

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2003 AT 7:00 PM AT ECHO CENTRE**

PRESENT: Mayor McRae, Councillors Patterson, Chopra, Mealey, Price, Solda and Lord.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. **REPORTS:**

Councillor Patterson described Council's commitment to maintain the City's annual expenditures at budget levels. He commended the Industrial Heritage Society, the Mill Manager and the many volunteers for a successful operating season in 2003. He emphasized the need for the community to be positive about the Mill.

Kevin Hunter, President, Industrial Heritage Society, provided a provincial perspective on the tourism season which showed a modest decline and compared it to the increase in visits at the McLean Mill. Mr. Hunter confirmed that the Mill would complete the season under budget.

Neil Malbon, Mill Manager, outlined the details of the budget, revenues and expenditures for 2003. He described programs for 2004, and indicated that the City is investigating options for improving water supply in response to water quality issues from the last year.

Jean McIntosh, Manager of the Alberni Valley Museum, outlined the museum's role on the site and the activities undertaken in 2003.

3. **INFORMATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE:**

Mike Carter, Acting Chair, Alberni Valley Museum Heritage Commission, presented a letter in support of the McLean Mill National Historic Site, which is attached to and forms part of these minutes.

5. **DELEGATIONS:**

5.1 **Gerald Scott**

Mr. Scott encouraged the City to secure sponsorship from the provincial government for the operation of the McLean Mill.

5.2 **Dusty Miller**

Mr. Miller expressed his pleasure to see the responsible management of the McLean Mill in 2003. He reiterated his support for a referendum to gauge the community's support for the Mill. He suggested that if operations were provided in french, greater federal monies would be available.

5.3 Richard Berg

Mr. Berg stated he was happy that the mill would operate within its budget for this year. He wondered how long it would be that the City will continue to subsidize the Mill and he asked for a gradual decrease in the City's subsidy. He expressed displeasure that the Regional areas were not contributing more than \$30,000 per year to the Mill. He outlined some of his ideas for improving the operation which included establishing a train station in proximity of Johnston Road, running the train to Loon Lake and later hours for the commencement of the daily train schedule. Mr. Berg also proposed that the Mill be advertised on BC Ferries, including their website.

5.4 Tommy Simmons

Mr. Simmons encouraged the community to get behind and support the McLean Mill. He indicated his involvement with the McLean Mill Advisory Committee and stated the idea of advertng on BC Ferries was previously investigated and the cost is prohibitive. He also indicated that a train station at Johnston Road may not be approved by the Ministry of Transportation.

5.5 Councillor Hira Chopra

Councillor Chopra expressed his appreciation to the employees and volunteers who have worked to create such a good season at the Mill. He appreciated the ability for the Mill to operate within budget. In response to his questions about the proposed upgrade to the water system, Mr. Ken Watson, Acting City Manager stated that concerns were expressed by the Health Inspector regarding the current water system which are predominantly water quality issues. The two choices include improved on site treatment or connecting to the Beaver Creek water system.

5.6 Councillor Amanda Lord

Councillor Lord thanked members of the Beaufort Gang for their contribution during the season, their efforts were a highlight of the train rides. In response to a question from Councillor Lord, Jean McIntosh explained that the City could not be sure of the type or amount of grants it receives from one year to the next, but the City does apply for those that have relevant criteria to the projects at the mill. Ms. McIntosh confirmed that presently there are no provincial sources of funding for the Mill.

5.7 Miss Fraser

Miss Fraser commended the Tin Pants Theatre Troupe for their great performances and hosting at the Mill. She indicated that the Log Train Trail is an integral component of the Mill and a support group has formed to promote the trail

5.8 Lindsay Rogers

Lindsay Rogers indicated that the volunteers and employees are doing a great job and are encouraged to keep it up.

5.9 **Jennifer Norn**

Ms. Norn encouraged a letter writing campaign to train enthusiasts to promote the Mill and Steam train.

5.10 **Mira**

Mira indicated that she had previously worked for the Mill, she appreciated the opportunity and saw first hand how much the Mill is appreciated by tourists and visitors alike.

5.11 **Ken Rutherford**

Mr. Rutherford stated that we do not need new ideas what is required is a commitment to do well with what we have. He stated that the Mill is an investment and it needs time to grow.

5.12 **Liz Malbon**

Ms. Malbon emphasized the value of the Mill itself. The machinery and equipment was very much appreciated by the visitors to the site. Many visitors have worked with this kind of equipment and the Mill is the only opportunity for them to revisit this past.

5.13 **Melody Francoeur**

Ms. Francoeur introduced herself as a member of the Beaufort Gang, she outlined the need for more volunteers and asked for people to become involved.

5.14 **Wayne Crowley**

Proposed that the railway operate within a smaller area and provide greater exposure on Johnston Road.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm.

Mayor

Clerk