

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Monday, March 21, 2022 @ 4:00 PM
In the City Hall Council Chambers | 4850 Argyle Street, Port Alberni, BC

PRESENT: Mayor S. Minions
Councillor R. Corbeil
Councillor D. Haggard
Councillor R. Paulson
Councillor H. Poon
Councillor C. Solda
Councillor D. Washington

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 7:00 pm on March 7, 2022, be adopted.

CARRIED

C. DELEGATIONS

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

E. STAFF REPORTS

1. Director of Finance – 2022 Tax Rates

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT members of the Committee recommend to Council that Council set the City's 2022 Tax Rates Bylaw based on the proposed tax share as outlined in 'Appendix A' of the staff report titled '2022 Tax Rates' and dated March 14, 2022.

CARRIED

The following outlines questions from Members of the Committee and associated staff responses. [Note: Questions posed by Members of the Committee have also been captured on the existing Q&A summary document.]

Members of the Committee commented/questioned as follows:

- Can you please clarify how we arrived at a Major Industry tax increase of \$282,670 and Light Industry tax percent increase of 90.17%?
Given the Somass is now a City property, it is no longer reflected in the tax base. There has also been a significant increase in the values for Class 5 so with that there has been a rebalance and the tax share for Class 5 is 90% over the previous year. Following the delinking of Class 4 & 5 in 2021, and now a rebalancing to share tax allocations across all property classes.

- To clarify, despite the loss of the Somass property from the tax base, the net Non-Market increase of 2.07% remains?
Yes
- What would the 2.07% Non-market increase be in dollar value?
Staff will bring information to provide Council context to address this question [April 11 RCM].
- What is the provincial average for residential tax?
The provincial average varies greatly and is dependent on a number of factors within each municipality such as assessed values in each property class [ie. some municipalities don't have an industrial tax base]. This will be included in a report to Council on April 11, 2022.
- Will improvements at the San Group sawmill be reflected as an increase within the Light Industry Class?
BC Assessment values are based on the condition of property on July 1 and values at October 30 of the previous year. In looking at the net tax value of that category, there has been an increase from 2021-2022.
- How does Port Alberni compare to other communities in tax rates over the last 5 years?
Director of Finance to prepare a report.

Note: There is a calculation error in the Financial Plan included in the agenda related to the amendment made on March 14, 2022 for the replacement of the Glenwood Boiler that is reflected on Pg. 29 in the amount of \$60,000. The amount was not carried through to the summary total or the transfer to and from reserves.

2. **Capital Projects Review and Update**

Director of Engineering and Public Works and Director of Parks, Recreation and Heritage presented a verbal overview of the City's Capital Works Projects.

Members of the Committee commented/questioned as follows:

- What area is the linking of Roger Creek Trail referencing?
This would be adjacent to the existing Mill Stone Park and tied in with the Connect the Quays Pathway Project.
- Will the Parks Canada funding for McLean Mill continue?
The federal government has not indicated a timeline for funding.
- Was the McLean Mill septic upgrade budgeted for 2021?
Yes. Staff are now engaging with the project consultant to confirm the scope of work and budget.
- Playground upgrade status?
A number of existing play structures were removed in 2020 related to safety concerns. Staff will incorporate a 'Parks Master Plan' to create an overarching plan as part of the Official Community Plan review and update.
- Will the projects outlined for 2022 be completed this year or in 2023?
The projects are scheduled to be completed in 2022.

- Once the old Lagoon is decommissioned, what are the future plans?
The Lagoon will be dried out, solids will be hauled to the landfill, and rehabilitation efforts will commence [to be determined].
- Street Line painting start date?
As soon as weather permits and the contractor is available.
- Are sidewalk repairs being made and what is the City's plan for regular maintenance?
A GIS Technologist determines and tracks deficiencies via a mapping system for priority sequencing. While repairs are occurring the tracking system is not yet finalized. New asset management software is a vital piece of the tracking process and once that software is in place, staff will bring this information forward for Council's consideration.
- What is the best method for the public to report sidewalk issues?
There is a 'Report a Problem' function available online at portalberni.ca or residents can call Public Works at 250.720.2840.
- Is there a proactive inspection process for sidewalk repair?
If staff notice an issue, they will document/report but there is not a specific proactive program in place. This would take place once the asset management software is implemented.
- 'Roadway Surface Maintenance' and 'Road Allowance Maintenance' reflects a budget of over \$1M for 2022, what does that entail?
From an operational perspective it is staff fixing potholes/smaller areas of damage, crack sealing, removal of debris, etc. Staff are in the process of incorporating this function within a tracking system.

F. CORRESPONDENCE

G. NEW BUSINESS

Update on Welcome Sign Project

At this time, progress has not been made on the project.

H. PUBLIC INPUT/QUESTION PERIOD

Roland Smith

Q1: At the March 7th E-Town Hall, Council received question from an 'anonymous' webinar participant which is contradictory to the Council Procedures Bylaw.

A1: *At present Council has not implemented a 'Hybrid' Terms of Reference. Council will need to address this point when updating the Council Procedures Bylaw.*

Q2: The 3rd Avenue, Argyle Street to Mar Street Beautification Project grant application was unsuccessful and it is noted in the Financial Plan that some of the budgeted funds have been reallocated to other projects. Is this project officially off of the books?

A2: *Council has not given formal direction at this time though the project was defunded at the onset of COVID-19 and other funds have since been repurposed.*

Q3: What is the status of the other forcemain [pipe #5] with regards to age/material and need to replace?

A3: While pipe #5 is the same material and age as the pipe #4 which is set to be replaced first due to the associated break and inability to repair, it does not have as many fines or as much flow which may lengthen its service life. Pipe #5 is on the priority list for replacement.

Q4: The Combined Sewer Overflow project for 7th Avenue to Redford has been removed from the list since initial Financial Plan projections. Will that return on a future year within the Financial Plan?

A4: In 2021 a consultant was engaged to review and prioritize projects such as this. Once this review has been completed, the projects will be relisted in a priority sequence and brought forward for Council's consideration.

Q5: The McLean Mill septic report states that the existing system is non-compliant. How is the City addressing this issue in the short-term [prior to remediating the issue as is projected within the Financial Plan for 2022]?

A5: Staff are working with the consultant to determine the scope of the project including compliancy as well as contingency for continued operation of the site by the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Q6: The \$30,000 allocated for removal of the underground storage tanks located at McLean Mill has been reallocated to other McLean Mill projects. Has the City had confirmation from the authorities that the tanks need not be removed?

A6: A site visit determined tanks are empty. At this time the surrounding area continues to be tested and monitored for contamination.

Q7: Has the City been successful in receiving the Connect the Quays Pathway grant?

A7: The grant results have not been received. Once that has been determined, the scope of work will be considered.

Q8: The Water Meter Replacement Project began in 2017 and including 2021 has had \$1.57M allocated towards this project and was anticipated to be completed this year yet only \$169,000 has been spent. What is the current status on this project? How many metres are there to replace and how many of those have been replaced? What was the expected lifespan of original metres? Is this project still adequately funded given inflation rates?

A8: Staff will attempt to answer detailed questions throughout the budget process. With regards to project status, existing resources continue to be tasked to other priorities. Staff are currently exploring options for delivering this project over the next year and following the financial planning process will provide that information to Council for consideration.

Q9: Pg. 18 of today's agenda reflects a projected revenue for 2022 of \$40,370,885, the same as the March 7th estimate but the expenses reflect \$45,594,941 which is \$2.17M more than the March 7th estimate. Please explain why there is an increase in expenses not reflected within revenue.

A9: There have been amendments made to Capital projects which do not impact the revenue but impact the Reserves.

Joseph Leskosek

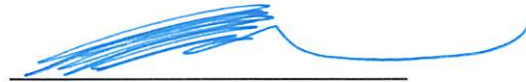
What is the City's liability with regards to injury or accidents that may occur due to lack of line painting, tripping hazards on sidewalks, etc.?

G. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the meeting adjourn at 5:28 pm.

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT



Mayor



Corporate Officer