

DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, March 1, 2021. The meeting was held virtually with participants appearing via video and telephone conference.

Present: Mayor M. Little
Councillor J. Back
Councillor M. Bond
Councillor M. Curren
Councillor B. Forbes
Councillor J. Hanson
Councillor L. Muri

Staff: Mr. D. Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. G. Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks & Facilities
Mr. D. Milburn, General Manager – Planning, Properties & Permits
Mr. A. Wardell, General Manager – Finance/CFO
Mr. R. Danyluk, Manager – Business Planning and Decision Support
Mr. J. Gordon, Manager – Administrative Services
Ms. G. Lanz, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Ms. C. Archer, Confidential Council Clerk
Ms. S. Clarke, Committee Clerk

RESOLUTION TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING WITHOUT THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

MOVED by Councillor CURREN
SECONDED by Councillor BOND
WHEREAS:

- the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General has issued Order M192; and,
- Order M192 requires British Columbia municipalities to use best efforts to allow members of the public to attend open meetings of council in a manner that is consistent with the applicable requirements or recommendations of the *Public Health Act* and Public Health Officer orders; and,
- the District has assessed its ability to allow members of the public to attend open meetings of council in a manner that is consistent with the applicable requirements or recommendations of the *Public Health Act* and Public Health Officer orders; and,
- the District has taken into consideration its Covid-19 Safety Plan as required by Worksafe BC; and,
- the District has determined that, at this time, it cannot safely allow members of the public to physically attend open meetings of council in a manner that is consistent with the applicable requirements or recommendations of the *Public Health Act* or its Covid-19 Safety Plan;

THEREFORE, this meeting of the Council for the District of North Vancouver is to be held virtually and without members of the public, or Council, being physically present;

AND THAT the principles of openness, transparency, accessibility and accountability are being ensured through:

- Providing an online subscription service for residents to sign up and be apprised of upcoming meetings and the post-meeting availability of meeting minutes and meeting videos;
- Providing advance notice of this meeting in accordance with the *Community Charter* and advising the public on how they may participate in the meeting by providing public input;
- Providing the availability of the agenda for this meeting on the District's webpage six days in advance of the meeting;
- The live streaming of this meeting via a link readily available on the District's webpage;
- Maintaining the thirty minute public input opportunity at each regular meeting and the discretionary public input opportunity at each workshop;
- The ability of the public to provide input on agenda items by full two-way audio and video means;
- Adhering the rules of procedural fairness and acting with respect and courtesy at all times when hearing the public;
- Conducting meetings in a manner that resembles in-person meeting as much as possible;

And reminding the public that they may contact Mayor and Council at any time on any topic via its council@dnv.org email address.

CARRIED

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. March 1, 2021 Council Workshop Agenda

MOVED by Councillor BACK

SECONDED by Councillor BOND

THAT the agenda for the March 1, 2021 Council Workshop is adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1. February 1, 2021 Council Workshop

MOVED by Councillor BOND

SECONDED by Councillor BACK

THAT the minutes of the February 1, 2021 Council Workshop are adopted.

CARRIED

3. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OR STAFF

3.1. Financial Plan Deliberations

File No.

Mayor Little introduced the Financial Plan Council Workshop, noting that the proposed three percent property tax increase is among the lowest in the region and is the lowest of the North Shore municipalities.

Mr. Rick Danyluk, Manager – Business Planning and Decision Support, provided an overview of the draft Financial Plan process, noting that:

- Investments included in the Financial Plan reflect Council priorities;
- Critical investments in infrastructure are included in the Financial Plan;
- Adjustments have been made in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- The District's approach to financial planning maintains stable and competitive property tax increases over the long-term and responsible use of taxpayer dollars;
- The property tax increases in most municipalities will be higher than the three percent overall increase proposed in the draft Financial Plan;
- Staff are continuing to improve communication strategies to convey information to the public regarding District services and the Financial Plan process; and,
- Staff are continuing to advocate for tax reform and a review of assessment practices with the Provincial Government.

Mr. Danyluk reviewed highlights of the draft Financial Plan, including:

- Investments in active transportation projects, road safety and capacity;
- Affordable housing projects and a new staff position to support the District's housing objectives;
- Additional child care spaces to be included at the future community centre in the Lynn Creek Town Centre;
- A new Climate Action, Natural Systems and Biodiversity Department to support sustainability and reduction of carbon emissions; and,
- Ongoing projects supporting community safety, health and resiliency.

Mr. Danyluk provided a summary of public input received by staff, noting most aligned with Council priorities, including housing, affordability, active transportation and addressing the climate emergency. Mr. Danyluk noted upcoming Council Workshops will be held on specific topics of interest such as facilities, transportation and District finances.

Mr. Danyluk reviewed the proposed timeline for adoption of the Financial Plan, consideration of the distribution of property taxes and the Annual Report. Mr. Danyluk noted the Annual Report will include a new schedule to show how funds received in 2020 through the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant from the Province of BC were used.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commended staff for their work on the draft Financial Plan;
- Commented on the variety of public input received;
- Acknowledged the proposed three percent property tax increase is lower than many other municipalities;
- Expressed support for the proposed three percent property tax increase with one percent allocated to asset renewal;
- Expressed concern regarding future increases to user fees set by Metro Vancouver;
- Commented on the costs associated with tertiary treatment at regional waste water treatment plants and expressed support for the environmental benefits;
- Further commented on the cost savings of building tertiary treatment during original construction rather than retrofitting and upgrading the North Shore Wastewater Treatment Plant in the future;
- Commented on the need to have Development Cost Charges (DCC's) to finance water infrastructure at the regional level;
- Expressed support for investing in active transportation networks and affordable housing;
- Commented on the alternative modes of transportation goals in the Official Community Plan and noted carbon reduction goals may not be met;
- Commented on the new Planner position to be dedicated to affordable housing initiatives and projects;
- Recommended increasing funding to non-profit organizations through community grants;
- Commented on District staff having met with community associations to discuss the Financial Plan; and,
- Recommended that staff ensure reports are easily comparable between years.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Danyluk advised that the COVID-19 Safe Startup Grant from the Province may only be used for specific purposes such as incremental costs related to the pandemic and revenue losses.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Danyluk advised that the property tax increase was not reduced from three percent to two percent for 2021. He noted some costs are rising more than two percent such as protective services and overall construction costs, and that the District's commitment to keep pace with infrastructure renewal has already been delayed a full year. He further noted that delaying infrastructure repair and replacement would require even higher property tax increases in the future.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented on a past zero percent property tax increase and the associated long-term financial issues;
- Commented on the household impact of regional DCC's and tax requisition; and,
- Noted that Council determines the fees charged for services.

In response to a question from Council, staff provided clarification on resident parking rules and associated fees, noting that the fees recover the costs of program administration.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Noted that a three percent property tax increase averages \$71 per property in the District and that the asset renewal portion of the increase is \$24 per year for the average homeowner;
- Commented on carbon emission reductions and the future carbon budget;
- Remarked on the negative health impacts of traffic congestion and recommended supporting alternative modes of transportation;
- Commented on cost recovery for different departments;
- Advised that programs to provide food to school-aged children are seeing increased use;
- Noted that food waste is a significant source of carbon emissions and that transportation to Pemberton for disposal is not sustainable;
- Commented on the use of parks and trails during the COVID-19 pandemic and opined that increased use will continue post-pandemic;
- Recommended increased investment in park and trail maintenance to mitigate the increased environmental impact from growing use;
- Commented on the District's asset management and renewal practices, noting that steady investment and ongoing work avoids higher costs later and that the District is considered an industry leader;
- Noted that reserves help keep taxation levels steady;
- Expressed concern about the impact on Reserve Fund levels due to the reduction or elimination of building permit fees, Community Amenity Contributions and DCC's for affordable housing developments;
- Requested more information on expenses associated with the COVID-19 pandemic; and,
- Noted that the District's geography and predominantly single-family housing form increase servicing costs.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Danyluk advised that staff will report on the condition of District assets, including facilities, at an upcoming workshop.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Danyluk advised that the Reserve Funds Bylaw established reserve funds and purposes. Mr. Danyluk further advised that the Finance and Audit Standing Committee has been discussing setting asset reserves at specific levels and that staff will be returning proposed minimums and maximums for reserve funds to the committee for consideration.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Danyluk advised that managing growth and growth-related projects may require bridge financing due to the timing of the

collection of funds. Mr. Danyluk advised that most District taxpayers are not financially impacted by the costs of new development as infrastructure costs are funded by other means. Other funding sources include senior levels of government and developer contributions. He noted that the purpose of reserve funds for asset management are for the costs of maintaining existing infrastructure.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Commented on the shortage of skilled child care workers and the need for more support in addition to dedicated space to improve access child care;
- Noted that major upgrades to highway interchanges currently in progress or planned will improve active transportation connections;
- Advised that Metro Vancouver is in the process of creating an asset management plan;
- Recommended coordinating park management with the other municipalities and park jurisdictions on the North Shore;
- Requested natural asset management be included in future financial plans; and,
- Commented on the District's digital transformation strategy and associated costs.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the City and District are each responsible for the capital costs of recreational facilities located in each municipality and operational costs are determined by cost sharing agreements.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Danyluk clarified that the proposed date of adoption for the Financial Plan Bylaw is possible on March 29th due to powers under Ministerial Orders.

MOVED by Councillor HANSON
SECONDED by Councillor BACK

THAT the February 26, 2021 report of the Manager – Business Planning and Decision Support entitled Financial Plan – Public Input is received for information;

AND THAT Staff are directed to prepare the 2021 to 2025 Financial Plan bylaws.

CARRIED

4. PUBLIC INPUT:

4.1. Mr. Corrie Kost, District Resident:

- Expressed disappointment that few members of the public were watching the live stream of the Council Workshop;
- Commented on the proposed schedule for adoption of budget and taxation-related bylaws;
- Opined that older residents are less likely to use active modes of transportation; and,
- Commented on the DNV.org search function.

4.2. Mr. Cooper Quinn, District Resident:

- Advised that his comments are on behalf of the North Shore Mountain Bike Association (NSMBA);
- Thanked District staff for their assistance with trails budget questions;
- Commented on the value of outdoor spaces to physical and mental health;
- Advocated for increased funding to address the increased level of trail use and maintenance for safety and sustainability;
- Opined that increased trail use will continue after the COVID-19 pandemic has ended; and.
- Clarified that NSMBA receives \$100,000 for trail work on Fromme Mountain only and does not receive funding for administration costs or vehicles.

5. ADJOURNMENT

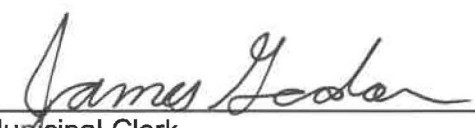
MOVED by Councillor MURI

SECONDED by Councillor BACK

THAT the March 1, 2021 Council Workshop is adjourned.

CARRIED
(9:04 p.m.)



Mayor

Municipal Clerk