

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Monday, January 24, 2022 @ 4:00 PM
In the City Hall Council Chambers | 4850 Argyle Street, Port Alberni, BC

PRESENT: Mayor S. Minions
Councillor R. Corbeil
Councillor D. Haggard
Councillor R. Paulson
Councillor H. Poon
Councillor C. Solda
Councillor D. Washington

Gallery: 4

A. CALL TO ORDER & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the agenda be approved as printed and circulated.

CARRIED

B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED AND SECONDED, THAT the minutes of the meeting held at 4:00 pm on March 15, 2021, be adopted.

CARRIED

C. CORRESPONDENCE

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Five Year Financial Plan 2022 – 2026

The Director of Finance introduced the City's draft Five-Year Financial Plan 2022 – 2026 providing an overview of the timeline, linkage to strategic priorities, tax distribution, projected impact of taxation, revenue, expenses and capital plan.

Following the conclusion of the presentation, members of the Committee inquired as follows:

- Are there dates proposed for the Connect the Quays Pathway funding?
The City has not been advised as to whether the City's application for funding has been awarded.
- Will inflation be included in current rate?
There is 3-4% anticipated for 2022 and reflected as higher in future years. Staff will continue to monitor and adjust to reflect increases if required or anticipated.
- Were the COVID-19 funds used to assist Parks, Recreation and Heritage with revenue loss related to COVID-19 in 2021?
Yes, funds from the COVID-19 Restart grant were allocated in 2020 and 2021. Some funds will also be assigned to support lower than anticipated revenue in 2022.

-
- Does the RCMP budget include funding for Body Cameras?
This item is identified as a future cost but is not included in the current RCMP contract. Director of Finance to follow up with Inspector for potential implementation date.
 - Request to review Emergency Reserve Fund [ERF] to accommodate increases.
Staff will provide a report showing allocation of funds.
 - Will the increase of new development alleviate the tax base?
Non-market change from new development provides the option of diluting the tax burden should Council elect to do so.
 - Does the Roads and Street Maintenance budget include sidewalks?
Yes, sidewalk improvements [new & replacements] and inspections are included within the operational budget for Roads and Street maintenance.
 - Are replacement costs included within the Sewer and Water service fees?
Yes, there is a contribution made each year, on average (approximately) 50% to Capital and 50% to Operational.
 - What portion of the curbside fees Organics collection service was covered by grants?
The collection bins, staff resources, communications, education, and cart delivery was financially supported by the ACRD with grant funding. Recycling service delivery is covered by RecycleBC incentives, the remainder is from curbside utility fees.
 - Was the Public Transit Restart Grant part of City grant?
No, BC Transit received its own grant over 2 operating years with fiscal year ending March 31. These funds were specifically to Local Governments that did not reduce level of service in transit through the pandemic.
 - What is the balance of the COVID-19 Restart Grant?
Staff will provide a report showing allocation of funds.
 - Are expenditures related to the operation of the Bylaw services department covered by fines?
No, Bylaw fine fees do not cover operational costs of the Bylaw department.
 - Is the Asset Management Fund required?
There are Capital and Operational reserves currently in place. Asset Management work continues to be completed and included within this budget cycle. Staff have a draft report in process to address reserves and will seek Council support for proposed changes.
 - Request for a summary of costs within RCMP Contract [i.e. cost per member].
Staff to prepare a report and provide to Council at a future meeting.
 - Budget E-town Hall format explanation?
[Response on page 4]

- Does the Payment in Lieu of Taxes [PILT] budget incorporate adjustments from the recent change in accord?
Yes, all PILT amounts expected are reflected in the Financial Plan.
- Are all COVID-19 Restart funds to be allocated by end of 2022?
Yes, funds had to be identified by the end of 2021 and spent by end of 2022.
- Are the 2022 Community Gaming Funds budgeted with the expectation of receiving the typical pre-COVID amounts?
Yes, the budget reflects full funding. Should there be a deficit, there is an option to use contingency to support any deficit in 2022.
- Given the cancellation of a number of conferences and/or move to a virtual format, how much of the Council travel budget was utilized in 2021 and given the continuation of virtual platforms should the 2022 budget be decreased to accommodate this change?
Staff will provide information regarding balance of funds for consideration.
- In anticipation of Council considering Building Permit fees, should Council increase fees, would greater revenue then be anticipated in the budget?
The amount in the budget wouldn't be predicated on Council increasing fees. The budget represents current rates and anticipated construction for 2022.

E. PUBLIC INPUT/QUESTION PERIOD

Moncia Alhroos

Q: Consider the world-wide environmental issues and the opportunities available to Port Alberni to mimic European initiatives. Wide City streets are ideal for utilizing public transit trolley systems. Shipping ports also present an advantage.

A: European initiatives provide a number of great examples. Some of Council's current Strategic Plan goals address utilizing the City's wide streets. The City works regularly with the Island Corridor Foundation and the province to bring passenger rail back to the island and with related agencies to explore all forms of transportation initiatives. The City also works with the Port Alberni Port Authority and other associated agencies regarding shipping ports.

Sylvain Rollin

Q: Request for Council to consider offering exterior grant funding or a loan program to Harbour Quay merchants to complete upgrades.

A: The City's Façade Improvement Program offered through the Economic Development department matches funds and grants for businesses. The Harbour Quay requires a number of upgrades which will be considered during this budget cycle.

The Director of Corporate Services provided an overview of methods available to the public for engaging with Council during the budget process. The City welcomes public input/engagement throughout the entire financial planning process and while Committee of the Whole meetings have been scheduled for this purpose, we wish to advise that Council will receive and consider financial plan information at all its meetings throughout the months of February, March, April and perhaps May. [NOTE: legislation requires councils to adopt financial plans prior to May 15].

Public participation opportunities include:

- Submission of comments/questions to council@portalberni.ca
- Submission of comments/questions by mail or to City Hall
- Attend a Committee of the Whole meeting in person
- Attend a Regular meeting of Council in person. Members of the public are able to address Council directly at regular meetings either during Public Input and/or Question period
- Council will be hosting an E-town Hall style meeting in March and will communicate more specific details as we approach the date

In addition to the above, we encourage you to monitor the City's website to view upcoming Council meeting agendas to stay informed as to when Council will be receiving information as it relates to the five year plan including when Council will be asked to consider additional readings to the bylaw.

F. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the meeting adjourn at 5:01 pm.

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT



Mayor



Corporate Officer