



**CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT**
Minutes - Final
Council

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

Monday, March 16, 2026

6:15 PM

Esquimalt Municipal Hall

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL RECONVENES AT 7:00 PM
WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

Present: 7 - Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Councillor Ken Armour
Councillor Andrea Boardman
Councillor Meagan Brame
Councillor Duncan Cavens
Councillor Jacob Helliwell
Councillor Tim Morrison

Staff: Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer
Deb Hopkins, Director of Corporate Services/
Corporate Officer
Bill Brown, Director of Development Services
Ian Irvine, Director of Financial Services & IT
Judy Kitts, Director of Strategic Initiatives
Alex Tang, Planner
Victoria McKean, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER - WURTELE ROOM

Mayor Desjardins called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

**I. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING PURSUANT TO
SECTION 90 OF THE COMMUNITY CHARTER**

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Boardman:
That pursuant to Section 90 (1) (a), (f), (i) and (m) of the
Community Charter, the meeting be closed to the general public
to discuss personal information about an identifiable individual
who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer,
employee or agent of the municipality or another position
appointed by the municipality; law enforcement, if the council
considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm
the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an
enactment; the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client
privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
and a matter that, under another enactment, is such that the
public may be excluded from the meeting. Carried Unanimously.

II. CLOSED MEETING**III. RECONVENE THE REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL AT 7:00 PM IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the meeting be reconvened at 7:00 PM. Carried Unanimously.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**1) [26-119](#) Late Correspondence**

1) Item 7.1 - Short-Term Rental Policy Analysis Report, Staff Report No. DEV-26-011

- Matt Brandwood - received March 12, 2026
- Stephen West - received March 12, 2026
- Ioana Tatar - received March 13, 2026
- Matt Brandwood - received March 13, 2026
- Jesse Baltutis - received March 13, 2026
- Jamie Starke - received March 13, 2026
- Alexander Robinson & Hannah Larman - received March 15, 2026
- André Durocher - received March 16, 2026

2) Item 7.3 - 2026-2030 Financial Plan - Final Budget Decisions, Staff Report No. ADM-26-013

- Lorraine Mainwaring - received March 11, 2026
- Donald Cook - received March 11, 2026
- David Slobodan - received March 16, 2026
- David Hodgins - received March 16, 2026

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1) [26-107](#) Minutes of the Regular Council meeting held February 23, 2026

2) [26-108](#) Minutes of the Regular Council meeting held March 2, 2026

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Helliwell: That the Minutes of the Regular Council meetings held on February 23, 2026 and March 2, 2026 be adopted as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

5. BYLAWS FOR ADOPTION OR FIRST AND SECOND READING THAT ARE SUBJECT TO A PUBLIC HEARING

For Adoption

- 1) [26-101](#) Adoption of Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw, 2025, No. 3153, Staff Report No. DEV-26-012

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw, 2026, No. 3153 be adopted. Carried Unanimously.

First and Second Reading Subject to a Public Hearing

- 2) [26-079](#) Rezoning Application - 851 Old Esquimalt Road, Staff Report No. DEV-26-007

Alex Tang, Planner, introduced the staff report. Staff and the applicant responded to questions from Council.

Moved by Councillor Helliwell, seconded by Councillor Brame: That Council give first and second reading to Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw, 2026, No. 3179 and authorize the scheduling of a Public Hearing. Carried Unanimously.

6. PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS 7, 8, 9, AND 10

Janet Frost, resident, expressed support for short-term rentals in Esquimalt as they give homeowners the flexibility to accommodate their changing needs and generate supplemental income and suggested that Council consider allowing existing short-term rentals to continue operating under any new policy that may be developed.

Valerie Elliott, resident, stated that those who operate short-term rentals may depend on the additional income and could experience their current housing becoming unaffordable if short-term rentals are heavily regulated and encouraged Council to pursue Option A contained in the staff report.

Dwight Innes, resident, proposed that the Provincial guidelines should be the standard for how short-term rentals are regulated in Esquimalt and expressed that they are opposed to infringement upon property rights. If a bylaw is to be created it should be done in such a way that generates income for the Township to be used to fund other projects that benefit the community as a whole.

Ian Black, resident, expressed support for short-term rentals in Esquimalt as a way for households to generate additional income, and cited a positive experience from a past short-term rental tenant in Esquimalt.

Constable Ian Diack, Victoria Police Department, expressed support for a crossing guard program to be implemented at École Victor-Brodeur and stated that they have worked closely with the school to establish a volunteer crossing guard program and, due to the increase of traffic in the area, a full-time crossing guard would be a positive benefit to the community.

Hiuyu Tung, resident, expressed concern regarding the regulation of short-term rentals, expressed their support for the protection of private property rights, and encouraged Council to take the same approach to short-term rentals as other regional municipalities to enable short-term rentals to attract tourists to the Township.

Doug Scott, Esquimalt property owner, stated their support for short-term rentals as an affordable alternative to hotels that provide a welcoming atmosphere that is less driven by profit as they are often run out of the owner's residence, as well as an opportunity for homeowners to generate additional income.

7. STAFF REPORTS

- 1) [26-095](#) Short-Term Rental Policy Analysis Report, Staff Report No. DEV-26-011

The Director of Development Services introduced the consultant, Eric Swanson from Third Space Planning, who presented a PowerPoint to Council. Staff responded to questions from Council.

Council comments included the following:

- If a regulatory environment for short-term rentals is to be created, an approach to compliance should be developed as well;
- Option 3A is in line with the Official Community Plan;
- A more cautious approach to regulating short-term rentals may be appropriate as it can be expanded upon if needed and reducing the degree of regulation may be difficult;
- Concern was expressed regarding how proceeding with the Province's default approach to short-term rentals may impact the future of the community;
- Decisions regarding the permissibility of short-term rentals may have an impact of other forms of accommodation, such as hotels.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That Council authorize that short-term rentals be permitted only within the operator's principal dwelling unit; renting a room while present, or the whole home while away; with no secondary or garden suites included; and limited to a maximum of 180 nights per year. Carried with Councillor Brame opposed.

2) [26-099](#) Crossing Guard Request, École Victor-Brodeur, Staff Report No. SI-26-007

The Director of Strategic Initiatives introduced the staff report and responded to questions from Council.

Council comments included the following:

- This is an important initiative that does not impose a significant financial burden.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Brame: That Council direct staff to work with École Victor Brodeur to develop a Memorandum of Understanding outlining responsibilities, service levels, and costs for crossing guard support, with funding incorporated into the 2027 budget process. Carried Unanimously.

3) [26-109](#) 2026-2030 Financial Plan - Final Budget Decisions, Staff Report no. ADM-26-013

The Regular Council meeting recessed at 8:30 PM and reconvened at 8:35 PM with all members of Council present.

The Director of Financial Services introduced the staff report and presented a PowerPoint to Council.

Council comments included the following:

- More information about expenditure metrics from statutory reserves, levels of surplus for previous years and its percentage of the operating budget was requested;
- The Township is seeing an increase in taxation increases as well as a larger surplus in the budget;
- Patrol officers provide community services that the Township has requested such as after-hours bylaw enforcement;
- Appreciation was expressed for the Police Board's willingness to present a reduced budget and for the Police Department's demonstrated willingness to serve the specific needs of Esquimalt;
- Our policing costs are very high per capita and cost-drivers are concentrated in the City of Victoria;
- The tax rate increase must be justified as essential, and it was expressed that increased policing resources may not be essential;
- Support was expressed for regional policing as a potential path forward, and it was noted that other municipalities must agree to this approach in order for it to be effective;
- Developing positive relationships between the Victoria and Esquimalt Police Department, the City of Victoria, and the Township is important and it was recognized that each partner has their own needs and challenges;

- Information about what services Esquimalt residents receive as part of their taxation package was requested to be made available to the public in order to provide regional context;
- A desire to further reduce the tax increase was expressed;
- The tax increase is primarily driven by external factors rather than increased service levels;
- Support for pursuing Amenity Cost Charges and Development Cost Charges was expressed to improve future financial sustainability;
- Future Councils may benefit from budget information when considering Strategic Priorities.

Motion arising from Councillor Cavens.

Council commented that they have heard from many senior residents about how rising economic costs impact them, and how the current Property Tax Deferral Program may be altered to support them.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That Council request the Mayor write to the Provincial Government regarding the proposed changes to the Property Tax Deferral Program, and specifically request that the Province introduce an income threshold so the program continues to function as originally intended, helping low-income seniors remain in their homes.

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the motion be amended to include that the letter be sent to the Union of BC Municipalities in addition to the Province. Carried Unanimously.

Main Motion as amended: That Council request the Mayor write to the Provincial Government and Union of BC Municipalities regarding the proposed changes to the Property Tax Deferral Program, and specifically request that the Province introduce an income threshold so the program continues to function as originally intended, helping low-income seniors remain in their homes. Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the 2026 Police budget be accepted as presented. Carried with Councillor Morrison opposed.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Brame: That staff be directed to prepare the Financial Plan Bylaw, in accordance with Council's direction;

Staff be authorized to begin the hiring processes for the full-time equivalent positions approved by Council for 2026; and

Staff be directed to prepare a report for Council to enable a comprehensive policy discussion about accumulated surplus and reserve funds, to be completed before July 2026. Carried with Councillor Morrison opposed.

8. **BYLAW READINGS NOT SUBJECT TO A PUBLIC HEARING**

- 1) [26-102](#) Proposed Amendments to Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw, Staff Report No. SI-26-008

The Director of Strategic Initiatives introduced the item and responded to questions from Council.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Brame: That Council give three readings to Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw, 2014, No. 2839, Amendment Bylaw, 2026, No. 3185. Carried Unanimously.

9. **REPORTS / MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES**

- 1) [26-105](#) March 9, 2026 Committee of the Whole resolutions to be ratified

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the resolutions from the March 9, 2026 Committee of the Whole meeting be ratified:

1. After Hours Bylaw Enforcement, Staff Report No. SI-26-005:

That Council direct staff to maintain a VicPD-delivered after-hours service model, and to work with VicPD to establish defined service levels, KPIs, and regular reporting; and that it be re-evaluated by Council after one year; and

That Council direct staff to focus after-hours enforcement exclusively on Saturday parking and Township events. Carried Unanimously.

10. **RISE AND REPORT (FROM IN CAMERA)**

- 1) [26-115](#) Rise and Report from the In Camera meeting of Council held on March 2, 2026

At the In Camera meeting held on March 2, 2026, Council passed the following resolution:

That Council appoint Yue Kang (David) Yip to the Advisory Planning Commission Design Review Committee for a term commencing immediately

and concluding on December 31, 2026 at the March 16, 2026 Council meeting.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Doug Scott, Esquimalt property owner, expressed their concerns regarding the retail medical space available for rent at 899 Esquimalt Road, commenting on the terms of the covenant, occupancy permit and acceptable terms of use for the lot.

Linda O'Keefe, resident, expressed appreciation for the seniors' safety and fraud prevention presentation with the Victoria and Esquimalt Police Department and Esquimalt Fire Department held at Esquimalt Recreation Centre and encouraged that this opportunity be widely advertised in the future to increase community awareness and attendance.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the meeting be adjourned at 10:03 PM. Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS

THIS 13TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026

DEB HOPKINS,
CORPORATE OFFICER
CERTIFIED CORRECT