



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Minutes - Final

Committee of the Whole

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

Monday, March 13, 2023

6:00 PM

Esquimalt Council Chambers

Present 7 - Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Councillor Ken Armour
Councillor Darlene Rotchford
Councillor Andrea Boardman
Councillor Duncan Cavens
Councillor Jacob Helliwell
Councillor Tim Morrison

Councillor Helliwell attended the meeting via conference call.

Staff: Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer
Ian Irvine, Director of Financial Services & IT
Vicki Gannon, Director of Corporate Services & Human Resources
Steve Serbic, Fire Chief
Deb Hopkins, Manager of Corporate Services/Corporate Officer
Sarah Holloway, Deputy Corporate Officer/Recording Secretary

Others: Deputy Chief Constable Watson, Victoria Police Department
Steve Hurcombe, Controller, Victoria & Esquimalt Police Board

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Desjardins called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

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

2. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

- 1) [23-165](#) Late Correspondence
- 1) Item No.7.1 Council Budget Discussion - Victoria Police Department 2023 Budget, Staff Report No. ADM-23-007
 - Stephen Harrison - received March 13, 2023

- 2) Item No.7.3 - 2022-2026 Council Priorities Development - Next Steps, Staff Report No. ADM-23-012
 - Kym Thrift - received March 13, 2023
 - Laura-Beth McDonald, Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce - received March 13, 2023

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 1) [23-159](#) Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held February 13, 2023
- 2) [23-158](#) Minutes of the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 27, 2023

Moved by Councillor Rotchford, seconded by Councillor Cavens: That the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 13, 2023 and the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held on February 27, 2023 be approved as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

5. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS 6 AND 7

Meagan Brame, resident, requested that a sidewalk be expanded into the industrial park as the streets around Flying Squirrel and Lighthouse Brewery are busy, narrow and in need of safety and walkability enhancements for the businesses and clientele.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

Presentations

- 1) [23-154](#) Esquimalt Community Arts Hub (ECAH) - Jason Colville, Director and Harper Kennedy, Director

Harper Kennedy and Jason Colville, Directors for the Esquimalt Community Arts Hub (ECAH) presented a PowerPoint and responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

In addition to thanking Council for the funding received in 2022 the following activities were highlighted: expansion of the mural festival, hiring of an executive director with the funds received from an Arts Impact Grant, receipt of the CRD Regional Impact Award and a Community Foundations of Canada grant and partnering with Driftwood Brewing to create a rotating gallery wall in their space. Also outlined was their economic impact on the local economy, their challenges with resources and connectivity, the

programs, workshops and mentorship opportunities offered and the upcoming events.

Committee of the Whole comments included:

- Community groups reporting back to Council on funding use and achievements is appreciated.
- The number of ECAH events held in support of the community is commendable.
- Parks and Recreation staff can provide information on other ideas for support and connections.
- The ECAH owl mural has transformed Esquimalt Road and has become a landmark.

2) [23-155](#) Community Social Planning Council - Diana Gibson, Executive Director and Colton Whittaker, Communications Coordinator

Diana Gibson, Executive Director and Colton Whittaker, Communications Coordinator presented a PowerPoint, mentioned that the Community Council was founded in 1936 and outlined the four main areas of focus including housing affordability, economic justice, community innovation, and climate equity. Further information was provided on the Regional Housing and Prosperity (RHAP) project started a year ago by Colwood in collaboration at the staff level with other municipalities to learn and share resources; the Greater Victoria Rent Bank which provides short term financial assistance to households at risk for eviction; the Greater Victoria Coordinated ID Services; Low Income Transit Assistance (LITA); and the Climate Equity program which brings low income households access to climate action resources.

In response to Committee of the Whole questions the following information was given:

- A report back on the housing needs in Esquimalt and comparables for the region can be provided.
- Funding sources are divided as follows: 30% is provided through consulting contracts, 30% foundations, 30% government funding and 10% membership donations.
- An additional learning session will occur in the next year.

7. STAFF REPORTS

Administration

1) [23-119](#) Council Budget Discussion - Victoria Police Department 2023 Budget, Staff Report No. ADM-23-007

Deputy Chief Constable Watson and Steve Hurcombe responded to

questions from the Committee of the Whole.

Committee of the Whole comments included:

- Given the ongoing discussions regarding the framework agreement and the future of policing in Victoria and Esquimalt, now is not the time to invest in new positions that may have limited impact to the Township moving forward.
- The Police Board may have a strong case for the additional positions due to the Police Crime Index Severity in Victoria, but there is no need for additional policing in the Township.
- As leaders we are responsible to the residents of Esquimalt and should ask the Police Board to return with suggestions on appropriate reductions.
- The Victoria Police provide very good service to the Townships residents but there are issues with the governance funding mechanisms.

Moved by Councillor Boardman and Seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That Council deny the 7 net new positions in the 2023 provisional Police Budget, and that Council deny the following police budget items with the following direction:

- 1) Reduce the Building Maintenance and Janitorial budget \$100,000;
- 2) Do not contribute to the Capital Fund in this fiscal year;
- 3) Defer the Body Worn Camera Pilot Project until 2024; and
- 4) Defer the Computer Forensic Professional Services until such as the Township's policing service delivery model is determined.

Moved by Councillor Armour, seconded by Councillor Boardman: That Council separate the motion into two items. Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Boardman, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council deny the 7 net new positions in the 2023 provisional Police Budget. Carried Unanimously.

Committee of the Whole comments included:

- Any items proposed to be reduced should be forwarded to the Police Board to rate the importance of each line item.
- Council budget approval timelines do not allow for further referral to the Police Board for guidance.
- Should the items be approved there would be a reduction of \$560,000 in the Police Board budget, and Esquimalt's share would equate to \$72,000.
- There are strong arguments for the retention of all of the line items in the budget.
- Policing costs per capita are larger in Esquimalt than other jurisdictions.
- During this time of increasing costs in the community, Council needs to display restraint in spending.

- The Province needs to understand that combining Victoria and Esquimalt Police is not working.

Moved by Councillor Boardman, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council deny the following police budget items with the following direction:

- 1) Reduce the Building Maintenance and Janitorial budget by \$100,000;
 - 2) Do not contribute to the Capital Fund in this fiscal year;
 - 3) Defer the Body Worn Camera Pilot Project until 2024; and
 - 4) Defer the Computer Forensic Professional Services until such time as the Township's policing service delivery model is determined.
- Carried with Councillor Armour Opposed.

In 6 - Mayor Desjardins, Councillor Rotchford, Councillor Boardman, Councillor Cavens, Councillor Helliwell, and Councillor Morrison
Favour:

Opposed: 1 - Councillor Armour

Moved by Councillor Boardman, seconded by Councillor Morrison: That the Committee of the Whole recommend that Council request that the 2022 decision to reduce the number of officers deployed in Esquimalt by 3 be upheld. Carried Unanimously.

- 2) [23-142](#) Accessible BC Act - Municipal Requirements, Staff Report No. ADM-23-011

The Corporate Officer introduced the report and gave the following response to questions from the Committee of the Whole:

- There is a requirement for first nations membership and contact will be made during the recruitment period.
- The annual cost for participation is currently unknown, but expect nominal charges such as arrangements for accessible participation methods and equipment.
- The committee is meant to look at the broad accessible issues of the region and any specific municipal issue would be directed to and managed by that municipality.

Committee of the Whole commented that it was a great report, that the Accessibility Committee is a move in the right direction, and are in support of the municipalities sharing the responsibilities of hosting.

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That it be recommended to Council:

That in response to the Provincial requirement to establish an Accessibility Committee by September 1, 2023, the municipality participate in a joint sub-regional Accessibility Committee, the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee, representing the City of Colwood, the Township of Esquimalt, the District of Highlands, the City of Langford, the District of Metchosin, the District of Sooke, and the Town of View Royal; and

That each member municipality of this joint sub-regional Accessibility Advisory Committee provide an equal share of the costs to retain a consultant to prepare an Accessibility Plan which member municipalities will apply to their own accessibility initiatives; and

That each member municipality of this joint sub-regional Accessibility Advisory Committee allocate nominal annual operating funds for Committee expenses; and

That the draft Committee Terms of Reference, provided as Attachment C to this report, be adopted; and

That a joint Accessibility Advisory Committee advertisement be placed seeking members for this Committee; and further

That the member municipalities each establish an email address to receive public comments as set out in the legislation. Carried Unanimously.

* Corporate Officer Note: This motion was rescinded at the Regular Council meeting of August 28, 2023.

3) [23-157](#) 2022-2026 Council Priorities Development - Next Steps, Staff Report No. ADM-23-012

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

Committee of the Whole comments included:

- A more fulsome discussion is needed for Council to define the priorities within the housing needs of Esquimalt.
- Further information needs to be provided to Council to understand the development capacity and vision when considering new developments in the Township.
- Issues with tenant relocation should be a priority.
- Council has a responsibility to ensure that our infrastructure has enough capacity.

- The sidewalks in the industrial area as well as others in the Township need to be prioritized and endorsed.
 - The Integrated Resource Management report should be presented to Council and made available to the public as soon as possible.
 - Included in the consideration of housing should be the integration of sidewalks, Development Cost Charges and the under-grounding of hydro lines.
 - The Health Needs Assessment which was completed prior to COVID should be refreshed and implemented.
 - There is an interest in the community to reinstate Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti (ETAG).
- A discussion on climate targets and implementation needs to occur to ensure the goals are met.

The Committee of the Whole recessed at 8:34 PM and reconvened at 8:38 PM with all members of Council present.

4) [23-153](#) Staffing Proposals - 2023 Draft Budget

The Chief Administrative Officer introduced the report and with the Director of Corporate Services and Human Resources and the Fire Chief, responded to questions from the Committee of the Whole.

The Director of Corporate Services and Human Resources outlined that the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Manager position is needed to meet organizational needs and requirements from WorkSafeBC to ensure staff are safe and to manage the current workloads of department managers that are currently filling the role in addition to their primary workloads.

The Chief Administrative Officer in speaking on the proposed Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Manager position clarified that all departments can be effected by health and safety and an incident immediately triggers a multi step process for documenting and putting preventative measures in place. This process is unexpected and disruptive to managers who need time to relearn the guidelines as they do not deal with incidents frequently and are not experts in the field of OHS. Providing a safety and return to work program that is more robust would allow for better accommodations for staff in returning to work, based on the specific injury and achieve the aim of making the Township a better working place overall.

Committee of the Whole commented that a reduction in future WorkSafe premiums would be beneficial to the Township.

The Chief Administrative Officer in speaking on the proposed Licensing and

Bylaw Clerk position stated that creating the new position would free up capacity in the Corporate Services department who currently also support the Community Safety Services department. This would allow for Corporate Services to better focus on Council priorities, meeting management and departmental operations.

Committee of the Whole was supportive of providing increased capacity for Freedom of Information requests and Council priorities.

The Chief Administrative Officer in speaking on the proposed four full time Fire Fighters emphasized that the recommendation is for the minimum number of needed positions and if they were based on assessments and other municipalities then the recommendation would probably be higher than four.

Moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That Council extend the time of adjournment of the Committee of the Whole meeting to 10:00 PM. Carried Unanimously.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Residents relayed congratulations on getting a proper washroom at Saxe Point and that the chairs in Council Chambers are uncomfortable to sit on.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Cavens, seconded by Councillor Rotchford: That the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned at 9:33 PM. Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR BARBARA DESJARDINS
THIS 17TH DAY OF APRIL, 2023

DEBRA HOPKINS,
CORPORATE OFFICER
CERTIFIED CORRECT