

Municipality of North Cowichan Committee of the Whole MINUTES

February 9, 2021, 6:00 p.m.
Electronically

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

Staff Present Ted Swabey, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Sarah Nixon, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (D/CAO)
 Mark Frame, General Manager, Financial and Protective Services
 David Conway, Director, Engineering
 Don Stewart, Director, Parks and Recreation
 Shawn Cator, Director, Operations
 George Farkas, Director, Human Resources and Corporate Planning
 Jason Birch, Chief Information Officer
 Megan Jordan, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
 Michelle Martineau, Corporate Officer
 Tricia Mayea, Deputy Corporate Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Regular Committee of the Whole meeting minutes from January 12, 2021

3.2 Joint Committee of the Whole meeting minutes from January 21, 2021

3.3 Special Committee of the Whole meeting minutes from January 26, 2021

Council noted an omission to the January 26, 2021 minutes and requested that they be amended to include *"An informal poll to extend the limits on the discussion was taken before the Chair closed the floor to further debate and moved to the next item of the agenda. Three members were in favour of continuing the discussion and 4 were opposed."* to the end of item 4.1

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meetings held January 12, 2021, January 21, 2021 be adopted as circulated, and the minutes from January 26, 2021 be adopted as amended. CARRIED

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Council received no public input regarding agenda items.

5. BUSINESS

5.1 Presentation Budget

The General Manager, Financial and Protective Services, Mark Frame presented details on the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for 2021 and responded to questions of Council. The Director Parks and Recreation, Don Stewart, and the Chief Information Officer, Jason Birch, also responded to questions of Council. A copy of the presentation was appended to the agenda.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council allocate the following amounts for 2020 under the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant:

- the actual revenue shortfalls at the Cowichan Aquatic Centre and Fuller Lake Arena of approximately \$610,000
- the additional operating expenses incurred in 2020 as a result of the pandemic of approximately \$681,000 CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council allocate the following 2021 budget amounts to be claimed under the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant:

- \$1,128,000 be used to offset decreases in Recreation Revenue in 2021
- up to \$1,308,600 of 2021 expenditures which includes:
 - Additional COVID expenses \$143,300
 - Parks And Recreation \$416,000
 - Two term Bylaw positions \$192,300
 - Information Management/IT \$498,000
 - Vehicle costs – social distancing \$29,000
 - Working from home – Ergo support \$30,000 CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council allocate the following 2022 budget amounts to be claimed under the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant, up to \$463,700:

- Two term Bylaw positions \$196,100
- Information Management/IT \$228,000
- Vehicle costs – social distancing \$29,600
- Working from home – Ergo support \$10,000 CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Council that any unspent COVID-19 grant funds as of December 31, 2020 be transferred into the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant reserve fund;

And that COVID-19 grant funds be recognized to offset actual expenditures to a maximum of budget in 2021 and 2022;

And further that the remaining funds in the COVID-19 Restart Reserve as of December 31, 2022 be reallocated for 2023 and future years' budgets. CARRIED

5.2 Automated Trucks for Residential Curbside Collection of Solid Waste

Carey McIver and Jeff Ainge from Carey McIver & Associates provided a presentation on their review of the North Cowichan's curbside collection program that included the purpose of the project, a review of the current collection program, a comparison of manual and automated cart-based collection, collection fleet information, cart sizes and costs, other service considerations with recommendations, and answered questions of Council. A copy of the presentation was appended to the agenda. The Director, Operations, Shawn Cator, and the Chief Administration Officer, Ted Swabey also responded to questions of Council.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council direct staff to prepare a public engagement plan and more detailed cost scenarios to assess public interest in pursuing a solid waste collection automation program for Council approval prior to proceeding with any public engagement. CARRIED

5.3 2021 Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Call for Resolutions

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council refer the following resolution to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities for consideration at the 2021 Virtual AGM and Convention:

WHEREAS the forest industry in British Columbia has been on a steady decline in recent decades, with mill closures, lost jobs, and once-thriving rural communities experiencing severe economic decline – due in large part to mismanagement, misguided policies, and lack of oversight;

AND WHEREAS many communities across British Columbia and globally have demonstrated that when local people are empowered to manage public forests and other resources through community forest licenses, regional trusts and other community-based governance models, they can enhance environmental sustainability, provide stable and fulfilling employment, and improve equity and fairness;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) call on the Province of British Columbia move to establish a de-centralized forest management model for the region of Vancouver Island, Sunshine

Coast, Powell River, the North Coast and the Central Coast ("Vancouver Island and the Coast"), and, as a first step, appoint a Forester General for the region who will undertake the following actions:

- Consult with local communities, workers, industry, First Nations and the broader public on current challenges with the forest sector;
- Carry out an analysis of the opportunities to increase employment and value-add, restrict raw log exports, improve environmental sustainability, and advance reconciliation with First Nations;
- Develop a regional land use plan for Vancouver Island and the Coast based on citizen input; and
- Recommend next steps for empowering Vancouver Island and the Coast in the management of forestry and related resources.

CARRIED

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 Request for Funding from the Cowichan Historical Society

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That Council approve the Cowichan Historical Societies funding request for \$15,000.

(Opposed: Douglas, Manhas, Sawrie, Siebring, Toporowski)

DEFEATED

7. NEW BUSINESS

None.

8. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received one question from the public regarding agenda item 5.2 [Automated Trucks for Residential Curbside Collection of Solid Waste].

9. ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the meeting be adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

CARRIED

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor