



**CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT**
Minutes - Draft

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

Special Committee of the Whole

Monday, February 9, 2026

7:00 PM

Esquimalt Council Chambers

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
Matt Furlot, Fire Chief
Ian Irvine, Director of Financial Services and IT
Joel Clary, Director of Engineering and Public Works
Judy Kitts, Director of Strategic Initiatives
Steve Knoke, Director of Parks and Recreation
Mark Jeckway, Senior Manager of Human Resources
Victoria McKean, Committee Coordinator/Recording
Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Helliwell, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Councillor Brame acknowledged with respect that the meeting is held on the traditional territories of the Songhees and Kosapsum Nations and recognized the strength and richness of Indigenous cultures and how important it is that the original peoples of these lands we serve be acknowledged and respected.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

1) [26-068](#) Late Correspondence

Item 7.2 - 2026-2030 Financial Plan Options and Way Ahead, Staff Report
No. ADM-26-008

- Dwight Ince - received February 6, 2026
- Dan Bruyere - received February 8, 2026

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 1) [26-060](#) Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 19, 2026
- 2) [26-061](#) Minutes of the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held January 26, 2026

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 19, 2026, and the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held on January 26, 2026, be adopted as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

5. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS 6 AND 7

Dwight Ines, resident, expressed confusion as to why \$27.1 million for the Public Safety Building was included in the 2026 Budget, as they understood that this initiative was already funded.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

Presentations

- 1) [26-059](#) Greater Victoria Harbour Authority Member Update

Don Krusel, Interim CEO of the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA), presented the GVHA's 2026 Member Update and responded to questions from Committee of the Whole.

- 2) [26-054](#) Victoria Police Department - Q4 Community Safety Report Card

Inspector Conor King and Chief Constable Fiona Wilson presented the Victoria Police Department's 2025 Q4 Community Safety Report Card and responded to questions from Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole comments included the following:

- Gratitude was expressed for the return of School Liaison Officers;
- More information on how Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti (ETAG) is positively impacting the community, and general information about instances of graffiti in Esquimalt was requested.

7. STAFF REPORTS

1) [26-055](#) 2026 Budget Book, Staff Report FIN-26-003

The Director of Financial Services introduced the item. Staff responded to questions from Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole comments included the following:

- An explanation about why property tax rate increases may be above the Consumer Price Index may be beneficial to include in the section on Budget Drivers;
- The statement on the 13% average increase within the Budget Overview sounds like a definitive statement and should be clarified that this is a proposed increase to provide more insight into the budget process;
- The detailed department budgets are appreciated, and providing previous years as context would be a benefit;
- It was suggested that a draft watermark be applied to the document;
- What has been included in the Budget Book on the Financial Sustainability Policy is helpful, but if there is a policy on the multiplier between businesses and residences it would be helpful to include a link to the policy;
- Improved notes and footnotes on tables would be a benefit, especially when there are significant changes year-over-year;
- Incorporating capital plans into the Book would be helpful;
- It was suggested to include a statement that other departments generate revenue through fees;
- An Additional Documents page with links to workforce plans, capital plans, and other relevant documents would be a benefit;
- Clarity that Payment in Lieu of Taxes is subject to change as percentages are impacted by development and density was suggested.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Mayor Desjardins: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to update the 2026 Budget Book to reflect the comments made at the February 9, 2026, Special Committee of the Whole meeting. Carried Unanimously.

2) [26-062](#) 2026-2030 Financial Plan Options and Way Ahead, Staff Report No. ADM-26-008

The Director of Financial Services presented a PowerPoint. Staff responded to questions from Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole comments included the following:

- The policing budget must be discussed as it will inform budget discussions.

The meeting went into recess at 8:52 PM.

The meeting reconvened at 8:57 PM.

Committee of the Whole comments (continued):

- Support was expressed for infrastructure funding, as not funding infrastructure now will result in funding being required in later years;
- An affordable tax rate is also a significant issue to consider and balance against infrastructure funding;
- There are several service reductions under consideration that, if removed, will not have an impact on the overall tax rate such as closure of the recreation centre on statutory holidays and therefore are not currently being considered;
- More information on policing, Esquimalt Road Design Guidelines and Financial Impact Analysis, Firefighter, Fire Inspector, advertising and local grants will assist to inform budget decisions.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council direct staff to provide more information on Advertising – Corporate Services, Advertising – Engineering, and Advertising – Communications, and Local Grants as potential service reductions.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the motion be split to consider the request for more information on Local Grants separately. Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council direct staff to provide more information on Advertising – Corporate Services, Advertising – Engineering, and Advertising – Communications as potential service reductions. Carried Unanimously.

Councillor Cavens left the meeting at 9:28 PM due to a conflict of interest as he is a Board Member for one of the recipient organizations.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council direct staff to provide more information on Local Grants as a potential service reduction. Carried Unanimously.

Councillor Cavens returned to the meeting at 9:29 PM.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council direct staff to provide more information on the supplemental budget request of one Fire Inspector (FTE). Carried with Councillor Armour opposed.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That the Committee of the Whole recommends that Council direct staff to provide an overview of overall net budget impacts for providing staffing to meet the Fire Department's established levels of service, showing the difference between permanent full-time employees versus temporary full-time employees and use overtime. Carried Unanimously.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Julia Davis, California resident on behalf of their parents who are Esquimalt residents, expressed concerns around property taxes, affordability, and senior care in Esquimalt, acknowledging that property tax deferment if an option, except if the property is in arrears, seniors face difficulties in managing their affairs with the effects of aging and memory loss which could put them at risk of losing their homes. Council was encouraged to recognize these realities and advocate for solutions for seniors so they can access and receive the help they need.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the meeting be adjourned at 9:56 PM. Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS

THIS 9TH DAY OF MARCH, 2026

DEB HOPKINS,
CORPORATE OFFICER
CERTIFIED CORRECT