

# Municipality of North Cowichan Special Committee of the Whole MINUTES

November 21, 2023, 5:00 p.m.  
Municipal Hall - Council Chambers & Electronically

Members Present Mayor Rob Douglas  
Councillor Mike Caljouw  
Councillor Bruce Findlay  
Councillor Chris Istace  
Councillor Christopher Justice  
Councillor Tek Manhas  
Councillor Debra Toporowski

Staff Present Ted Swabey, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
George Farkas, General Manager, Planning, Development and Community Services  
Talitha Soldera, General Manager, Corporate Services  
Alyssa Meiner, Information Management Officer  
Barb Floden, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement  
Clay Reitsma, Director, Engineering  
David Conway, Director, Subdivision and Environmental Services  
Gaylene Thorogood, Administrative Supervisor, RCMP Support Services  
Heather Power, Legislative Coordinator  
Kim Ferris, Manager, Bylaw and Business Licensing Services  
Manuela Herzig, Director, Information Technology and Business Solutions  
Marla Laycock, Director, Human Resources and Health & Safety  
Michelle Martineau, Corporate Officer  
Neil Pukesh, Director, Parks and Recreation  
Rob Conway, Director, Building and Planning  
Ron French, Interim Fire Chief  
Rowena Tansley, Manager, Business Solutions  
Shawn Cator, Director, Operations  
Teri Vetter, Director, Financial Services

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

## 3. PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Council received public input from 3 member of the public from Council Chambers regarding agenda items 4.1. and 4.1.2.

## 4. BUSINESS

### 4.1 Presentation of the Office of the CAO and Corporate Services Departmental Business Plans

#### 4.1.1 Introductory Overview

An opening presentation was provided by General Manager, Corporate Services, Talitha Soldera, that included an overview of the 2024 business planning process and how each of the departmental business plans would be presented, focusing on departmental deliverables; operating budgets, including any supplemental requests; and key statistics.

#### 4.1.2 Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Chief Administrative Officer, Ted Swabey, presented the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer's business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The Manager of Communications and Public Engagement, Barb Floden, provided an overview of the department's deliverables and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Building Relationships with Indigenous People
- (2) Support Rowing Canada's Relocation to North Cowichan
- (3) Support Council's initiatives around drug addiction, mental health and homelessness
- (4) Proactively inform residents and staff about projects and priorities
- (5) Ensure open and transparent communications with the public
- (6) Provide staff with tools and a framework to support public engagement as part of the Engagement Framework and Strategy project
- (7) Support the ongoing Municipal Forest Reserve review
- (8) Develop crisis/emergency communications plan and regional MOU
- (9) Support work and projects of other governments, agencies, and partners

#### 4.1.3 North Cowichan/Duncan RCMP Detachment

Chief Administrative Officer, Ted Swabey, presented the detachment's business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The Administrative Supervisor, RCMP Support Services, Gaylene Thorogood, provided an overview of the department's deliverables and staffing requests, and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Implementation of the North Cowichan/Duncan RCMP Detachment Annual Performance Plan
- (2) Focus on enhanced public safety, accountability, governance, employee excellence, and workplace culture

- (3) Offender management, road safety, reconciliation, consultation with local government, and equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives
- (4) Indigenous Elder Workshops with VIU
- (5) RCMP Reconciliation Process, including the old detachment/new detachment and land acknowledgments

The following three supplemental budget requests were presented for information at the meeting and will be included in the budget discussion on December 12, 2023:

- (1) IT/LAN Administrator position
- (2) RCMP Officer (FIS/Ident member) position
- (3) Restorative Justice Society

#### **4.1.4 Fire Services**

Interim Fire Chief, Ron French, presented the Fire Services business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Implement Fire Inspection Program
- (2) Fire Department survey Mission Vision report
- (3) South End Fire Engine replacement
- (4) Communications and Leadership Effectiveness proposal
- (5) Paid On-Call Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Strategy
- (6) Fire Underwriters Survey Review
- (7) Review and updated Standard Operational Guidelines and Policies
- (8) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF)
- (9) Strategic Plan for Fire Service
- (10) Retrofit Exhaust Extraction Systems for three stations

The following supplemental budget request was presented for information at the meeting and will be included in the budget discussion on December 12, 2023:

- (1) Deputy Chief Training / Operations position

Councillor Istace left the meeting at 6:42 p.m. and returned at 6:45 p.m.

Councillor Findlay left the meeting at 6:43 p.m. and returned at 6:44 p.m.

Councillor Caljouw left the meeting at 6:46 p.m. and returned at 6:48 p.m.

#### **4.1.5 Bylaw Services**

Manager, Bylaw and Business Licensing Services, Kim Ferris, presented the Bylaw Services business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Strengthen bylaws that support enforcing safety and prepare an Open Drug Use Bylaw to minimize public exposure to open drug use

- (2) Partner with Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society and Nature Trust of BC to enable more fulsome marsh patrols
- (3) Create an operational policy and procedures manual for the department
- (4) Continue to implement the Community Safety Plan

#### **4.1.6 Financial Services**

Director, Financial Services, Teri Vetter, presented the Financial Services business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Investigate alternative utility rate structure to promote water conservation
- (2) Prepare Asset Management Long-term Financial Plan
- (3) Implement a budget dashboard for the website
- (4) Prepare accurate and timely monthly budget reports for staff
- (5) Implement asset retirement obligations on the 2023 financial statement
- (6) Revise the Permissive Tax Exemption Policy
- (7) Implement new Property Tax Sale Regulatory Standards

The following supplemental budget request was presented for information at the meeting and will be included in the budget discussion on December 12, 2023:

- (1) Part-time Payroll Clerk position

#### **4.1.7 Human Resources and Health & Safety**

Director, Human Resources and Health & Safety, Marla Laycock, presented the Human Resources and Health & Safety business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Implementation of Paid on Call Firefighters collective agreement
- (2) CUPE Collective Bargaining
- (3) Review of recruitment, retention, and succession strategies
- (4) Create a Manager Toolkit for SharePoint (staff Intranet site)
- (5) Coordinate corporate training opportunities
- (6) Complete WorkSafeBC high risk initiatives

The following supplemental budget request was presented for information at the meeting and will be included in the budget discussion on December 12, 2023:

- (1) HR Advisor position

#### **4.1.8 Legislative Services**

Manager, Legislative Services and Corporate Officer, Michelle Martineau, presented the Legislative Services business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Undertake phase 2 of Bylaw and Policy Audit project
- (2) Prepare policy amendments and new policies to align with the new Council Procedure Bylaw
- (3) Complete a review of the Council Standards of Conduct Policy
- (4) Implement eScribe Participant Portal and Board Manager software
- (5) Coordinate Council training for the balance of the term

#### **4.1.9 Information Technology and Business Solutions**

Director, Information Technology and Business Solutions, Manuela Herzig, presented the Information Technology and Business Solutions business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Undertake a Server Upgrade - Storage Array
- (2) Implement cloud computing technology
- (3) Complete network security improvements
- (4) Complete the Orthophoto (Lidar) project
- (5) Network switch replacements
- (6) Provide Project Management for Asset Management Software implementation
- (7) Establish an IT specific Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan

The following supplemental budget request was presented for information at the meeting and will be included in the budget discussion on December 12, 2023:

- (1) Transition the Business Solutions Specialist position from part-time to full-time

#### **4.1.10 Information Management**

Information Management Officer, Alyssa Meiner, presented the Information Management business plan and responded to questions of Council.

The plan included the following projected action / project deliverables for 2024 for Council's information:

- (1) Transition essential physical records into electronic document and records management system
- (2) Transition key records-generating business processes across the organization

### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**6. QUESTION PERIOD**

Council received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

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Certified by Corporate Officer

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Signed by Mayor