

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Monday, June 19, 2023 @ 4:00 PM
In the City Hall Council Chambers | 4850 Argyle Street, Port Alberni, BC

Present: Mayor S. Minions
Councillor D. Dame
Councillor J. Douglas
Councillor D. Haggard
Councillor C. Mealey @ 4:13 pm
Councillor C. Solda

Absent: Councillor T. Patola

Staff: M. Fox, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Smith, Director of Development Services | Deputy CAO
D. Monteith, Interim Director of Corporate Services
A. McGifford, Director of Finance
W. Thorpe, Director of Parks, Recreation and Heritage
R. Macauley, Deputy Director of Finance
S. Darling, Deputy Director of Corporate Services/Recording Secretary

Gallery: 4

A. CALL TO ORDER & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the agenda be approved as printed and circulated.

CARRIED

B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the minutes of the meeting held at 6:00 pm on May 15, 2023, be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED

C. PUBLIC INPUT PERIOD

A. Street

Spoke to building permit application wait times.

D. DELEGATIONS

1. West Coast General Medical Staff Association

Dr. M. Lambiotte presented an overview of medical staff recruitment and retention noting challenges and opportunities for improvement on a region wide level.

The Committee requested the item be brought forward to the June 26th Regular meeting for consideration of Dr. Lambiotte's recommendation of a joint Task Force to support recruitment and retention of medical staff in the Alberni Valley.

2. Dr. S. Longman

Dr. S. Longman presented on addictions and mental health in Port Alberni.

3. **Port Alberni Community Action Team (CAT)**

R. Merk and E. Frood presented an overview of the Poisoned Drug Crisis in the community noting opportunities for the City to provide support through continued advocacy with senior government and the sharing of information to reduce stigma and harm.

The Committee requested the item be brought forward to the June 26th Regular meeting for consideration of suggested opportunities to support.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Bylaw Enforcement Policy**

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT Committee of the Whole recommend Council approve Policy 3008-1 "Bylaw Enforcement".

CARRIED

Members of the Committee commented/questioned as follows *[responses, if provided, are reflected below]*:

- Staff report noted approximately 1000 bylaw complaints annually. How many years does that go back?

The numbers reflect back to 2018 to when Bylaw department was expanded.

F. STAFF REPORTS

1. **Sports Fields | Current Status and Long-Term Maintenance**

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council direct staff to obtain preliminary costs for the recommended capital projects for City-owned sports fields for Council's consideration at a future Regular meeting.

CARRIED

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council direct staff to utilize a portion of the awarded Growing Communities Fund to complete a Parks, Recreation and Heritage master plan.

CARRIED

Members of the Committee commented/questioned as follows *[responses, if provided, are reflected below]*:

- Facilities plan different than parks master plan?
A facilities audit is underway with surplus funds. The proposed parks master plan is an overarching plan in addition to the previous discussion and budgeted line items within the Financial Plan for the purposes of a facilities audit.
- Option of conversion of fields from soil to sand, is this a new technique in the building of fields?
Field structure is dependent on a number of factors, including the age of a field and associated costs for the material.

- Are sand based fields preferred by users and if the conversion is undertaken, deeming the field temporarily unusable, is there availability to reroute user groups?
When comparing sand versus soil-based fields it does not have much impact on user satisfaction. Sand is favourable for drainage and other maintenance requirements. Should a conversion be undertaken causing temporary closure of affected fields, staff would look to communicate with user groups to advise on what fields to shut down/when for the least amount of disruption and best ability to reroute.
- What is the timeline for field upgrade completion?
The timeline is dependent upon the service level Council wishes to deliver. The proposed parks master plan would assist Council in making this determination.
- How long would a master plan take to establish and can some work be undertaken on the fields in the meantime?
Portions of the work could begin at any time [subject to weather and staff capacity]. The proposed two-part recommendation reflects capital projects to solve existing challenges and establishment of a master plan for long-term planning.
- What are the field conditions at present?
Fields are presently in good condition. User groups have reported satisfaction with the work that staff were able to recently conduct, with the understanding that there is still work to be done.
- If Council approves the capital projects as suggested, how would work proceed?
Staff recommend that Council indicate priorities as it relates to field use based on a number of factors such as, but not limited to, volume of overall participation, youth sport, adult sport, individual sports, etc.

G. CORRESPONDENCE

The Director of Corporate Services summarized correspondence to the Committee:

- a. Tseshah First Nation | Draft Letter in Support of an Alternative Access Road.

Councillor Dame left the meeting at 6:41 pm and returned at 6:43 pm.

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council support the letter provided by Tseshah First Nation addressed to the Prime Minister and Premier Eby requesting the establishment of an alternative access road in response to the Cameron Lake Bluffs fire and associated closure of Highway 4.

CARRIED

Councillor Haggard left the meeting at 6:44 pm and returned at 6:46 pm.

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Growing Communities Fund | Grant Priorities Plan

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council direct staff to allocate Growing Communities funds in the amount of \$5,269,000 as follows:

- *20% of the funding to address information gaps in populating long term financial planning for community growth and the City's major assets.*
- *80% of funding to set specific capital priorities based on the results of the long-term financial planning.*

CARRIED

2. 2024 Permissive Tax Exemptions Policy

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend Council direct staff to proceed with establishing new Permissive Tax and Places of Public Worship Bylaws for the years 2024 to 2027 [4-year term] based on the Permissive Tax Exemption Policy dated June 10, 2019.

CARRIED

Members of the Committee commented/questioned as follows [*responses, if provided, are reflected below*]:

- *Is it anticipated that 2024 exemption amounts will remain within the overall cap of 1.15 percent of annual property tax revenues?*
Previous years reflect total exemptions amounted to 25 percent below the 1.15 percent cap.
- *Were many organizations affected by the implementation in 2019 of a cap for land owned by public places of worship in excess of a one-half acre?*
Approximately 5 applicants were affected by the change.
- *Do exemptions still apply only to the portion of the building that is being used for a place of worship?*
If a portion of the building is being used for services that do not meet the criteria within the Permissive Tax Exemption Policy, that portion would be classified as non-exempt.

I. QUESTION PERIOD

Neil Anderson

Requested clarity regarding the recent amendments made to Question Period.

J. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the meeting adjourn at 7:05 pm.

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT



Mayor



Corporate Officer