

DISTRICT OF SECHELT
MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
held via Zoom Online Meeting Platform
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

PRESENT Mayor D. Siegers; Councillors J. Kuester; T. Lamb; M. McLean and B. Rowe

REGRETS Councillors A. Toth and E. Scott

STAFF Chief Administrative Officer A. Yeates; Director of Engineering and Operations K. Dhillon; Director of Planning and Development Services A. Allen; Director of Financial Services D. Douglas; Manager of Development Engineering and Sustainability M. Lee; Wastewater Supervisor C. Miller; Manager of Financial Services B. Smith; Corporate Officer J. Frank and Recording Secretary J. Chamberlain

In accordance with the orders from the Provincial Health Officer regarding COVID-19, the March 10, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting was conducted by electronic means.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Siegers called the Committee of the Whole Meeting to order at 3:00 pm and acknowledged that the meeting was being hosted on the traditional territory of the shíshálh Nation.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Recommendation No. 1

Moved/Seconded

That the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

3. APPOINTMENTS AND DELEGATIONS

None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

None.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5.1 Sechelt Library Update and 2021 Budget Request

The Mayor introduced Leianne Emery, Sechelt Library Director and Pat Harvey, Sechelt Library Board Chair. Ms. Emery provided an overview of the impacts and adjustments made from the Covid-19 pandemic, the library services provided, historical photos of the library and budget details.

It was further noted:

- The library took every opportunity to market their services and assets.
- The library underwent some construction projects to enable programs and services to be provided in a safe manner.
- There have been increased costs associated with Covid-19 and the library has had no volunteers after March 2020.
- Staff go above and beyond for patrons and the library provides many more services than just supplying books.
- The requested 5-year budget proposal is a minimalized list of essential basic needs.

In discussion it was noted:

- Services provided to the Pender Harbour-Egmont area include: online reading, online services and courses; coordinates services through the Pender Harbour Reading Centre.
- The District of Sechelt provides the library building space rent free, has provided the full use of the Community Meeting Room to meet book quarantine needs, and some staff time for repairs and maintenance.
- The Library Funding Agreement has been negotiated and will be presented to Council once all other parties have approved it.

The Mayor thanked Leianne Emery for her presentation and for the services the library provides.

Councillor Lamb joined the meeting at 3:13pm.

5.2 RCMP 2021 Budget Request

The Mayor introduced RCMP Sgt. Don Newman, Acting Detachment Commander. Sgt. Newman provided an overview of the Sunshine Coast RCMP detachment's policing challenges, anticipated policing priorities, frontline policing duties, District of Sechelt policing statistics, the complexity of policing and staffing needs.

It was further noted:

- The last municipal increase to police service levels was in 2009, and the last provincial increase was in 2007.
- There has been sustained population growth on the Sunshine Coast.
- As the Sunshine Coast is geographically isolated, the local RCMP detachment do not have other detachments to call upon for immediate assistance or resources.
- The Sunshine Coast has begun to see a year-round influx of tourists and part-time residents, and is no longer specific to just spring and summer months.
- 2020 was an anomaly year for statistics due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions.
- Mental Health related Calls for Service in the District have significantly increased since 2017.
- The volume of Calls for Service has increased, with spikes that do not always coincide with summer months.
 - There are instances where Sunshine Coast RCMP Calls for Service are comparable or higher to Surrey, Squamish and/or Richmond RCMP.
- More recent judicial legal requirements on evidence for convictions as well as Provincial Policing Standards have caused an increased demand in policing time and resources.
- The Sunshine Coast provincial population to officer ratio is significantly higher than almost all other municipalities.
 - The ratio significantly increases during peak tourist summer months.
- For 2021, the Sunshine Coast RCMP detachment is requesting a municipal-funded General Investigation Section (GIS) officer and a civilian employee.
 - For 2022-2024, the Sunshine Coast RCMP detachment will request further staffing once the 2021 census and related call volumes are reviewed.

In discussion it was noted:

- The GIS position would allow the ability to enhance public safety through a proactive approach to mental health, homelessness and the opioid crisis, as well as decrease Calls for Service.
- The District of Sechelt has asked the province for an additional RCMP municipal member in 2020, which has not yet been approved.
 - District staff have included the full cost of an additional member in the presented budget sheet.
 - Contract Services outlined in the presented budget sheet will likely be reduced to reflect the actual cost of hiring a member later in the year.
- The Mayor noted a recent provincial grant opportunity, *Strengthening Community Services* which can be used for projects to reduce community concerns about public health and safety in neighbourhoods, where unsheltered homeless populations are seeking temporary shelter and services.
 - Funding guidelines for the Sunshine Coast could mean up to \$450,000, and the application deadline is April 16, 2021.
- The proposed GIS position could also help alleviate the workload in the area of community engagement, education and liaison, among many other potential duties.

- The single main deterrent for hiring experienced officers is the high cost of living on the Sunshine Coast.
- The Sunshine Coast RCMP have also requested provincially-funded members.

The Mayor thanked Sgt. Newman for his presentation.

5.3 Sunshine Coast Tourism Update and 2021 Funding Request

The Mayor introduced Paul Kamon, Executive Director of Sunshine Coast Tourism (SCT). Mr. Kamon provided an update on the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) renewal, SCT's new Stakeholder model and various grant application outcomes.

It was further noted:

- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all 2020 membership fees were waived and SCT saw an opportunity to move forward with a stakeholder model and at their 2020 AGM, a motion was passed with intention to adopt a stakeholder model.
 - It is projected that there will be a small deficit in the first year of implementation, which will be absorbed with retained earnings.
 - Members will have to be in compliance with all government regulations and bylaws, hold a valid business licence, have liability insurance and hold proper accreditation and licensing.
- As a result of the Tourism Growth Management Committee (TGMC) formally submitting a letter to BC Ferries outlining tourism concerns, BC Ferries will return to the 2019 peak season service levels on Route 3, and increase discretionary sailings in the event of overloads on weekends.
- SCT applied for a businesses and community recovery and resilience grant to provide temporary employment funding needed to assist with implementing projects.

In discussion it was noted:

- The TGMC should advocate to the District of Sechelt for potential collaboration on projects.
- All grants outlined in the presentation align with the 10-year Destination Development Plan.
- SCT is committed to getting a destination audit done, and encourage individual stakeholders to get audits done for their businesses to determine the impacts and benefits of tourism, and what sustainable tourism would look like.
 - Sustainability addresses economic and environmental concerns, and what the industry needs to do to be responsible and sustainable.
- SCT should be involved in discussions around regional growth to ensure that the quality of life residents want is preserved, but also to support the tourism and economic sector of the community.
- SCT is requesting \$12,800 for 2021.

- It is anticipated it will be a very busy summer.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Kamon for his presentation.

Recommendation No. 2

Moved/Seconded

That the presentations providing updates and 2021 budget requests from the representatives of Sechelt Public Library, the Sunshine Coast RCMP detachment and Sunshine Coast Tourism, be received.

CARRIED

5.4 Sewer and General Capital Requests for 2021

Recommendation No. 3

That Business item 5.4, *Sewer and General Capital Requests for 2021* be deferred to the March 24, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting.

CARRIED

6. ADJOURNMENT

Recommendation No. 4

Moved/Seconded

That the Committee of the Whole meeting of March 10, 2021 be adjourned at 4:33 pm.

CARRIED

Certified Correct:

Darnelda Siegers, Mayor

Jo-Anne Frank, Corporate Officer