

DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 12, 2022 in the Council Chamber of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

Present: Acting Mayor J. Back
Councillor B. Forbes
Councillor J. Hanson
Councillor H. Mah
Councillor L. Muri
Councillor C. Pope

Absent: Mayor M. Little

Staff: Mr. G. Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks and Facilities
Mr. D. Milburn, General Manager – Planning, Properties and Permits
Ms. S. Walker, General Manager – Corporate Services
Mr. A. Wardell, General Manager – Finance and Technology
Ms. C. Jackson, Director – Climate Action, Natural Systems and Biodiversity
Mr. R. Danyluk, Deputy General Manager – Finance and Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Ms. N. Chevallier, Deputy General Manager – Engineering Operations and Facilities
Mr. J. Gordon, Manager – Administrative Services
Ms. S. Jones, Section Manager – Financial Planning
Ms. K. Stuckert, Policy Analyst
Ms. K. Hebron, Confidential Council Clerk
Ms. E. Allen, Committee Clerk

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. December 12, 2022 Council Workshop Agenda

MOVED by Councillor MURI

SECONDED by Councillor BACK

THAT the agenda for the December 12, 2022 Council Workshop is adopted as circulated, including the addition of any items listed in the agenda addendum.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Nil

3. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OR STAFF

3.1. December 12, 2022 Workshop on Priorities and Budget File No.

Ms. Saira Walker, General Manager, Corporate Services, provided an introduction to the Council Workshop, noting that this is the first of many Workshops focusing on District of North Vancouver Priorities and Budget.

Mr. Rick Danyluk, Deputy General Manager, Finance and Deputy Chief Financial Officer, provided a presentation on the Draft 2023 – 2027 Budget to Council. Mr. Danyluk noted the following:

- The District's tax increases are among the lowest throughout the Lower Mainland; and,
- The approach to the budget is steady and predictable which is seen as a competitive advantage relative to other municipalities.
- Highlighted the below challenges:
 - adjusting to a new normal;
 - inflation and capacity;
 - regional decisions and emerging needs; and,
 - financial flexibility.
- Discussed the timeline of the Financial Plan; and,
- Noted Council decisions impact the budget, Financial Plan and Development program.
- Highlighted the below guiding principles:
 - sustainable service delivery;
 - fairness in taxation and user fees;
 - stable and competitive rates;
 - growth management; and,
 - rolling long-term plan.
- Noted the Finance department will be addressing emerging needs as they arise.
- Highlighted the below draft priorities:
 - enhance transportation and mobility;
 - address the community's housing needs;
 - achieve a balanced and fair economy;
 - lead in climate emergency action and environmental management;
 - improve quality of life by fostering community safety, wellbeing and culture; and,
 - foster a resilient organization.
- Highlighted the below approaches to the budget:
 - keep pace with inflation, smooth increases;
 - focus on priorities and policy direction;
 - define role in emerging services;
 - manage expectations and financial risks; and,
 - financially resilient and flexible.
- Noted the proposed tax increase for 2023 is 5.5%;
- Noted the proposed average tax increase for the next four years is estimated at 3.75%;
- Commented on the impact of inflation on the District's Asset Management Plan;
- Commented on rising infrastructure costs;
- Noted the District is applying \$1.9 million from General Reserves to stabilize tax increases;

- Noted approximately \$65 million in capital will carryover from 2022 and additional deferrals will be required;
- Commented on an upcoming workshop in January regarding Council priorities and balancing the budget; and,
- The introduction of the 2023 – 2027 Financial Plan.

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

- Commented on priorities discussed during the municipal election;
- Discussed the issue of efficiency;
- Expressed concern regarding a tax increase of 5.5%;
- Queried if there are any strategies to help mitigate the proposed 5.5% tax increase;
- Suggested focus is on the notion of living within our means;
- Commented on the exponential erosion of District trails due to increased usage;
- Expressed concern regarding District staffing levels;
- Commented on streamlining processes within District departments;
- Noted the District needs to reevaluate and reconsider what our core services are before adding other priorities;
- Suggested the District focus on what the community's priorities are;
- Opined the report was confusing and ineffective in outlining core services and priorities;
- Commented on the Official Community Plan (OCP) Action Plan, which was adopted by the previous Council;
- Suggested Council revisit the OCP Action Plan's core values and focus on them;
- Noted the financial impact of project delays;
- Suggested that the District streamline the process for housing projects so that it is simpler and easier for developers to receive approval;
- Requested Council receives a list in the New Year of projects the District has committed to;
- Commented on Metro Vancouver's increasing user fees;
- Suggested suspending work on some capital projects until inflation goes down;
- Expressed concern regarding what the District's Reserve Fund levels are;
- Commented on the need for an educational communications piece regarding taxes;
- Suggested the goal of all priorities should be to improve the quality of life;
- Suggested a workshop be held to provide further understanding of the processes within each of the District's departments;
- Opined their understanding for the purpose of the meeting was not to draft priorities;
- Suggested Council have an opportunity in the survey to provide their own opinions on what the priorities should be;
- Highlighted the importance of communicating with the public to keep them informed on projects;
- Suggested indigenous relations should be included in the list of priorities;
- Suggested strategies to engage voters should be included in the list of priorities; and,
- Stated growth is not paying for growth in Metro Vancouver.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the Trail Management Strategy is almost complete and will come back to Council in the New Year.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that there are going to be challenging decisions needed to be made by staff and Council to rank priorities.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that Finance has been working closely with Engineering in regard to which projects the District are committed to.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that Finance is working with Communications to create a document for the public to help explain tax increases.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that they ideally would like to separate the Metro Vancouver charges from District charges.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the six broad objectives are a previous continuation of previously established corporate goals.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the next step is to survey staff and Council in order to help direct the order of priorities.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that Finance is working on mitigating Metro Vancouver rate increases and have been for the past decade.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the Asset Management Plan include District projects.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that a Council workshop can be planned in order to outline and develop further understanding of departmental processes.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that this workshop is used to build the foundation for the next Corporate Plan.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the financial landscape has changed since the OCP Action Plan was adopted.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that they will provide Council with a document outlining how the General Manager's objectives align with the OCP Action Plan.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the District recognizes indigenous relations as a strategic priority and a corporate wide priority.

4. PUBLIC INPUT:

4.1 Mr. Corrie Kost:

- Opined the sound system is poor;
- Stated every municipality says its competing with each other;
- Suggested more details are needed regarding climate action;

- Queried whether trails are eroding due to usage or quality of the build;
- Opined no innovation is being done to keep pace with inflation;
- Stated tax increases are used to refurbish infrastructure; and,
- Queried if the public will see the results from the Council survey.

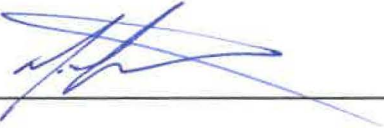
5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councillor MURI


SECONDED by Councillor BACK

THAT the December 12, 2022 Council Workshop is adjourned.

CARRIED
(8:22 p.m.)



Mayor



Municipal Clerk