



**CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT**

Municipal Hall
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

Minutes - Final

Committee of the Whole

Monday, August 21, 2023

6:00 PM

Esquimalt Council Chambers

Present 7 - Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Councillor Ken Armour
Councillor Darlene Rotchford
Councillor Andrea Boardman
Councillor Duncan Cavens
Councillor Jacob Helliwell
Councillor Tim Morrison

Staff: Bill Brown, Director of Development Services
Joel Clary, Director of Engineering & Public Works
Vicki Gannon, Director of HR & Community Relations
Deb Hopkins, Director of Corporate Services/Corporate
Officer/Acting CAO
Jack Lees, Manager of Occupational Health and Safety
Jonah Ross, Recording Secretary

Others: Inspector Mike Brown, VicPD Esquimalt Division

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Desjardins called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Councillor Morrison acknowledged the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations on whose traditional territory we live, we learn, and we do our work.

Mayor Desjardins recognized the Esquimalt Fire Rescue Service (EFRS) members deployed to Kelowna to assist in forest fire response work. Appreciation was also extended to all EFRS members for stepping up on short notice to cover shifts to enable this support. On behalf of Council, Mayor Desjardins sent best wishes to all crews responding to the fires, and to evacuees affected by the fires. The Mayor also spoke to the ongoing drought levels and water restrictions across the province; she noted measures taken by the Township to contribute to a reduction of water-use, and encouraged residents to do their part.

Mayor Desjardins welcomed Jack Lees, Manager of Occupational Health

and Safety, to the Township.

Jack has over a decade of experience in the field of health and safety, including positions with WorSafe BCC as a Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant, and the Department of National Defence where he was a Preventive Medicine Technician. Jack has developed a comprehensive skill set in occupational health and safety including developing and implementing comprehensive safety policies, conducting risk assessments, leading safety training programs, and ensuring compliance with regulations. In his role with WorkSafeBC, he developed and implemented a range of successful disability management and return to work programs in other municipalities.

Jack has a Bachelor of Science with a Biochemistry Major and a Psychology Minor from UVic, and a few years ago won the Major General Barr Award of Excellence that was presented to him by the Surgeon General of Canada as the health services member who demonstrated the highest degree of excellence and professionalism and whose work has contributed to the betterment of the Canadian Forces Health Services.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

- 1) [23-422](#) Late Correspondence - Summary Sheet

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That the agenda be approved as circulated with the inclusion of the late items. Carried Unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 1) [23-387](#) Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on June 12, 2023

Moved by Councillor Boardman, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on June 12, 2023 be adopted as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

5. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS 6 AND 7

Limit 2 minutes per speaker.

Corey Burger, Policy and Infrastructure Chair at Capital Bike, expressed concern regarding the need for additional time to consider the details in the proposed Parking Bylaw and Parking Strategy. He emphasized that details are important in order to achieve desired outcomes and for developers to be able to build effective parking, and noted his related concern regarding vertical bike racks counting towards bike parking despite not being accessible for all bikes, and the similar issue of ramps which are compliant to

the Bylaw but not suitable for use by cargo bikes.

Lorne Argyle, resident, expressed concern regarding the proposed parking strategy, and highlighted the need to modernize accessible parking by mandating additional width in accessible parking stalls.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

Presentations

- 1) [23-414](#) Think Eco Power Inc - Stephen Kong, Director with Vic Young and James Winnett

Stephen Kong and James Winnett joined the meeting by phone to give a presentation on behalf of Think Eco Power Inc., regarding their search for a possible test location for battery-powered light rail. They wish to secure a 2-3 kilometer pilot track site and vehicle-storage space, and highlighted the technology and design behind the project.

- 2) [23-415](#) Victoria Police Department - 2023 Second Quarterly Report, Inspector Michael Brown

Inspector Mike Brown presented a PowerPoint and provided an overview of the Victoria Police Department (VicPD) 2023 Q2 Community Safety Report Card which included updates on operations, crime prevention, and community engagement. Inspector Brown noted VicPD's current areas of focus within the Township, including traffic safety, vacant homes, and a Summer Action Plan to increase police visibility in parks.

Inspector Mike Brown provided the following responses to questions from the Committee of the Whole:

- Recruitment of reserves has now established a full complement, so the Department is no longer experiencing the same challenges as in their recruitment of regular officers.
- The new Co-Response Team, a partnership between VicPD and Island Health, seems to be effective in reducing workload for officers.
- The Township does an excellent job of providing support to youth through the Rec Centre's programming.
- While there has not been an increase in reported graffiti, there are locations of concern that have been identified by officers on bike patrol in the Township; VicPD is in the process of following up on these sites.
- Members of Council are able to schedule ride-alongs by contacting Inspector Mike Brown, and it was noted that the fall is a good time for such initiatives given the influx of new students and other community members during this time.

- 3) [23-413](#) St. Peter and St. Paul Anglican Church - Reverend Gail Rodger & Douglas Bowen

Reverend Gail Rodger and Douglas Bowen of St. Peter and St. Paul Anglican Church provided an overview of plans to transition the Church's Memorial Hall to a non-denominational community centre. Their consultation with community members led them to identify three key areas of need in seniors' support services, disaster-response, and programming for newcomers to Canada. The presenters expressed a desire to avoid service duplication, identify resources needed for the project, and work inclusively with the community to bridge gaps in community support. It was noted that planning and development is in progress, with potential partnerships with other community organizations being explored.

The Committee expressed their excitement for the work being done, and their value for organizations which help meet our community's needs.

4) [23-412](#) WITS Programs Foundation - David Valentine and Andy Telfer

David Valentine and Andy Telfer provided an outline of the WITS Programs Foundation's 25-year history in Esquimalt, and an overview and updates on the anti-bullying programs and initiatives continuing to be carried out in the community.

The WITS Programs Foundation gave the following responses to Committee of the Whole questions:

- The WPF has revised its program materials to reduce the presence of police, and include broader references to uniformed emergency response personnel, with the inclusion of fire fighters and paramedics.
- New partnerships with sports teams, Indigenous Elders, Mayors, and MLAs have been developed to broaden the program beyond law enforcement.

The Committee of the Whole noted their appreciation for the presence and impact of the WITS Programs Foundation in the Township.

7. STAFF REPORTS

1) [23-401](#) Consideration of Public Hearing Scheduling and Decision Making Timelines, Staff Report No. ADM-23-025

The Director of Corporate Services briefly introduced the report, noting this as an opportunity to consider the current process and available alternatives for scheduling public hearings. The Director responded to questions from the Committee:

- Under the Local Government Act, much of the public hearings process is prescribed, but it does allow for Council to exercise some discretion in scheduling and subsequent decision-making.

- Council does have the ability to schedule standalone Public Hearings on a case-by-case basis, should that be preferred over a regular and re-occurring standalone public hearing night, however consistency could be beneficial for the public, staff, and Council.
- The current practice of scheduling public hearings for Council meetings can pose challenges for staff, consultants, and members of the public who, depending on the item(s) they wish to speak to, or hear discussion on, must wait an unpredictable amount of time.
- Given that public hearings must, by legislation, start at the time they are advertised, they are currently scheduled for the beginning of their assigned meeting agenda; as such, significant costs can arise when staff or consultants hired by the municipality must wait for their agenda item to come up after public hearings.
- Under the current model, modifications are provided to staff hours to accommodate any adjusted start and end times and/or overtime.
- If Council opts for a standalone public hearing meeting, multiple hearings could be scheduled for the same night, and additional meetings could still be added on a case-by-case basis as Council sees necessary.
- Other regions have multiple additional meeting nights, but one additional meeting is estimated to be sufficient given development trends in the Township.

The Committee of the Whole gave the following comments:

- There is concern for the impact of the current model on staff's ability to manage a work-life balance, and a desire to consider this factor when determining the preferred model going forward.
- Limiting public hearings to one night each month could possibly cause unwanted delays for applicants waiting on a decision; a possible alternative of interest is the option to have two dedicated public hearing meeting nights each month, although it was also acknowledged that this may cause more of the same problems observed around managing staff and consultant time.
- It was noted that good governance practices are also priorities in the Committee's decision-making on this process.
- There is a need to consider limitations around scheduling additional meetings, related to statutory holidays, other Council commitments such as UBCM, and other meetings of Council and advisory committees.
- The Committee expressed interest in deferring their consideration of this matter to a later meeting to ensure a balanced approach to decision-making.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Morrison:

That it be recommended to Council that staff report ADM-023-025 be received for information, and that staff be directed to schedule this item to a future strategic planning session for consideration by Council. Carried Unanimously.

2) [23-409](#) Review of the Integrated Parking Management Strategy and Parking Bylaw, Staff Report No. DEV-23-058

The Committee of the Whole recessed at 8:04 PM and reconvened at 8:08 PM with all members of Council present.

The Directors of Development Services, and Engineering and Public Works gave a brief overview of the Parking Management Strategy and Parking Bylaw, before introducing consultant Dan Casey to facilitate the presentation. Dan Casey, consultant from Urban Systems, provided the following updates regarding work done on the Parking Management Study and Parking Bylaw:

- The Parking Management Study aims to address conventional aspects of parking management, as well as integrate emerging and unconventional strategies, and is not intended as a prescriptive document, but rather as a guide to address issues which were identified in feedback from residents and targeted stakeholders.
- The strategy draws on data acquired through community engagement events, a survey, virtual information sessions, and open-houses, with a focus on hearing from stakeholders firsthand.
- Community input indicated a strong desire for improved availability of accessible parking stalls, loading zones, end-of-trip cycling facilities.
- The updated Parking Bylaw accounts for unit-size in calculating parking requirements.
- Parking supply requirements will account for proximity to major transportation routes, whereas the current bylaw differentiates only by land-use.
- Updated parking bylaw will establish requirements for bike parking, which will match our policy to nearby communities, and responds to input received by stakeholders.
- Construction Parking Management Plans will be required for development projects.
- Off-street parking regulations have undergone an overhaul, and supply requirements are now differentiated by proximity to transportation networks; within 200 meters of major routes, reduced parking requirements have been proposed.
- Requirements for Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers are proposed to expand beyond commercial designations.

Staff and consultants provided the following responses to Committee of the Whole questions:

- Urban Development Institute and Capital Bike requested additional time to review the report and provide feedback; should the Committee wish, the strategy could be posted online for additional time for residents and

stakeholders to provide input.

- Other municipalities have opted to delegate management and enforcement to third parties, but a number of them have subsequently opted for less aggressive and more profitable models of in-house enforcement.
- A cash-in-lieu policy is allowed under the Local Government Act, and caveats can be added if there are concerns that such a policy could be used to attain zero parking.

The Committee of the Whole provided the following feedback:

- The availability of parking permits to those with access to off-street parking, as well as the proposed pricing and availability of permits, were identified as sources of concerns for the Committee, and an interest in a stricter approach was expressed.
- It was noted that the proposed parking ratios were higher than anticipated by the Committee, given the lower ratios secured in several recent developments, and the desire to satisfy the emission-reduction targets set out in the Climate Action Plan.
- There is a desire to have a focused discussion on enforcement to identify a model which is sufficiently balanced.
- It would be beneficial for the Township's Climate Action Plan to be incorporated and referenced throughout the Parking Management Strategy and Parking Bylaw to ensure that they are contributing to the targets set out by the Climate Action Plan.
- Further discussion on the issue of frontages, and how they are accounted for in these policies, was noted as of interest.

Committee of the Whole consensus was to recommend to Council that staff be directed to conduct additional public consultation on the Parking Management Strategy and the proposed Parking Bylaw as attached to staff report DEV-23-058 before bringing them back to a future meeting for consideration.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Address Council on any topic that impacts Esquimalt (excluding Agenda items and matters that will be or have been the subject of a Public Hearing). Limit 2 minutes per speaker.

Lynden Chisholm, resident, expressed support for parking permits as a source of funding for road improvement, and expressed concern regarding vehicles which are parked on the street despite having access to driveway or garage parking.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Rotchford, seconded by Councillor Helliwell: That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 9:23 PM. Carried unanimously.

MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS
THIS 23RD DAY OF OCTOBER, 2023

DEBRA HOPKINS,
CORPORATE OFFICER
CERTIFIED CORRECT