



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Minutes - Final

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

Special Committee of the Whole

Monday, May 26, 2025

5:45 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
Joel Clary, Director of Engineering & Public Works
Matt Furlot, Fire Chief
Vicki Gannon, Director of HR & Community Relations
Steve Knoke, Director of Parks & Recreation
Terése Finegan, Manager of Economic Development
Sarah Holloway, Manager of Corporate Services/Deputy
Corporate Officer

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Desjardins called the Special Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:46 PM.

Councillor Cavens recognized and acknowledged Songhees Nation and Kosapsum Nation on whose traditional territory we live, we learn, and we do our work.

2. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

There were no late items.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

4. **PERIOD STAFF REPORTS**

- 1) [25-188](#) CAO 2025 First Period Report, Staff Report No. ADM-25-022

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) presented the Council Priorities Plan and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole comments included the following:

- A new project status symbol to represent ongoing projects, such as Indigenous Relations should be added to the Council Priorities Plan document.
- The deer fence project should become an active project.
- Some projects are connected to other activities or have other steps, and these should be reflected in the plan.

- 2) [25-174](#) Community Safety Services - 2025 1st Period Report, Staff Report CSS-25-002

The Director of Engineering and Public Works introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

- 3) [25-165](#) Corporate Services - 2025 First Period Report, Staff Report No. ADM-25-018

The Director of Corporate Services introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole commented that including in the report the number of resolutions from the prior period to compare it to the current period, would be appreciated.

- 4) [25-172](#) Development Services 2025 First Period Report, Staff Report No. DEV-25-019

The Director of Development Services introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole comments included the following:

- Development permits that are delegated for approval to the Director of Development Services, should also be included in the development tracker on the Township's website, for the benefit of the public.
- A calls for service should be made to the bylaw officer to address the unsightly development properties currently in the Township.

- 5) [25-173](#) Engineering & Public Works Departments - 2025 First Period Report, Staff Report No. EPW-25-006

The Director of Engineering and Public Works introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

- 6) [25-179](#) Financial Services & IT Departments, 2025 First Period Report, Staff Report FIN-25-007

The CAO introduced the report to the Committee of the Whole.

- 7) [25-168](#) Fire Department & Emergency Management Program First Period Report 2025, Staff Report No. 25-004

The Fire Chief introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

- 8) [25-166](#) Human Resources and Community Relations - 1st Period Report, Staff Report No. ADM-25-021

The Director of HR and Community relations introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

The Committee of the Whole congratulated Occupational Health and Safety on the 81.5% reduction in claim costs from 2023 to 2025.

- 9) [25-167](#) Parks and Recreation- 2025 First Period Report, Staff Report No. P&R-25-004

The Director of Parks and Recreation introduced the report and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

The Mayor expressed gratitude for the thoroughness of the departmental period reports as it indicates that staff are working at a very high level.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council direct staff to immediately initiate discussions with BC Hydro to formulate an agreement regarding graffiti; work with Ian Diack of the Victoria Police Department who has initiated a call for volunteers to reinstate Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti (ETAG); and report back quickly to Council regarding funding materials and staff coordination of ETAG with the goal of having volunteers removing graffiti as early as June 2025.

The Committee of the Whole comments included the following:
- Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti (ETAG) was initiated in the early 2000's by a former Councillor to address public safety challenges due to graffiti. ETAG were a group of volunteers who, coordinated through public works, were given paint and rollers and directed to remove graffiti in the Township of Esquimalt.

- BC Hydro poles and transformers have had an increase in graffiti lately and, in the past, BC Hydro has been happy to provide paint and image wraps to prevent graffiti.
- The Chamber of Commerce has already reached out to the community looking for interested volunteers.
- The maintenance of the community is a concern and this should be expedited immediately.
- Staff capacity is of concern, so encouraged to see the interest by VicPD in assisting.
- Although ETAG has been identified in Council's strategic priorities, the funds to support it were not included in the 2025 budget. Staff resources and cost should be included in the report back to Council.
- A more creative approach in supporting the initiative should be considered such as using the Fire Department or youth groups.

The Motion was then put and Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council move the Deer Fencing Project from the "Future Projects" list to the "Active Projects" and ask staff to investigate how to amend the zoning bylaw with less effort and resources than described in the project assessment in December. Council would like the bylaw to provide for exceptions to current residential fence height limits where the intent is to deter deer, while ensuring designs remain visually permeable and safe for wildlife.

The Committee of the Whole comments included the following:

- This has been an ongoing issue for years and there are already several deer height fences in the Township that have not been the cause of any issue or complaints.
- It is of concern that some residents have installed non compliant fences without repercussion, and this has pitted neighbours against each other due to the inconsistent enforcement.
- The expectation of staff is not to invest in an extensive review of the bylaw, if possible, but to return to Council with a short report to allow for discussion and direction.
- Small requests for bylaw reviews should be permitted outside of Council's Priorities Plan projects.

The Motion was then put then Carried with Councillor Helliwell Opposed.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council endorse the Council Priorities Plan as amended and approve its publication to the Township of

Esquimalt's website. Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council receive the 2025 first period reports for information. Carried Unanimously.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Helliwell: That the Special Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 7:31 PM. Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS

THIS DAY OF , 2025

DEB HOPKINS,
CORPORATE OFFICER
CERTIFIED CORRECT