

Alberni Valley Museum
and Heritage Commission



Alberni Valley Museum and Heritage Commission
Meeting of Wednesday October 5, 2016
7:00 pm in the AV Museum

Minutes

Attending:

Bert Simpson
Judy Carlson
Penny Cote
John Douglas
Libby Manson
Gareth Flostrand
Pam Craig
Jamie Morton, Manager of Museum, Heritage and Culture

Regrets:

Neil Malbon
Jolleen Dick
David Taberner
Paul McDougall
Marta Williamson
Dan Washington

Guest:

Tim Pley – City of Port Alberni CAO

Called to order 7:05 PM.

1. Introduction of Tim Pley, City of Port Alberni CAO to the Heritage Commission.
2. Moved by Pam Craig, seconded by Judy Carlson, that the agenda of the October 5, 2016 meeting be approved.
3. Moved by Pam Craig, seconded by Penny Cote, that the minutes of the September 7 meeting, as amended, be approved.

Museum and Heritage Commission City of Port Alberni

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4. Correspondence
 - No correspondence, but a very positive letter to the editor in the September 15 *Alberni Valley News* from James Calhoun of Port Coquitlam, who had visited to research in the Archives and was extremely impressed by the AV Museum, and called for its continued support by the community.
5. Updates – CAO Tim Pley – Comments on McLean Mill Governance:
 - a. Outlined the evolution of the current situation:
 - i. Advisory Committee formed in 2015, which developed into the Board of Management [BOM].
 - ii. City Council has terminated the contract with the WVIHS to operate the mill, effective December 31, with the BOM taking over at that time. The WVIHS has been great in managing the transition, and keeping the operation going, in spite of many challenges.
 - iii. The WVIHS will continue to maintain the truck and machinery collection at the IHC, and the rail collection at the Roundhouse. The BOM will manage McLean Mill NHS, and will contract with the WVIHS to operate the APR. There is still some discussion about how the operation of the Train Station will be integrated.
 - iv. The BOM needs to establish a legal identity to take over the management contract, and has looked at various options, before settling on a one-member non-profit society model, under the 2016 BC Societies Act. The BOM currently consists of Jan Lavertu, Bill Collette, Sheena Falconer, and Ken Fyfe, with more members to be added. There are also ex-officio and advisory participants. The BOM has a more retail-oriented focus than either the WVIHS or the City of Port Alberni.
 - b. Discussion followed, with a number of issues raised:
 - i. Staffing the Mill – who will be responsible? Managing volunteers is an ongoing issue – who will be responsible? There is a split between paid staff & volunteers – need to manage that also. Mr. Pley responded that the new society/BOM would manage these issues.
 - ii. Time issue – what if the society is not in place in time to take over on January 1? Mr. Pley noted that temporary arrangements would be made, perhaps utilizing a short-term contract manager.
 - iii. Heritage preservation is a sensitive issue – will this be ensured under the new arrangement? Mr. Pley noted that the Heritage Commission could request representation on the BOM, or write a letter to Council. Additionally, the Museum Manager will be advising the BOM. He further noted that lack of maintenance was an ongoing issue, and clear capital priorities were required.
 - iv. If the Museum was no longer City-operated, there was no guarantee that there would be a professional Museum Manager – also an uncertain future for the Heritage Commission in the current environment – how could heritage preservation oversight be ensured? Mr. Pley noted that there would still be some expertise

available – the split between the Museum and McLean Mill already existed. Further, he was positive about the initiative to develop a city Arts, Culture, and Heritage Plan.

- v. There was further discussion about the role of the Heritage Commission – City Council should demonstrate some commitment to heritage – the Heritage Commission provides a good mechanism to represent heritage interests and advise Council – Council should be encouraged to understand this role. Mr Pley made the suggestion that the Heritage Commission come as a delegation to City Council.

- Other Updates – Heritage Cave Preservation Initiative:

- a. Judy Carlson and Jamie Morton updated the status of this initiative. A letter to the NTC, as directed in a motion at the September meeting, had not been written, as after further investigation, the situation seems to be in hand within Nuuchahnulth and provincial government agencies. The Archaeology Branch has recently been in touch with the Hupacasath First Nation, and a number of actions are proposed or under way to ensure the protection of the cave, ranging from further documentation of its resources to a proposal to bar the entrance to prevent ingress and damage to the resources. As the Heritage Commission letter was intended to advance strategies for the protection of the cave, and such initiatives are already under way involving the appropriate parties, the Heritage Commission will take no further action at this time.

6. Reports:

6.1 Judy Carlson reported for the ADHS

- The ADHS Board has learned that there is some flexibility on the phasing in of the new Societies Act, so some of the time pressure is lifted.
- At the public meeting of Thursday, October 20, author Lynne Bowen will be speaking on the topic of Italian immigration – unfortunately, the PAMHS has one of its Maritime Evenings at the same time.

6.2 Jamie Morton reported for the AV Museum.

- We were pleased with our summer season, with good response to in-Museum programs, and good response to our presence at the Train Station with our two summer students, Emma and Jonathan. They welcomed about 1,500 visitors to the Train Station on their days there, in addition to the passengers on the train, and provided a range of services in addition to the walking tours and exhibit interpretation.
- The BC Arts Council Operating Funds application was sent in; this is the second year of the two-year extended funding cycle recently introduced by BCAC. This is the primary source of external operating funds for the Museum, and is granted based on various performance criteria.
- *Vacation Land: Pleasurable Diversions in the Alberni Valley* has been well-received, with strong local interest. We will partially deconstruct this exhibit to mount the travelling exhibit from the RBCM – *British Columbia's War: 1914-1918* – arriving On October 26, in time for Remembrance Day. This will include a complementary exhibit produced by ADSS Civilization students, that will focus on soldiers that signed up

from Port Alberni, providing a local connection. There will also be further educational and public programming.

- *Vacation Land* will be remounted in January, to be followed by *Alberni's Home Front*, the exhibit for summer 2017, which will commemorate and recognize the 75th anniversary of World War II's local impact in 1942.
- The Museum's Film Fest Alberni fall program continues, with *The Dressmaker* the next showing, on Sunday, October 23, 5:00, at the Paramount Theatre, and then a final film in November.

6.3 Penny Cote reported for the ACRD

- Back from the UBCM Conference, and now working on the budget – early January is the deadline for any ACRD grant applications, such as the one given last year to the PAMHS for the roof over the *Swan*.
- The airport project is going well, with paving of the runway coming soon.
- February 3 & 4 – the Island Agricultural Show will be held at the Glenwood Centre.
- The Sproat Lake Regatta was a success again this year, including the Cole family historic outboard display at the Show & Shine.
- Nothing specific is being proposed or planned for the Canada 150 events in the summer of 2017.

6.4 Bert Simpson reported for the WVIHS.

- Volunteers are putting away trucks and machines for the winter.
- The City's Hayes Chaindrive was taken by two of the WVIHS volunteers to display at the Woodfibre Reunion in Squamish – the truck was originally built for the Woodfibre mill.
- The WVIHS International highway tractor – "Big Bertha" – is out of service – Brad Berry loaned a tractor to the group for the Woodfibre trip.
- Work is proceeding on deconstructing and salvaging rails and ties from the paper mill rail line.
- Work continues on the restoration of the #112 Baldwin locomotive.
- Tom Maher and crew continue to work on the restoration of the Strathcona Parlour Car in the IHC.

6.5 Pam Craig reported for the School Board

- This year there are 3,737 enrollments in the district.
- Noting the cooperation of Shelley Harding of the Museum and Anne Ostwald of ADSS on the local component of the WWI exhibit.
- Ministry funds are available for seismic upgrading for west coast schools – Ucluelet Secondary/Elementary and Wickaninish – but the goal of the Board is to have one consolidated K-12 school in Ucluelet.
- Noting that other Island school districts, including Sooke, are incorporating elements that were piloted in ADSS – providing a model for other new schools.

6.6 John Douglas reported for the PA Maritime Heritage Society.

- The project to construct the shelter for the *Swan* is moving ahead well, led by Kenn Whiteman – the trusses are nearly on, and a metal roof is to be applied next.
- The Maritime Discovery Centre will now be open three days a week through the winter, operated by the new coordinator, Nicole.
- The next Maritime Evening, unfortunately in conflict with the ADHS event, is to be held on October 20, featuring Barrie Farrell, talking about his career as a boatbuilder.

6.7 Gareth Flostrand reported for the Community at Large.

- The Community Arts Council will be holding over the Carol Schulz exhibit at the Rollin Art Centre.
- Trinity Church will host a Thanksgiving Dinner, Monday, October 10 at 5:00 PM.
- An Old Time Square Dance will be held at Cherry Creek Hall on Saturday, October 15, from 7:00 – 10:00 PM.
- Oktoberfest will be celebrated at the Beaver Creek Hall, Saturday, October 22, from 7:00 PM – 1:00 AM.
- The Annual Sail-Past and Activities will be held on Sunday, December 4, from 5:00 – 9:00 PM.
- Penny Cote asked about Christmas events at McLean Mill – several responses that there was nothing going on there this year, due to the management transition.

6.8 Tim Pley [for Dan Washington] reported for the City of Port Alberni

- Asked how people felt about the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Plan – responses were generally positive – similar models appear to work in other communities, and there may be an “economy of scale” benefit.
- City Council has revisited its Strategic Plan – not finalized, with one more review due, but appears that there are no major changes.
- Budget process is starting – noted proposed 17% increase for 2017 – not realistic – but pattern of one-year, rather than stated five-year plans. Mr Pley wants to work backward from anticipated/desired goals in 2021 – then determine how to reach them. Issues include stagnant population size and so tax base, aging infrastructure – so options are to reduce services or increase taxes – wants to take a long perspective on priorities. Noting the imminent release of an online survey to obtain public input – and some changes in how the budget will be rolled out to the public.
- Asked about the swimming pool – response was that it was the oldest in the province, but required \$20 - \$25 million to replace – a difficult challenge – perhaps some regional district involvement? \$11 million being spent on the sewage lagoon project in 2017, so no more funds available at present.
- Asked about industrial tax program – Mr. Pley noted that it was in the fourth of five years, so soon to be reviewed.
- Asked about the Fire Chief and City Engineer positions – Mr. Pley noted that both recruiting processes were under way.

7. Next Meeting

- 7:00 PM, Wednesday, November 2, 2016, at the AV Museum.

8. Adjournment

- Moved at 8:48 by Pam Craig to adjourn the meeting.



Gareth Flostrand, Chair
Alberni Valley Museum and Heritage Commission

Davina Hartwell, City Clerk
City of Port Alberni