

Municipality of North Cowichan
Regular Council
MINUTES
April 1, 2026, 3:00 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 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, Building and Environmental Services
 Barb Floden, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
 Chris Osborne, Senior Manager, Planning and Environment
 Clay Reitsma, Director, Engineering
 Dave Preikshot, Senior Environmental Specialist
 David Conway, Director, Subdivision and Environmental Services
 Jennifer Aldcroft, Senior Environmental and Programs Analyst
 Kayla Reid-Starck, Legislative Coordinator
 Marla Laycock, Director, People and Culture
 Rachel Pukesh, Development Planning Coordinator
 Ron French, Fire Chief
 Shaun Mason, Director, Parks and Recreation
 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 [3:00PM - 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)(c) labour relations or other employee relations.
- 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)(i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.

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)(i) Legal Advice

2.3.2 Closed under section 90(1)(c) Labour

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

2.4 Rise and report

Council rose with report on items 2.3.2 – decision to be released, and 2.3.3 to be released when public notice is given.

2.3.2 Delegation of Authority Compliance Issue – Expense Approvals

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council

1. Authorizes the contract award to C-1 Contractors in the amount of \$2,294,103;
2. Directs staff to reinforce staff training on the Delegation of Authority Bylaw and Purchasing Policy and improve internal review processes for high-value procurements;
3. Directs staff to present the detailed 2027 capital projects for North Cowichan in a closed meeting as part of the financial planning process; and,
4. Directs staff to return to an upcoming open meeting with options to amend the Delegation of Authority Bylaw. CARRIED

3. RECESS UNTIL 5:00PM

The meeting recessed at 4:38 p.m. and reconvened in open session at 5:00 p.m.

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 4.1.3 – Town of View Royal Judicial Review Coalition

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

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopt the minutes of their special and regular meetings held March 18, 2026. ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.1.2 Feedback from Environmental Advisory Committee on Draft Biodiversity Policy Report

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council direct staff to implement recommendations from the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting of February 26, 2026, as outlined in the April 1, 2026 report from the Senior Environmental Specialist, in the final Biodiversity Protection Policy for adoption by Council and that, after adoption of the report by Council, staff work with the Environmental Advisory Committee to develop an Implementation Plan for the Biodiversity Protection Policy.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.1.4 Island Coastal Economic Trust re- Letter of Support for Legislative Modernization

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council authorizes the Mayor to provide a letter of support to Island Coastal Economic Trust for inclusion in its advocacy efforts to the Provincial government.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2 Items for Information

4.2.1 Mill Closure Response – Working Group Draft Minutes from March 20, 2026

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receives the draft minutes of the March 20, 2026 Mill Closure Response – Working Group meeting, for information.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.2 Only Rain Down the Drain – Yellow Fish Catch Basin Marking Initiative

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receives the report titled “Only Rain Down the Drain – Yellow Fish Catch Basin Marking Initiative” dated April 1, 2026, prepared by Jennifer Aldcroft, Climate Change Specialist, for information.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.3 Legislative Assembly of British Columbia re- Provincial Budget 2027 Consultation

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive the March 23, 2026 email from Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, for information.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.4 Village of Pouce Coupe re- UBCM Resolutions

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive the March 13, 2026 email from Duncan Malkinson, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Pouce Coupe, for information.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.2.5 Karen Brandt, Public Affairs & Partnerships, Mosaic Forest Management re-Council Motion on Log Exports and Fibre Availability

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council receive the March 23, 2026 letter from Karen Brandt, Senior Vice President, Public Affairs & Partnerships, Mosaic Forest Management, for information.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

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 no public input from members of the public.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND PETITIONS

8.1 Petitions

8.1.1 Petition regarding Traffic along York Avenue adjacent to Crofton Elementary School

Laura Lenzi Loewen presented an informal petition to Council containing 344 signatures, requesting traffic-calming and signage along York Avenue by Crofton Elementary School and answered questions from Council.

9. UNFINISHED AND POSTPONED BUSINESS

9.1 Oak and Vine Next Steps

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

1. THAT Council rescinds third reading of Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 4030, 2025.
2. THAT Council direct staff to schedule a second Public Hearing on May 20, 2026 for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 4030, 2025, and provide statutory notice in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

CARRIED

9.2 University Village Local Area Plan (UVLAP)

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council direct staff not to add the University Village Local Area Plan update project to the workplan at this time.

CARRIED

10. BYLAWS

10.1 Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 4031, 2026 for adoption

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopts Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 4031, 2026. CARRIED

10.2 Bylaw Offence Notice Enforcement Amendment Bylaw No. 4064 for adoption

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopts Bylaw Offence Notice Enforcement Amendment Bylaw No. 4064, 2026. CARRIED

10.3 Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 4066 for adoption

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopts Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 4066, 2026.
(Opposed: Findlay, Manhas)
CARRIED

10.4 Municipal Fine and Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 4051, 2026

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council gives first, second and third readings to Municipal Fine and Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 4051, 2026. CARRIED

11. REPORTS

11.1 Hydro Excavating Contract Award

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council award the three-year contract for hydro excavating services, in the amount of \$863,500, to SaveOnSeptic Services Ltd., and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the contract on behalf of the Municipality of North Cowichan. CARRIED

11.2 Climate Action and Energy Plan Terms of Reference Update

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council adopts the revised Terms of Reference for the Climate Action and Energy Plan Reserve Fund as presented in Attachment 2 of the Climate Change Specialist's report dated April 1, 2026. CARRIED

11.3 Municipal and Regional District Tax Renewal Process

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the following motion:

THAT Council authorizes the Mayor to write a letter to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board regarding the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) renewal process, confirming agreement in principle for renewal and rate increase to 3% conditional upon:

- a. *Clear reporting that distinguishes administration costs from program expenditures.*
- b. *Increased funding allocation to the Visitor Information Centres in Chemainus and the Cowichan Regional Visitor Centre at the Forest Discovery Centre.*

- c. *Continued CVRD administration of the MRDT program.*
- d. *North Cowichan specific performance metrics and annual outcome reporting.*
- e. *A governance review by spring 2027 that clarifies oversight, funding allocation processes, and reporting expectations for Tourism Cowichan and the Cowichan Housing Association in administering MRDT and Online Accommodation Platform revenues.*
- f. *Origin-based tracking and public reporting of Online Accommodation Platform MRDT revenues allocated to affordable housing.*

be amended to add the word "Significantly" at the beginning of item 'b'. CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council authorizes the Mayor to write a letter to the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board regarding the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) renewal process, confirming agreement in principle for renewal and rate increase to 3% conditional upon:

- a. Clear reporting that distinguishes administration costs from program expenditures.
- b. Significantly increased funding allocation to the Visitor Information Centres in Chemainus and the Cowichan Regional Visitor Centre at the Forest Discovery Centre.
- c. Continued CVRD administration of the MRDT program.
- d. North Cowichan specific performance metrics and annual outcome reporting.
- e. A governance review by spring 2027 that clarifies oversight, funding allocation processes, and reporting expectations for Tourism Cowichan and the Cowichan Housing Association in administering MRDT and Online Accommodation Platform revenues.
- f. Origin-based tracking and public reporting of Online Accommodation Platform MRDT revenues allocated to affordable housing. CARRIED

11.4 Disposal of 1996 Superior E-One Aerial apparatus

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with the sale of 1996 Superior E-One Aerial apparatus to the Pacheedaht First Nation Emergency Services in the amount of \$15,000.00. CARRIED

11.5 Election Personnel Remuneration Policy

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council approves the "Election Personnel Remuneration Policy" attached to the Manager, Legislative Services report dated April 1, 2026. CARRIED

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.1 Consent agenda item 4.1.3 Town of View Royal Judicial Review Coalition

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT Council takes no further action with regards to the letter dated December 4, 2025, from Town of View Royal Mayor Sid Tobias. CARRIED

13. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received no questions from the public.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor