



# CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

## Minutes - Final

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

### Special Committee of the Whole

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Monday, September 23, 2024

5:45 PM

Esquimalt Council Chambers

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**Present** 5 - Mayor Barbara Desjardins  
Councillor Ken Armour  
Councillor Duncan Cavens  
Councillor Jacob Helliwell  
Councillor Tim Morrison

**Regrets** 1 - Councillor Andrea Boardman

**Absent** 1 - Councillor Darlene Rotchford

**Staff:** Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Deb Hopkins, Director of Corporate Services/Corporate Officer  
Bill Brown, Director of Development Services  
Joel Clary, Director of Engineering & Public Works  
Ian Irvine, Director of Financial Services & IT  
Matt Furlot, Fire Chief  
Vicki Gannon, Director of HR & Community Relations  
Steve Knoke, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Sarah Holloway, Deputy Corporate Officer/Recording Secretary

#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Desjardins called the Special Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:45 PM.

#### 2. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

There were no late items.

#### 3. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Desjardins acknowledged that we are on the unceded territory of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. We thank them for caring for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great township together.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Helliwell: That the agenda be approved as circulated Carried Unanimously.

#### 4. SPECIAL MEETING MATTERS

- 1) [24-437](#) 2022-2026 Council Priorities Mid-Term Refresh, Staff Memo ADM-24-062

The Chief Administrative Officer outlined the report with a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions from Council.

Council requested that an expected date of completion for the Police Service Model Transition be added to the Council Priorities Plan 2023 -2026, found on slide 13 of the presentation, for the next Council Priorities discussion.

Councillor Cavens introduced the Improved Budget Documentation proposal which requests that staff revise and improve the documents presented to Council for the 2025 budget cycle by providing a single document that consolidates most of the Township's budget information, including past, current, and projected data to ensure that the budget process is easier to understand for both the general public and new Council members.

Council comments included:

- Examples of what could be included in the document, providing it is attainable, are departmental budgets including a list of the number of full time employees, and historical and proposed budgets from the Victoria Esquimalt Police Department and Greater Victoria Public Library.
- Investigating how to approach the budget differently to gain a better understanding is supportable.

Moved by Councillor Helliwell and seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back with an impact assessment on the Improved Township Budget Documentation proposal. Carried Unanimously.

Councillor Cavens introduced the Front Yard Deer Fencing Policy/Bylaw proposal which seeks to clarify and update Esquimalt's fencing bylaws to address the ongoing issue of deer encroachment in residential gardens.

Council commented that there is some demand in the larger community for clarification on this subject.

Moved by Councillor Morrison and seconded by Councillor Armour: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back with an impact assessment on the Front Yard Deer Fencing Policy/Bylaw proposal. Carried Unanimously.

Councillor Cavens introduced the Ground-Oriented Small Developments proposal which aims to identify and address barriers to building family-sized, small-scale developments such as townhouses and detached accessory dwelling units (DADUs) in Esquimalt, and to propose changes to bylaws and processes to make housing options more viable and affordable for families.

Council comments included the following:

- There was a question on whether the municipality has many barriers as suggested.
- An impact assessment will help Council understand the amount of work that would be required to achieve the request.

Moved by Councillor Morrison and seconded by Councillor Helliwell: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back with an impact assessment on the Ground-Oriented Small Developments proposal. Carried Unanimously.

The Mayor introduced the Official Community Plan (OCP) Changes or Updates proposal which looks to take advantage of the provincial requirement to update the Official Community Plan in 2025 by also incorporating changes in market conditions and updated community needs since the last major amendment of the OCP in an expedited process that will include efficient but effective community engagement.

Council comments included the following:

- The April 8, 2024 resolution regarding height clarifications to the residential portion of the Commercial/Commercial Mixed-Use designation should be addressed urgently and should not be involved in an OCP review.
- All of the suggested items in the proposal are important and need to occur.
- A discussion at a future Committee of the Whole to prioritize which OCP items should be included would help advise the impact assessment.
- The significant changes that provincial Bill 44 has placed on the community should be recognized.
- Decisions on the OCP should not occur in the final year of the Council term.
- Changes to the OCP that are achievable in 2025 would provide a legacy for Council.
- A discussion would allow Council to focus on which OCP items need to be addressed with the understanding that not everything within the OCP will be up for discussion
- Staff should allow for ample time for Council to provide their differing views during the meeting at which this item is to be scheduled.

Moved by Councillor Armour and seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the

Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to schedule the Official Community Plan Changes or Updates proposals to an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting for further consideration. Carried Unanimously.

Councillor Cavens introduced the Affordable Housing Plan proposal which aims to develop a comprehensive action plan to attract funding for affordable housing by leveraging Provincial, Federal, and private resources with a goal to increase the supply of below market rental and supportive housing units in alignment with recently set housing targets.

Moved by Council Helliwell and seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back with an impact assessment on the Affordable Housing Plan proposal. Carried Unanimously.

The Mayor recommended a new initiative that would help Council to understand the process in choosing where parks are placed, how land is acquired, is there a plan in place to manage parkland in the Township and for policy guidance.

Moved by Councillor Cavens and seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back with an impact assessment on policy development to understand parkland placement, how land is acquired and a parkland management plan for the Township. Carried Unanimously.

The Mayor recommended a new initiative to direct staff to report back on policy options for addressing the family doctor shortages and incentives.

Council comments included the following:

- The shortage of Doctors is appreciated but Esquimalt's not a rural community, and has options. If the Township provided an incentive to a doctor there would be no ability to control the patients' place of residency so there would be no guaranteed support for the community.
- Further work with the Westshore Mayors and communities should occur.
- The Mayor and Councillor Boardman will bring this forward to discuss at another meeting.

The Mayor recommended the revitalization of Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti (ETAG), which was disbanded during COVID, and which some of the volunteers are no longer available. Tagging had diminished when there was an active group of volunteers, but graffiti is once again occurring in the

community.

The Director of Engineering and Public Works informed Council that staff were previously directed to restore ETAG and it is on the Council Priorities Plan as a future project, but due to staff shortages it has not been made an immediate priority. The Director recommended that Council request an impact assessment should they wish to understand the implications of moving it up on the priority list.

Moved by Councillor Cavens and seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to report back with an impact assessment on implementing the Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti group. Carried Unanimously.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Helliwell, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the Special Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:08 PM. Carried Unanimously.

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MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS

THIS 21ST DAY OF OCTOBER, 2024

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DEB HOPKINS,  
CORPORATE OFFICER  
CERTIFIED CORRECT