

**Municipality of North Cowichan
Committee of the Whole
MINUTES**

**January 29, 2020, 10:30 a.m.
Municipal Hall - Maple Bay Meeting Room**

Members Present Mayor Al Siebring
 Councillor Rob Douglas
 Councillor Christopher Justice
 Councillor Tek Manhas
 Councillor Rosalie Sawrie
 Councillor Debra Toporowski

Members Absent Councillor Kate Marsh

Staff Present Ted Swabey, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Mark Frame, General Manager, Financial and Protective Services
 Ernie Mansueti, General Manager, Community Services
 Sarah Nixon, General Manager, Corporate Services
 David Conway, Director of Engineering
 Rob Conway, Director of Planning and Building
 Jason Birch, Director, IT and GIS Services
 Clay Reitsma, Senior Manager, Engineering
 John Dehoop, Manager, Infrastructure
 Michele Gill, Manager, Development
 Megan Jordan, Acting, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
 Nelda Richardson, Deputy Corporate Officer
 Alyssa Meiner, Acting Corporate Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, Mayor Siebring called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded:

That the January 29, 2020 Committee of the Whole agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. CLOSED SESSION

It was moved and seconded:

That the Committee close the January 29, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting at 10:30 a.m. to the public on the basis of the following section of the *Community Charter*:

- **90(2)(b) - the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.**

CARRIED

4. RESUME OPEN MEETING

Council rose without report at 11:30 a.m. and resumed the open portion of the Committee of the Whole meeting.

5. PUBLIC INPUT

Council received no public input from registered speakers regarding items on this agenda.

6. BUSINESS

6.1 PRESENTATION: John Weninger, Consultant, Urban Systems - Asset Management

Council heard from John Weninger, Consultant, of Urban Systems regarding his summary of findings and recommendations for improving asset management planning at North Cowichan. Highlights of Mr. Weninger's presentation included:

- A review of the seven project components (data review, assets replacement costing, condition assessment framework, financial policy, risk assessment framework and analysis, asset management investment plan, visualization).
- Linear assets (pipes, roads) populated within North Cowichan's GIS is generally very good.
- The current approach for valuing assets is good and appropriate, and have migrated costing out of a spreadsheet format and into the GIS system.
- Robust system for sewer and road assets, agreed to standard 1-5 rating scale; expanded CCTV to include storm sewers as well as sanitary sewers.
- Tracking of watermain breaks is stored within the GIS.
- Currently formalizing and documenting existing practices (policy includes 7 areas as set out in the report attached to the agenda).
- Applied risk assessment framework and analysis to linear water and stormwater infrastructure and found moderate risk (\$10 million of stormwater assets are high and medium high risk, and \$1.5 million of sewer assets are high and medium high risk).
- Visualization tool allows for high risk areas to be identified on the GIS.
- Asset management focus is on replacement at end of life, as repairs already done as part of regular maintenance.
- North Cowichan has a high amount of infrastructure when compared to similar-sized municipalities.
- Good next step to factor in future needs (upsizing), for example due to increased waterflow given environmental changes. Heard from the Director of Engineering that when staff look at replacement, also look at what it should be replaced with (to address environmental and other considerations).

Councillor Sawrie identified that impact on natural assets (e.g. removal of forests) should also be considered.

Council heard from the CAO that an asset reserve fund could also be good next steps.

- Staff know when the assets were installed and are able to determine remaining life.
- The numbers (percentages) provided in the report are based on an average.
- The Report attached to the January 29, 2020 agenda identifies how much money needs to be invested annually by each year (16.2 Million annually) and shows the annual investment by area; Chemainus, Crofton and South End.
- Current annual capital funding for South End water should be increased. A question was asked if there would be advantages to merging the three areas. The Committee heard from the CAO that there would be disadvantages and advantages and a future discussion would be required.
- North Cowichan does not have reserves for utilities, requires healthier reserves for sewer.
- Roads and stormwater are funded through taxation.
- North Cowichan has carried forward funds based on annual capital project backlog (4 Million). The current roads program is not directly related to roads expansion, a certain amount of annual funds is dedicated for new infrastructure.

Councillor Douglas left the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

A question was asked if North Cowichan is underfunding. The Committee heard from the General Manager, Financial and Protective Services that North Cowichan is somewhere in between, need to start investing more in reserves going forward.

Mr. Weninger stated that assets will fail on a bell curve, some will last longer or fail sooner. Numbers used in the Report are based on the middle range. The Report is telling North Cowichan to do CCTV scans of the assets to determine remaining life. Stormwater is generally underfunded in all local governments and North Cowichan's annual funding is below the recommended target. North Cowichan is doing a good job, only a few areas to address. Minor funding gaps in the South End, take a closer look at roads. Assess stormwater and look at dedicated funds to stormwater to ensure consistent funding. Staff processes are good and information base is solid, funding is good.

The Committee thanked staff and commended them for all their hard work in managing the assets as identified in the Consultant's Summary Report.

It was moved and seconded:

That the Committee receive the report for information.

CARRIED

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received no questions from the public regarding business considered at this meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded:

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

CARRIED

Certified by Acting Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor