service delivery. Highlights included:

- The Hub, located at 55 Victoria Road, is a key access point for people experiencing homelessness
- The Hub model is a partnership between two operators: Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS) and Nanaimo Family Life Association (NFLA)
- Following the 2025-JUL-21 Finance and Audit Committee Meeting, Council approved an additional \$125,000 to support services over the winter season and directed Staff to work with Hub service providers to find a more suitable location

- The Hub serves approximately 83 visitors per day and sees an average of one new visitor per day
- There has been a recent trend in seeing an increased number of housed individuals access the Hub for services
- Identifying a suitable location to relocate the Hub has been challenging
- Staff have requested that a Hub relocation working group be established at the Homelessness Response Leadership Table

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Consideration for separate sites for those in active addiction
- The City does not track Hub users who are using substances
- When looking for a new location, Staff have not considered the option of purchasing land
- There is intention to meet with the South End Community Association in January 2026 to discuss the transition of closing the Hub at its current location
- A Point-in-Time count was conducted on 2025-DEC-03, and Staff anticipate the report to be presented to Council in January 2026
- There is a recommendation from the Public Safety Committee to have the Hub be a standing item on the Committee's agenda
- The Community Safety Officers (CSOs) are not always in a position to answer their duty phone, and the best way to request their support is through the Bylaw Department

Delegations:

1. Deborah Hollins, Executive Director, Nanaimo Family Life Association, spoke regarding the urgent need for 24-hour services, and shared the value of consistent access to care that the Hub offers. They noted that the Hub provides a central point of contact when people need to access support.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The Hub does not monitor or track whether individuals are experiencing addiction
- Safety concerns with the congregation of people near the highway
- Acknowledging that other services in the area may be contributing to the street disorder

- The need for a purpose-built building with shower and food services
  - As an operator, NFLA has a duty to ensure their staff are safe, and therefore are unable to send staff off location
2. Lisa Clason, Drop In Hub Manager, spoke regarding the value of the Hub, not only for food services and a bathroom facility, but also for clients to feel dignity and respect. They noted the significant number of guests over the age of 50 and highlighted the need for a senior centre. They invited the Committee to visit the Hub.

L. Clason, Drop In Hub Manager, responded to questions from the Committee, and advised of the following:

- Much of the clothing donations to the Hub come from churches and the Salvation Army
- A washer and dryer can be installed at the Hub once the City permit is approved
- The impact of mental health on the street disorder

The Finance and Audit Committee recessed the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

The Finance and Audit Committee reconvened the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

3. Trish Briggs spoke regarding the benefit of the Hub remaining in its current location as it concentrates multiple services in the same area, and cautioned that relocating the Hub would only create a new problem in a different neighbourhood. They spoke regarding adding stairs from Nicol Street to 55 Victoria Road and requested continued funding to the Hub.
4. Violet Hayes, Executive Director, Island Crisis Care Society, requested that the Committee consider extending the funding for the Hub and noted the positive daily connections developed through the Hub. They spoke regarding finding a potential location to relocate the Hub if funding were available. They expressed understanding for the challenges experienced by the south end neighbourhood, and noted concerns regarding the negative impact that closing the Hub will have on the clients. They urged the Committee to reconsider closing the Hub.
5. Donna Marie Dunnigan spoke regarding the sense of community that has been built at the Hub and advised of a volunteer cleaning team that has been cleaning up in the community. They spoke regarding

the benefit of the Hub in providing safety and advised that not everyone who accesses the Hub has substance issues.

6. Ryan Webster was not in attendance to speak.
7. Greg Clausen was not in attendance to speak.
8. Diana McGivov spoke regarding their lived experience and expressed gratitude towards the Hub. They spoke regarding understanding addiction and the need for immediate services when an individual wants to get clean, and the benefits of having services all in the same area. They spoke regarding the abuse people experiencing homelessness receive and recognized the Hub as being a safe space.
9. Kevin Williams spoke regarding lived experience of homelessness, the abuse experienced by people living on the street and expressed gratitude for the Hub and the Hub's staff. They expressed concern for the area if the Hub closes, and praised the Hub for supporting individuals battling drug addiction and homelessness.
10. Alexander Marback, Manager, ARC-Addiction and Recovery Clinic, spoke regarding the services provided by the ARC Clinic, including Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT). They spoke regarding the services provided by the Hub and the benefit of the Hub's proximity. They expressed concern with the waitlist for patients to receive treatment, and the increase in opioid overdose related hospitalization. They noted that from their perspective, the Hub provides integral support, and expressed a desire to see the Hub continue operating.
11. Naomi Woodland, Director, Community Impact and Investment, United Way British Columbia, advised that the number of unsheltered individuals continues to grow and urged the Committee to reconsider ending funding for the Hub. They spoke regarding the impact of the HEART and HEARTH program, and advised that the Hub is a starting point for individuals to access other supports and services. They spoke regarding the community partnerships, community engagement, and the Alignment Project, and urged the Committee not to end this service.
12. Sydney Robertson, South End Community Association, spoke regarding the weight of the social disorder on the south end neighbourhood and expressed concern regarding the mitigation of

the behaviour outside the Hub. They expressed concern regarding the congregation zone created around the Hub.

S. Robertson, South End Community Association, responded to questions from the Committee, and advised of the following:

- The ideal situation would be to diversify the Hub's services in several purpose-built sites
- Encouraged a mitigation plan before a new Hub location opens
- Encouraged a community impact assessment for the neighbourhood

13. Gail Murray spoke regarding the personal loss experienced by neighbouring businesses since the opening of the Hub. They expressed support for the Hub's services; however, spoke regarding concerns for personal safety, financial losses resulting from damages, fire and garbage from people sheltering on their property.

14. Collen Middleton, President, Nanaimo Area Public Safety Association, spoke regarding the association's concern for the situation in Nanaimo, and advised of a research document titled: "The Recent Evolution of the Overdose Crisis in Nanaimo and the Impact of Street Disorder on Neighbourhood". They spoke regarding a lack of funding for public safety advocacy, and noted they are looking to enforce the accountability of senior levels of government.

Councillor Geselbracht advised that he will be bringing forward the following Notice of Motion to a future Council meeting:

"That the Mayor and Council write to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs requesting a meeting to discuss the urgent need for funding for a daytime drop-in homelessness resource hub, as well as other housing-related priorities."

(d) Council Expenses for the Nine Months Ending 2025-SEP-30

L. Mercer, General Manager, Corporate Services, provided an overview of the report in the agenda package, and clarified that the Council members' budgets were adjusted based on their intention to attend conferences.

Committee discussion took place regarding the desire to not have the Council expenses adjusted to avoid confusion for the public.

(e) Financial Results for the Nine Months Ending 2025-SEP-30

L. Mercer, General Manager, Corporate Services, provided an overview of the report in the agenda package.

(f) Quarterly Purchasing Report (Single and Sole Source, Purchases in Excess of \$250,000 and Instances of Exceptions to Trade Agreements)

L. Mercer, General Manager, Corporate Services, provided an overview of the report in the agenda package.

**8. QUESTION PERIOD:**

The Committee received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved and seconded at 12:06 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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CORPORATE OFFICER