

Municipality of North Cowichan

Regular Council

MINUTES

September 4, 2024, 3:00 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)
Bill Corsan, General Manager, Corporate Services and Community Relations
George Farkas, General Manager, Planning, Development and Community Services
Amanda Young, Director, Planning and Building
Andrea Hainrich, Deputy Corporate Officer
Barb Floden, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
Chris Osborne, Manager, Planning
Christina Hovey, Project Planner
Clay Reitsma, Director, Engineering
David Conway, Director, Subdivision and Environmental Services
Jennifer Aldcroft, Climate Change Specialist
Kayla Reid-Starck, Legislative Coordinator
Marla Laycock, Director, People and Culture
Shaun Mason, Manager, Parks and Forestry
Shawn Cator, Director, Operations
Teri Vetter, Director, Financial Services
Tricia Mayea, Corporate Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, Mayor Douglas called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC [3:00 - 5:00PM]

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council close the meeting to the public at 3:00 p.m. based on the following sections of the *Community Charter*:

- 90(1)(e) - the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, which the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality.
- 90(1)(k) - negotiations & related discussions re 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 held in public.

- 90(2)(b) - the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial or the federal gov't or both, or between a provincial or the federal gov't or both and a third party. CARRIED

2.1 Approval of in-camera meeting Agenda

2.2 Adoption of in-camera meeting Minutes

2.3 In-camera meeting Items

2.3.1 Closed under section 90(1)(k) – Municipal Service + Harm

2.3.2 Closed under section 90(1)(k) – Municipal Service + Harm, and 90(2)(b) – Negotiations with the Province

2.3.3 Closed under section 90(1)(e) - Land + Harm

2.4 Rise and report

The Closed Session rose without report.

3. RECESS UNTIL 5:00 P.M.

The meeting recessed at 4:19 p.m. and reconvened at 5:00 p.m.

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were pulled from the Consent Agenda so that they could be added to the Regular Agenda:

1. Item 4.2.5 [Heather Young, Under the Oak Farm re- Farm Building Permits]
2. Item 4.2.6 [Chemainus Festival of Murals Society re- Every Child Matters Crosswalk Project]

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council approve the Consent Agenda and the recommendations contained therein.

CARRIED

4.1 Items for Decision

4.1.1 Council Meeting Minutes for Adoption

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopt the minutes of their regular meeting held August 21, 2024.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2 Items for Information

4.2.1 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive for information the draft minutes from the August 20, 2024 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.2 Ministry of Agriculture and Food re- request for Agricultural Land Use Inventory

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive for information, the August 19, 2024 letter from the Honourable Pam Alexis, Minister of Agriculture and Food. ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.3 City of Duncan re- UBCM Resolution – Fail to Appear Charges in Policing Statistics

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive for information, the August 21, 2024 letter from Mayor Michelle Staples, City of Duncan. ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.4 City of Pitt Meadows re- UBCM Resolutions to Reform the Farm Property Tax System

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive for information, the August 22, 2024 letter from Mayor Nicole MacDonald, City of Pitt Meadows. ADOPTED ON CONSENT

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

The agenda was amended as follows:

5.1 Introduction of Late Items

5.1.1 Chemainus Festival of Murals Society re- Every Child Matters Crosswalk Project added to Consent Agenda Items for Information Item 4.2.6

5.1.2 Appointment to the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board added to New Business as Item 12.4

5.2 Changes to Order of Business

None.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the agenda be adopted as amended. CARRIED

6. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Douglas provided a verbal update on meetings and activities he recently attended.

7. PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Council received public input from 9 members of the public regarding agenda 11.1, 9.1, and 8.2.1.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND PETITIONS

8.1 Presenters

8.1.1 Salish Sea Stones Update and Presentation

Pete Shepherd of Salish Sea Stones discussed the project and presented Mayor and Council with Salish Sea Stones as a thank you for the grant in aid provided for their project.

8.2 Delegations

8.2.1 Cowichan Green Community

Judy Stafford, Executive Director of Cowichan Green Community provided a presentation to Council on the services provided by the Cowichan Green Community.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9.1 Cowichan Climate Hub [Delegation from August 21, 2024 regular Council meeting]

THAT Council direct staff to provide a report exploring the merits of joining a class-action lawsuit alongside other BC communities to recoup expenses from fossil fuel companies.

(Opposed: Caljouw, Findlay, Manhas)

CARRIED

10. BYLAWS

None.

11. REPORTS

11.1 Chemainus River Actions Update

Staff presented this item, for Council's information, highlighting the changes made to the Chemainus River.

The meeting recessed at 6:49 p.m. and reconvened at 6:58 p.m.

11.2 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation 2024

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council approves a \$3,500 grant-in-aid to the M'akola Housing Society, to be taken from the First Nations Initiatives budget, to support the 2024 Every Child Matters Walk to be held on September 30, 2024.

CARRIED

11.3 Adoption of the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Strategy

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council:

1. approves the September 2024 Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Strategy prepared by Urban Systems Ltd, as attached to the Climate Change Specialist's report dated September 4, 2024; and,
2. directs staff to include recommendations for implementation in the annual business planning process.

(Opposed: Caljouw, Findlay, Manhas)

CARRIED

11.4 Action Plan for Housing Accelerator Fund – Round 2

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council:

1. Approves the North Cowichan Housing Accelerator Action Plan described in the Project Planner’s report dated September 4, 2024, including the seven initiatives generally identified as:
 1. Remove Barriers to Development in the Bell McKinnon Growth Centre
 2. Encourage and Fast-Track Accessory Dwelling Units
 3. Affordable Housing Policy Framework & Incentives
 4. Website Enhancements: Implement E-Permitting & Develop New Guides, Checklists and Templates for Property Owners/Applicants
 5. Zoning Bylaw Review
 6. Streamline Development Permit Requirements for Missing Middle Housing
 7. Reduce Parking Standards for Multi-Unit Housing
2. Authorizes staff to apply to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s Housing Accelerator Fund based on the Action Plan included in the September 4, 2024 report. CARRIED

11.5 Interim Housing Needs Report

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council accepts the 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report dated August 2024 as attached to the Manager, Planning’s September 4, 2024 report. CARRIED

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.1 Watershed Plan

THAT Council:

1. direct staff to provide a report detailing what we know about the recent Somenos Lake fish kill event, listing the ongoing steps that are being taken to improve the water quality of Somenos Lake, and to include suggestions for advocacy that the municipality could take to improve the water quality; and
2. authorize the Mayor to send letters to the Province of BC, the Cowichan Valley Regional District, and the Cowichan Watershed Board urging them to take the necessary actions to address the issues that cause the “fish kill” events in Somenos and Quamichan Lakes. CARRIED

12.2 Request for Leave

Councillor Toporowski declared a conflict of interest due to a personal interest [political aspirations] and its financial benefit to her and left the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council authorize a leave for Councillor Debra Toporowski from her responsibilities as a Councillor, including attendance at Council meetings, beginning September 5, 2024 and ending October 25, 2024. CARRIED

Councillor Toporowski returned to the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

12.3 Temporary Appointment of Acting Mayor

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council designate Councillor Istace to serve as Acting Mayor when the Mayor is absent or unable to act, during Councillor Toporowski's leave of absence, from September 5, 2024 to October 25, 2024.

CARRIED

12.4 Appointment to the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council appoint Councillor Mike Caljouw as Municipal Director to the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board during Councillor Toporowski's leave of absence, from September 5, 2024 to October 25, 2024.

CARRIED

12.5 Heather Young, Under the Oak Farm re- Farm Building Permits

Council discussed this item.

12.6 Chemainus Festival of Murals Society re- Every Child Matters Crosswalk Project

THAT Council direct staff to engage with First Nations on the development of an 'Every Child Matters' themed crosswalk in Chemainus and allocate funds for this project in the 2025 budget.

CARRIED

13. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

None.

14. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received two questions from the public regarding agenda items 8.2.1 and 12.1.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor