

Municipality of North Cowichan

Regular Council

MINUTES

June 4, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

Municipal Hall - Council Chambers & Electronically

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

Staff Present George Farkas, Acting Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Bill Corsan, General Manager, Corporate Services and Community Relations
 Andrea Hainrich, Deputy Corporate Officer
 Barb Floden, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
 Chris Osborne, Manager, Planning
 Clay Reitsma, Director, Engineering
 Dave Preikshot, Senior Environmental Specialist
 James Goodman, Manager, Revenue Services
 John Horn, Director, Social Planning and Protective Services
 Moudud Hasan, Senior Manager, Engineering (Transportation and Drainage)
 Neil Pukesh, Director, Parks and Recreation
 Shawn Cator, Director, Operations
 Tricia Mayea, Corporate Officer

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, Mayor Douglas called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Item 2.1.2 Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes from May 8, 2025
- Item 2.2.2 Chemainus Festival of Murals Society re- Budget Increase for 2026 and Lighting in Waterwheel Park
- Item 2.2.3 Jim Dias, Agent re- Rezoning 3037 and 3047 Westhill Place

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council approves the Consent Agenda, as amended, and the recommendations contained therein.

CARRIED

2.1 Items for Decision

2.1.1 Council Meeting Minutes for Adoption

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopts the minutes of their regular and public hearing meetings held May 21, 2025.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

2.2 Items for Information

2.2.1 Accessibility Advisory Committee minutes from May 27, 2025

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receives the draft minutes of the May 27, 2025, Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting for information.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

3.1 Introduction of Late Items

None.

3.2 Changes to Order of Business

The agenda was amended by moving item 11.1 Amendment to Building Bylaw [Zero Carbon Step Code] for consideration immediately after item 6.1.1 Cowichan Climate Hub.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the agenda be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

4. MAYOR'S REPORT

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

5. PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Council received public input from 14 members of the public regarding agenda items #10.1, 11.1 and 11.2.

The meeting recessed at 5:31 p.m. and reconvened at 5:42 p.m.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND PETITIONS

6.1 Delegations

6.1.1 Cowichan Climate Hub

Jane Kiltie and Valerie Russell of Cowichan Climate Hub presented to Council regarding keeping the current Zero Carbon Step Code Building bylaw in place.

7. UNFINISHED AND POSTPONED BUSINESS

None.

8. STATUTORY HEARING MATTER

8.1 Statutory Right to be Heard

8.1.1 Explanation of the hearing process

Mayor Douglas called the statutory hearing to order at 6:40 p.m. and provided an explanation of the statutory hearing process.

8.1.2 Development Variance Permit for 7136 Richards Trail

1. The Corporate Officer introduced Development Variance Permit Application DVP00116.
2. The Mayor provided the applicant with an opportunity to provide details of their application. No comments were presented.
3. The Corporate Officer advised that one piece of correspondence was received from Farmer Ben's Eggs listing their concerns about the importance of preserving agricultural land in North Cowichan.
4. The Mayor provided an opportunity for comments from persons affected by the proposed permit. No one commented.
5. No new information was provided in relation to the proposed permit.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council authorizes the issuance of Development Variance Permit No. DVP00116 and grant a variance to Section 51(2) of "Zoning Bylaw 1997, No. 2950" by decreasing the minimum lot size on 7136 Richards Trail from 12 hectares to 5.8 hectares.

CARRIED

Mayor Douglas ended the statutory hearing at 6:47 p.m.

9. BYLAWS

9.1 Reserve Fund Establishment Bylaw No. 4019, 2025 for adoption

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopts Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 4019, 2025.

CARRIED

10. REPORTS

10.1 Development Permit with Variance at 2557 Alexander Street (Application DP000330)

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council approves the Development Permit DP000330 at 2557 Alexander Street (PID 032-365-799) to construct a 46-unit 4-storey apartment building as attached to this report dated June 4, 2025, including variances to Zoning Bylaw 1997, No. 2950, to:

1. Permit one parking stall in the front yard of the R8 Zone at 2557 Alexander Street under Section 18(2)(c);
2. Decrease off-street parking requirements from 1 stall per residential unit (46) plus 15% of the number of units as visitor parking (7) for a total of 53 stalls to 0.96 stalls per unit (44) plus 2% visitor parking (1) for a total of 45 stalls under Section 21(7);
3. Increase the principal building height from 11.0m to 15.5m under Section 63(7)(a); and,

4. Decrease the two-way drive aisle width from 7.6 m to 6.0 m under Section 24(1).

CARRIED

10.2 Chemainus Community Garden

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council approves a 1-year licence of use agreement with Cowichan Neighbourhood House Association for the partial use of 9800 Willow Street in Chemainus for a food garden.

CARRIED

10.3 Noise Bylaw Exemption: Catalyst (Crofton Mill)

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council directs the Chief Administrative Officer, or their delegate, to use their discretion when directing bylaw compliance officers to enforce noise infractions under Noise Bylaw No. 2857 as they pertain to Domtar Inc. (Crofton Mill) to allow all activity related to the repair of the Crofton Mill waterline from Wednesday, June 11 to Tuesday, June 17, 2025.

CARRIED

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1 Amendment to Building Bylaw [Zero Carbon Step Code]

THAT Council, in accordance with section 4.4.4 of the Notice of Motion Policy, refers the 'Amendment to Building Bylaw [Zero Carbon Step Code]' notice of motion to staff to return with a report outlining the policy implications including the Climate Action and Energy Plan objectives; recent costing studies; as well as information on the energy level that is being achieved in recent building permits issued both prior to and after adoption of EL-4 step code, to assess the local building industry's readiness with the new standard.

CARRIED

11.2 Changes to Municipal Director Appointments to the CVRD – Councillor Manhas

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council Postpone consideration of the motion to change the Municipal Director Appointments to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board until after the review of the strategic planning session is complete, and to make the appointments to the CVRD as quick as possible afterwards. (Opposed: Caljouw, Findlay, Hogg, Manhas)

DEFEATED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the following motion:

THAT Council appoints Councillor's Findlay and Manhas as Municipal Directors to the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board, with Councillor Justice as Alternate Director #1, and Councillor Istace as Alternate Director #2

be amended to remove the words "Findlay and" and to remove the word "Justice" and replace with "Findlay" as Alternate Director #1.

CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council appoints Councillor Manhas as Municipal Director to the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board, replacing Councillor Istace, and appoints Councillor Findlay as Alternate Director #1, Councillor Istace as Alternate Director #2, and Councillor Hogg as Alternate Director #3.

CARRIED

11.3 Consent Agenda Item 2.1.2 Agricultural Advisory Committee Minutes from May 8, 2025

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receives the minutes of the May 8, 2025 Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting.

CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council delays consideration of the following two Agricultural Advisory Committee recommendations for 6 weeks (July 16, 2025 Council meeting):

THAT Council:

- 1. Endorses the Strategic Agricultural Plan Scope of Work substantially as attached to the Planning Manager's June 4, 2025 report to form the basis of a competitive tender process for consultancy services.*
- 2. Authorizes expenditure of up to \$75,000 from the Agricultural Reserve Fund for the revision, update and replacement of the 2001 Strategic Agricultural Plan.*

(Opposed: Istace, Justice)

CARRIED

11.4 Consent Agenda Item 2.2.2 Chemainus Festival of Murals Society re- Budget Increase for 2026 and Lighting in Waterwheel Park

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council directs staff to include the request from Chemainus Festival of Murals Society for a budget increase for 2026 and lighting in Waterwheel Park, in upcoming budget deliberations.

CARRIED

11.5 Consent Agenda Item 2.2.3 Jim Dias, Agent re- Rezoning 3037 and 3047 Westhill Place

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council refers the letter dated May 27, 2025, from Jim Dias to staff and directs staff to return with a report that would outline options to establish further structure to the large site surcharge component of the Fees & Charges Bylaw, and to reach out to Mr. Dias.

(Opposed: Douglas)

CARRIED

12. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

12.1 Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society [Adopt-a-Trail program]

Councillor Istace introduced the following motion which Council will consider at the June 18, 2025, Regular Council Meeting:

"THAT Council direct staff to prepare a report exploring the feasibility of allowing the Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society (CTSS) to manage an "Adopt-a-Trail" program on sanctioned trails within their existing trail maintenance responsibilities in the Municipality of North Cowichan."

13. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received 2 questions from the public regarding agenda items.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor