

Municipality of North Cowichan

Regular Council

MINUTES

March 20, 2019, 1:30 p.m.
Municipal Hall - Council Chambers

Members Present Mayor Al Siebring
 Councillor Rob Douglas
 Councillor Christopher Justice
 Councillor Tek Manhas
 Councillor Kate Marsh
 Councillor Rosalie Sawrie

Members Absent Councillor Debra Toporowski

Staff Present Ted Swabey, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Karen Robertson, Corporate Officer
 Jacqueline East, General Manager, Development and Engineering Services
 Mark Frame, General Manager, Financial and Protective Services
 Sarah Nixon, General Manager, People and Business Services
 David Conway, Director of Engineering
 Rob Conway, Director of Planning
 Don Stewart, Director, Parks and Recreation
 Natasha Horsman, Manager, Communications and Strategic Initiatives
 Glenn Morris, Development Planning Coordinator
 Larissa Barry-Thibodeau, Planning Technician

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

There being a quorum present, Mayor Siebring called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

A minute of silence was observed to reflect on the number of tragedies that occurred in the world this past week.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded:

That Council adopt the March 20, 2019 Council agenda, as amended, to include a notice of motion being put forward by Councillor Marsh.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded:

That Council adopt the minutes of the following meetings:

- 1. Committee of the Whole meeting held March 6, 2019;**
- 2. Special Council meeting held March 6, 2019; and**
- 3. Regular Council meeting held March 6, 2019.**

CARRIED

4. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Siebring gave a verbal report on meetings and activities he recently attended.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

Council received brief public input regarding agenda items from the following registered speakers:

- Sandy McPherson – Item 7.3
- Icel Dobell – Item 6.3
- Pauline Key – Item 6.3
- Sabena Elstrom – Item 6.3
- Dale Kelly – Item 7.1
- Seairra Courtemanche – Item 7.1
- Joyce Behnsen – Item 6.1

6. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

6.1 DELEGATION: Terri Mattin, on behalf of the Cowichan Housing Association to present the Draft Cowichan Attainable Housing Strategy

Ms. Mattin presented the Cowichan Housing Association's draft Attainable Housing Strategy for the Cowichan Region. Highlights of her presentation were as follows:

- Community participants included: 80 community meetings; 28 focus groups; 20 individual interviews; 386 public surveys; and 125 workshops;
- A number of reports between 2006 – 2018 recommend a range of affordable housing options to address the homeless, youth, seniors, families, vulnerable groups, and Aboriginal off-reserve housing needs;
- The purpose of the strategy is to provide direction to the range of stakeholders in the Cowichan Region in response to the current and future affordable housing needs of the community;
- The aim of the next five years is to reduce the number of households in core housing need by assisting 1,000 households to move into affordable housing;
- Desired outcomes include: increase non market rentals; market rentals; maintain rental supply; address housing supports; and innovative affordable ownership.
- Local government policy frameworks include: enhancing Official Community Plans to recognize and prioritize affordable housing; addressing zoning and other bylaws; and exploring other initiatives such as: a community amenity contribution policy, land banking, fast tracking affordable housing applicable, improving substandard housing

applications, improving substandard housing, a strata conversion policy, and training on development applications for non-profits.

Ms. Mattin concluded her presentation by stating that she would like feedback on the plan by April 15, 2019 and ultimately Council's endorsement once they've had an opportunity to review the document.

6.2 DELEGATION: Heather Pritchard to introduce the Harrop-Procter Community Forest - Eco Based Management Principles for the Municipal Forest Reserve

Ms. Pritchard provided a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the Harrop-Procter Community Forest model whereby there was no logging permitted in sensitive terrain, riparian ecosystems, headwater protection zones, sensitive wildlife habitat, and culturally significant areas.

She outlined how ecosystem-based principles affect revenue and encouraged Council to think about what the current values of the community are, who the right people are in the community to find the way forward, and to be creative when planning community participation. She concluded her presentation by stating that what was once a contentious issue in the Harrop-Procter area became a success by using site sensitive, ecologically based forestry practises which were modelled on silva forest foundation planning.

6.3 DELEGATION: Erik Piikkila to request that an Ecological Assessment be done on the downed logs in the blowdown areas before harvesting plans are finalized

Erik Piikkila addressed Council and requested that an ecological assessment of the downed logs in the blowdown areas be conducted before harvesting plans are finalized.

He suggested that the December windstorm provided a unique ecological opportunity whereby if the wood was left alone it would:

- Increase soil and site productivity;
- Create log dams that would create big deep pools and rapid areas that aerate the water;
- Hold the soil in place and slow down water on the landscape;
- Provide habitat for voles and field mice (prey for owls and hawks) beetles and Fungi; and
- Act as nurse logs for seedling and moss beds and as moisture sponges that may dampen fires.

By consensus, Council recessed the meeting at 3:11 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:20 p.m.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Community Engagement on Municipal Forest Reserve

It was moved and seconded:

That Council affirm its desire to go ahead with a meaningful public engagement, both deep and broad, on the future management of our forests defined by the following decision statement:

Council will decide on an overall vision for the highest and best use of the Municipal Forest Reserve that:

- 1. will emphasize ecological stewardship and promotion of biodiversity;**
- 2. will build and enhance those values and interests the forest has for the community and forest experts; and**
- 3. will be used to inform the development of a management framework and long term plan for achieving the vision. This decision will preferably be made by January 2020 but will not be rushed.**

It was moved and seconded:

That consideration of the motion be referred to the April 3, 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting.

(Opposed: Douglas; Justice)

CARRIED

By consensus Council recessed the meeting at 4:15 p.m. for 10 minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 4:25 p.m.

The Mayor, under the authority of Section 131 of the *Community Charter*, requested that Council reconsider and vote again on the matter.

The following motion was now on the floor for consideration:

It was moved and seconded:

That Council affirm its desire to go ahead with a meaningful public engagement, both deep and broad, on the future management of our forests defined by the following decision statement:

Council will decide on an overall vision for the highest and best use of the Municipal Forest Reserve that:

- 1. will emphasize ecological stewardship and promotion of biodiversity;**
- 2. will build and enhance those values and interests the forest has for the community and forest experts; and**
- 3. will be used to inform the development of a management framework and long term plan for achieving the vision. This decision will preferably be made by January 2020 but will not be rushed.**

Amendment:

It was moved and seconded:

That the sections 1, 2 and 3 be struck from the recommendation and that the phrase "and if harvesting is to continue, will establish harvesting guidelines, by January, 2020" be added at the end of the second paragraph.

(Opposed: Douglas; Justice; Marsh; Sawrie)

DEFEATED

It was moved and seconded:

That the motion be amended to add a 4th paragraph (after the third paragraph) as follows:

"And that if harvesting is to continue, will establish harvesting guidelines, by January 2020."

(Opposed: Justice)

CARRIED

Main Motion as Amended:

It was moved and seconded:

That Council affirm its desire to go ahead with a meaningful public engagement, both deep and broad, on the future management of our forests defined by the following decision statement:

Council will decide on an overall vision for the highest and best use of the Municipal Forest Reserve that:

- 1. will emphasize ecological stewardship and promotion of biodiversity;**
- 2. will build and enhance those values and interests the forest has for the community and forest experts; and**
- 3. will be used to inform the development of a management framework and long term plan for achieving the vision. This decision will preferably be made by January 2020 but will not be rushed.**
- 4. And that if harvesting is to continue, will establish harvesting guidelines, by January 2020.**

The Manager of Communications and Strategic Initiatives asked if Council would be flexible with the sequence of wording in the motion, specifically, to relocate placement of the decision date reference, to before, or after the four numbered points.

Council, by consensus, supported the request.

The following reordered motion was on the floor for consideration:

It was moved and seconded:

That Council affirm its desire to go ahead with a meaningful public engagement, both deep and broad, on the future management of our forests defined by the following decision statement:

Council will decide on an overall vision for the highest and best use of the Municipal Forest Reserve that:

- 1. will emphasize ecological stewardship and promotion of biodiversity;**
- 2. will build and enhance those values and interests the forest has for the community and forest experts;**
- 3. will be used to inform the development of a management framework and long term plan for achieving the vision; and**
- 4. if harvesting is to continue, will establish harvesting guidelines.**

This decision will preferably be made by January 2020, but will not be rushed.

It was moved and seconded:

That Council refer consideration of the motion to the April 3, 2019 Council meeting for consideration when all members of Council are present to vote.

(Opposed: Justice)

CARRIED

**7.2 Agricultural Land Commission Proposed Subdivision (homesite severance)
Application – 9266 Chemainus Road**

It was moved and seconded:

That Council authorize submission of Agricultural Land Commission Subdivision Application No. ALR00028 to the Agricultural Land Commission for 9266 Chemainus Road, and recommend the application be approved.

(Opposed: Douglas; Justice)

CARRIED

7.3 Proposed Environmental Position

It was moved and seconded:

That a senior environmental specialist be hired to expedite completion of the climate change and environment-related priority projects of Council identified in the 2019-2022 Council Strategic Plan.

It was moved and seconded:

That the recommendation to consider the proposed environmental position be referred to the April 3, 2019 Council meeting for consideration when all members of Council are present to vote.

(Opposed: Manhas)

CARRIED

7.4 Pre-budget Approval Fuller Lake Park Pickleball Court

It was moved and seconded:

That Council authorize staff to proceed with pre-budget spending in an amount not to exceed \$24,000 for the Fuller Lake Park Pickleball Court Resurfacing as outlined in the 2019-2023 Capital Budget Plan.

CARRIED

7.5 Property Tax Rate Options

The Mayor, under the authority of Section 131 of the *Community Charter*, requested that Council reconsider and vote again on the following resolution that was passed at the March 6, 2019 meeting:

It was moved and seconded:

That Council endorse the 2019-2023 Financial Plan and adopt the tax rate of 3.2% for 2019 based on the higher service levels of service noted in the March 6, 2019 report by the General Manager of Financial and Protective Services;

And That staff be directed to prepare the 2019-2023 Financial Plan bylaw for Council's consideration.

(Opposed: Unanimous)

DEFEATED

It was moved and seconded:

That Council direct staff to prepare the Property Tax Rate Bylaw based on the budget approved by Council, in principle, with a net tax increase of 3.05%.

(Opposed: Siebring; Douglas; Justice; Manhas)

DEFEATED

It was moved and seconded:

That Council direct staff to prepare the Property Tax Rate Bylaw based on the budget approved by Council, in principle with a net tax increase of 2.95%

(Opposed: Marsh; Sawrie)

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded:

That Council support retaining the distribution of property taxes between the nine assessment classes, in the same proportions as 2018, which will provide an equal net tax increase to all classes.

CARRIED

The CAO requested pre-budget approval to hire the Chief Building Inspector.

It was moved and seconded:

That Council give pre-budget approval to staff to hire a Chief Building Inspector.

CARRIED

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Letter from Bruce Gibbons Re: request for bylaw to prohibit the sale of groundwater

It was moved and seconded:

That staff be requested to bring back a staff report to a future Council meeting on the request to prohibit the sale of groundwater.

CARRIED

9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Councillor Marsh requested that the following resolution be placed on the April 3, 2019 agenda for Council's consideration:

That Council members be encouraged to participate in the District of Highlands Municipal Survivor Climate Challenge to measure and track their average "One-Planet Living" footprint effective April 22, 2019 (Earth Day) for one year (until Earth Day, 2020).

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received questions from the public regarding business considered at this meeting.

12. RISE AND REPORT

Council rose without report.

13. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded:

That Council adjourn the March 20, 2019 Regular Council meeting at 5:55 p.m.

CARRIED

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor