



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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

Minutes - Draft

Council

Monday, April 13, 2026

5:45 PM

Council Chambers

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
Joel Clary, Director of Engineering & PW
James Davison, Manager of Development Services
Mark Jeckway, Senior Manager of Human Resources
Jakub Lisowski, Planner
Jonah Ross, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Desjardins called the Regular Council meeting to order at 5:45 PM.

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

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That pursuant to Section 90 (1) (c) and (2) (b) (i) of the Community Charter, the meeting be closed to the general public to discuss labour relations or other employee relations; and the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government, or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government, or both, and a third party. Carried Unanimously.

II. CLOSED MEETING

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

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Regular Council meeting be reconvened at 7:01 PM. Carried Unanimously.

Mayor Desjardins acknowledged with respect the Lekwungen-speaking peoples, the Songhees and X^wsepsəm First Nations, and their stewardship of the land on which we are lucky enough to live, work, and play. We send our thoughts and prayers to the community of Songhees Nation who have just lost a significant Elder, Skip Dick. Skip did an incredible amount of work with the University of Victoria and Songhees Nation. We send our thoughts to the community.

Mayor Desjardins noted that the Township's Chief Administrative Officer, Dan Horan, has been recognized by the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators for his remarkable 10 years of service in local government management roles. Dan's dedication to his role has undoubtedly contributed to the advancement of our municipality, and we are pleased to recognize his accomplishments; please join us in recognizing Dan's 10 years of service.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

1) [26-143](#) Late Correspondence

1) Item 7.1 - Development Variance Permit DVP00173 - 640 Lampson Street

- Alex Lausanne - received April 8, 2026
- Alex Lausanne (2) - received April 8, 2026
- Richard Fisher - received April 9, 2026
- Consttance Sinclaire - received April 12, 2026
- Kim Fisher - received April 12, 2026

2) Item 8.1 - Development Application Procedures and Fees Bylaw, 2012, No. 2791

- Zac Zawaduk, received April 10, 2026

3) Item 10.2 - Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers

- Tina O'Keeffee - received April 13, 2026

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the late items be added to the agenda. Carried Unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Brame: That the agenda be approved with an amendment to move item 10.2 up to 7.1, and the agenda renumbered accordingly. Carried Unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 1) [26-130](#) Minutes of the Special Council meeting held March 9, 2026
- 2) [26-124](#) Minutes of the Regular Council meeting held March 16, 2026

Moved by Councillor Boardman, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the minutes of the Special Council meeting held on March 9, 2026, and the Regular Council meeting held on March 16, 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) [26-126](#) Adoption of Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw 2014 No. 2839 Amendment Bylaw 2024 No. 3185, Staff Report No. ADM-26-016

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

6. PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS 7, 8, 9, 10 AND 11**Item 7.1 - Email from Tina O'Keefe, Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers dated March 24, 2026 Re: Robotics Team Funding Request**

Linda O'Keefe, resident, expressed support for the Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers' funding request.

Item 8.3 - 2026 Financial Plan Policies and Objectives, Staff Memorandum FIN-26-008

Dwight Ince, resident, suggested that alternative service delivery could be explored as an option to help with financing the budget.

Item 8.4 - 2026 Property Tax Rates Discussion, Staff Memorandum FIN-26-009

Dwight Ince, resident, expressed support for a tax rate scenario of 11.32%, and the use of surplus funds to reduce the burden on taxpayers where possible.

Item 7.1 - Email from Tina O'Keefe, Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers dated March 24, 2026 Re: Robotics Team Funding Request

Dwight Ince, resident, expressed support for the funding request, as it supports the education of youth.

Item 8.1 - Development Variance Permit - 640 Lampson St - Staff Report No. DEV-26-008

Matt Brandwood, resident, spoke in favour of the application, noting that the revised plan would better preserve trees which are important features in the area, serve to moderate perceived scale of buildings, and help integrate new buildings into the landscape.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

For Council's Consideration

- 1) [26-133](#) Email from Tina O'Keeffe, Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers dated March 24, 2026 Re: Robotics Team Funding Request

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That Tina O'Keeffe and the Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers be invited to speak to their funding request. Carried Unanimously.

Tina O'Keeffe, Coach, introduced the funding request and responded to questions from Council.

Director of Financial Services and IT noted that contingency funds could be used to fund this request if approved.

Council comments included the following:

- With roughly \$20,000 left to be funded, approving \$10,000 would be supportable to help bridge the funding gap.
- This request will support young aspiring engineers and scientists in the community.
- The team's progress over the years is impressive, and their hard work has been recognized by many residents and community organizations.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That Council provide \$10,000 in grant funding to the Esquimalt High School Atom Smashers. Carried Unanimously.

8. STAFF REPORTS

- 1) [26-082](#) Development Variance Permit - 640 Lampson St - Staff Report No. DEV-26-008

The Manager of Development Services introduced the report and responded to questions from Council.

Xeniya Vins, representing the applicant, gave a presentation and responded to questions from Council.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Brame: That Council

approve the application for DVP00173 to vary the applicable provisions of the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw for certain frontage works and services for the proposed Small-Scale Multi-Family Residential project at 640 Lampson Street as outlined in Staff Report No. DEV-26-008.

Council comments included the following:

- Facilitating pedestrian access to the units from Fernhill Road is supportable; despite the lack of a sidewalk, the road is a safe and preferred walking route given the slow traffic and gradual grade of the slope compared to Lampson Street.
- The proposed paths will require less trees to be removed, and better protect root by preventing informal paths from forming.
- Cars turn quickly from Lampson Street onto Fernhill Road at this corner, which may impact pedestrian safety without a sidewalk.
- The applicant's proposed paths will likely have less impact on the character of Fernhill Road given the number of trees which would need to be removed for staff's proposed alternative.
- There is concern that using Fernhill Road as the primary access to the property will result in vehicles parking along the boulevard and trees.
- Visitors likely already park along the boulevard on Fernhill Road due to the steep grade of driveways.
- While a proposal without any paths to Fernhill Road may be preferred, paths have been approved for the site already; approving the proposed variance may be the best way to ensure the boulevard trees are protected.
- The motion could be postponed to determine whether the applicant is willing to consider alternative designs without paths to Fernhill Road.
- With the driveways already on Lampson Street, directing pedestrian traffic to access the property through those entrances would be intuitive, and resolve challenges with the current options.
- The developer can still proceed with the approved paths should a decision on the variance be postponed; providing approval to the variance at this time may be preferred.

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That the main motion be postponed to engage the applicant regarding a potential alternative design without paths to Fernhill Road. Defeated, with Councillors Brame, Cavens, Helliwell, Armour Opposed.

Main Motion: Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Brame: That Council approve the application for DVP00173 to vary the applicable provisions of the Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw for certain frontage works and services for the proposed Small-Scale Multi-Family Residential project at 640 Lampson Street as outlined in Staff Report No. DEV-26-008. Defeated, with Mayor

Desjardins, and Councillors Boardman, Helliwell, and Morrison Opposed.

2) [26-123](#) Council Remuneration, Staff Report No. ADM-26-014

The Senior Manager of Human Resources introduced the report and responded to questions from Council.

Council comments included the following:

- Reviewing Council's compensation is uncomfortable, but necessary; maintaining the independence of this process is a priority.
- Using staff-identified comparator communities, and having the review conducted by an independent consultant will ensure Council does not influence the process.
- The proposed comparator model may be more suitable for typical analyses than for elected positions, as it can have a ratcheting effect which drives compensation upwards, and there is not the same risk of individuals moving between employers.
- This decision will simply initiate the review, and a decision on any potential increases will follow its completion.

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Armour: That Council:

- a) Direct staff to initiate a study to review remuneration for the Township of Esquimalt elected officials;
- b) Direct staff to include the recommended 12 comparator communities and survey criteria questions as outlined in Staff Report No. ADM-26-014; and
- c) Request that staff bring forward the findings of the elected official remuneration review for Council's consideration. Carried with Councillors Armour and Cavens Opposed.

Council recessed at 8:52 PM and reconvened at 8:57 PM with all members of Council present.

3) [26-112](#) 2026 Financial Plan Policies and Objectives, Staff Memorandum FIN-26-008

The Director of Financial Services and IT gave a presentation on the updated Council Policy FIN-23 Financial Sustainability, Revenue and Tax, and responded to questions from Council.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That Council approve Council Policy FIN-23 Financial Sustainability, Revenue and Tax and direct staff to attach the document to the 2026-2030 Financial Plan Bylaw.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That the

main motion be amended to include that section 5.2 of the policy be replaced with "A significant annual increase to contributions to capital reserves will be added annually until the identified infrastructure funding deficit is eliminated, with a target date of 2036."

Council comments included the following:

- The 3% increase is supportable for 2026, but may not belong in the policy as a target under section 5.2; amending the wording in the policy to not be tied to a specific number would be supportable.
- Having a specific target in the policy provides clarity.
- Future Councils are able to adjust their contributions and targets as appropriate.
- Use of the word "significant" may result in ambiguity for future Councils, and unintentionally encourage deferrals.
- Indicating that there will be an annual increase, but leaving the specifics undefined, allows for discussion of different tools for addressing the deficit in the future.

Moved by Councillor Helliwell, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the amendment to the main motion be amended to remove the "significant."
Carried with Councillor Armour Opposed.

Amendment as amended:

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That the main motion be amended to include that section 5.2 be replaced with "An annual increase to contributions to capital reserves will be added annually until the identified infrastructure funding deficit is eliminated, with a target date of 2036."

Council comments continued:

- Ambiguity may be helpful as it will require Council to refer to staff's updated evaluations of the deficit each year, and consider the most appropriate target and tools to address it at that time.

The question was called on the amendment, and Carried with Councillor Armour Opposed.

Main Motion as amended:

Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That Council approve Council Policy FIN-23 Financial Sustainability, Revenue and Tax, as amended to replace section 5.2 with "An annual increase to contributions to capital reserves will be added annually until the identified infrastructure funding deficit is eliminated, with a target date of 2036"; and direct staff to

attach the document to the 2026-2030 Financial Plan Bylaw. Carried with Councillor Armour Opposed.

Council comments continued:

- The impacts of property taxes on small businesses are recognized, and there may be opportunities for further mitigation through tax rate adjustments.
- Options to support small businesses through commercial tax rates could be explored.
- Advocating for additional tools to assist residential taxpayers may be a higher priority given the tools already available to businesses.
- Given the number of variables that impact commercial tax rates, there will likely not be an easy way to improve the tax environment for businesses through this policy; directing staff to explore this policy may not be appropriate at this time.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That staff be directed to return with a suggested policy that would use commercial tax rates to further support small businesses. Defeated Unanimously.

4) [26-111](#) 2026 Property Tax Rates Discussion, Staff Memorandum FIN-26-009

The Director of Financial Services and IT presented updated information regarding 2026 Property Tax Rates and responded to questions from Council regarding potential strategies for communicating budget challenges to the public, and budget pressures,

Council comments included the following:

- Surpluses reflect services which ultimately required less funding than predicted; use of this funding to reduce the tax rate is supportable.
- Feedback from residents suggests that the proposed tax rate increases for 2026 have come as a surprise, and reducing the increase using surplus funds would help ease the pressure of this year's budget.
- The property tax system is complicated; communications regarding the budget need to underscore that only 6% of the increase is due to spending.

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That Council direct staff to reduce the 2026 tax rate to 11.32%. Carried Unanimously.

Council comments continued:

- Council's budget decisions this year have been focused on the necessities, but there are items in the police budget which will require meaningful metrics in order to support rationale for approved funding.

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That

Council direct staff to prepare the 2026 Tax Rates Bylaw based on the tax rate scenario of 11.32%. Carried with Councillor Morrison Opposed.

- 5) [26-135](#) Proposed AVICC and UBCM Resolution - Changes to Provincial Property Tax Deferment Program, Staff Memorandum No. ADM-26-017

Councillor Cavens introduced the report.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Brame: That:

WHEREAS the provincial property tax deferment program was established to help seniors and other eligible homeowners with limited incomes remain in their homes by allowing payment of annual property taxes to be deferred until the property is sold or transferred;

AND WHEREAS the 2026 provincial budget changes to the program, including increased interest rates and changes to the compounding formula, are making it significantly more expensive and risk reducing its effectiveness for lower-income seniors, while concerns about higher-income participants could be more appropriately addressed through targeted eligibility criteria;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to review the recent changes to the Property Tax Deferment Program with consideration for the needs of low-income seniors on fixed incomes, including the introduction of an income threshold, so that the program continues to support low-income seniors as originally intended. Carried Unanimously.

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

- 1) [26-120](#) Bylaw to amend the Development Application Procedures and Fees Bylaw, 2012, No. 2791, Staff Report No. DEV-26-018

The Director of Development Services introduced the report and responded to Council questions.

Council comments included the following:

- The proposed increases seem reasonable and sufficient.
- Efforts to simplify the Bylaw and fee structure are appreciated.
- Ensuring application fees are consistent with the costs to the Township is a priority.
- A recurring annual increase could allow for more efficient fee maintenance, without requiring staff and Council to revisit the fees annually.
- Tracking staff time required for each application could provide valuable insights for future fee adjustments and consideration of alternative billing

structures.

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That Council give first, second, and third readings to Development Application Procedures and Fees Bylaw, 2012, No. 2791, Amendment Bylaw, 2026, No. 3187. Carried Unanimously.

- 2) [26-094](#) Repeal Craigflower Road (Gorge Vale Golf Club) Local Area Service Bylaw, Staff Report FIN-26-007

The Director of Financial Services and IT introduced the Bylaw and responded to questions from Council.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Brame: That Council give three readings to Bylaw to Repeal Bylaw No. 2698, 2026, No. 3182. Carried Unanimously.

10. REPORTS / MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

- 1) [26-129](#) Minutes of the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held on November 24, 2025

This item was received.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

For Council's Consideration

- 1) [26-139](#) Letter from the CRD dated March 10, 2026 Re: Municipal Consent for Bylaw No. 4719 - Traffic Safety Commission Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 5, 2025.

Mayor Desjardins introduced the correspondence.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Helliwell: That Council consent to the CRD adopting Bylaw No. 4719, "Traffic Safety Commission Establishment Bylaw No. 1, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 5, 2025". Carried Unanimously.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Dwight Ince, resident, expressed concern that restrictions on short-term rentals (STRs) may be unnecessary given Esquimalt's housing supply, and emphasized the need to balance housing availability with property rights; Provincial legislation already provides limits while allowing economic benefits and local flexibility, and STRs can help homeowners, such as those on fixed incomes, manage rising costs. Time limits, licence caps, and taxation are recommended over stricter measures.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Brame, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That the Regular Council meeting be adjourned at 10:28 PM. Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS

THIS DAY OF 2026

DEB HOPKINS,
CORPORATE OFFICER
CERTIFIED CORRECT