

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
2008 – 2012 FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN
HELD THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2008 AT 6:30 PM
IN THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

PRESENT: Mayor McRae, Councillors Chopra, McLeman, Mealey, Patterson, Solda and Whiteman

Approximately 22 members of the public were in attendance.

1. Call to Order and Adoption of Agenda.

Mealey/Solda

That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

Carried

B. PRESENTATIONS

1. Fire Department – Fire Chief

Larry McGifford, Fire Chief, provided an overview of the Fire Department and the proposed budget.

There was discussion regarding apparatus (vehicle replacement). The Fire Chief indicated that Engine #3 will be replaced in 2008 following 24 years of service. The standard life is 20 years and that is what the City had planned through the Equipment Replacement Reserve Fund.

In response to a question from Mayor McRae, the Fire Chief indicated that amalgamation of Alberni Valley Fire Departments requires political will and direction from local governments of the Alberni Valley.

In response to a question of Councillor McLeman, the Fire Chief stated that presently the City is not reimbursed for confined space services provided by the Fire Department.

Donna Brett, resident, asked if the ambulance service would be amalgamated with the Fire Department. The Fire Chief explained that no consideration was being given to this by the province at this time.

2. RCMP – OIC

Inspector Gord Wellar, OIC, RCMP Port Alberni, provided an overview of the RCMP department and the proposed budget.

In response to a question of Council, Inspector Gord Wellar explained that the provincial police contract with the RCMP is due for renewal in 2012. Presently there is no information about the impact this may have.

Donna Brett asked if the RCMP would consider the Community Police and School Liaison positions as Municipal employees rather than RCMP. The Inspector indicated he has investigated this and it would not work.

C. INFORMATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

1. Kirk/Selkirk McPhail

*Mealey/Patterson
That Informational Correspondence from Kirk McPhail regarding the request from Catalyst Paper for further industrial taxation reductions be received and filed.*

Carried

D. REPORTS

1. Manager of Human Resources and Community Development – External Training Budget

*Chopra/Mealey
That the report from the Manager of Human Resources and Community Development dated February 5, 2008, providing a breakdown of the external training budget, be received.*

Carried

2. Alberni Valley Museum Budget

Council considered the tabled motion from the Budget meeting of January 30, 2008 regarding the Alberni Valley Museum Budget but agreed that it was premature to consider the matter at this time.

E. OVERVIEW AND TAX RATES - CITY MANAGER

1. The City Manager made a presentation regarding the budget, tax rates and the implications of the direction for a further annual tax reduction for Major Industry of \$125,000.

Council discussed the impact to residential tax rates. There was some suggestion that the average residential tax payer should realize no more than a 5-6% tax increase in 2008. The matter was to be discussed in more detail at another budget meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 6:30 pm.

Councillor Patterson requested that staff present a report at the March 4 meeting on Reserve Funds and look at options of reducing the City's annual expenses by reducing contributions to the ERRF.

F. PUBLIC INPUT

Amar Giri, CUPE Local 118 Vice President, stated that the Works Yard has reduced two full time positions, not one.

Alexandra Pazitch, resident, asked if the proposal to reduce major industry taxes by \$125,000 per year is final. The City Clerk explained that tax rates are set by the bylaw to be adopted in April based on the City budget. The Mayor stated that the City must address its high industrial taxes and has little option but to reduce industrial taxes.

G. ADJOURNMENT

*Mealey/Patterson
That the meeting adjourn at 9:08 pm.*

Carried

Mayor

Clerk