MINUTES

CITY OF MERRITT

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, March 24, 2020
7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
2185 Voght Street
Merritt, B.C

PRESENT: **Mayor L. Brown**
Councillor M. Bhangu
Councillor K. Christopherson
Councillor A. Etchart
Councillor T. Fehr
Councillor T. Luck
Councillor M. White

Mr. S. Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. S. Smith, Director of Corporate Services
Ms. S. Thiessen, Director of Finance & IT
Mr. W. George, Tourism & Economic Development Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Call to Order

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 7.01pm

2. LATE ITEMS

2.1 Council Procedure Bylaw - Electronic meetings

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-01

THAT Council add an item to the agenda (9.6.3) regarding the amendment of the Council Procedure Bylaw to allow for electronic Council meetings during emergencies.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

3. PUBLIC INPUT

There were no public comments

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Special Council Meeting Minutes - February 25, 2020

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-02

THAT the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on February 25, 2020 be adopted.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

4.2 Regular Council Meeting Minutes - February 25, 2020

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-03

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on February 25, 2020 be adopted

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

4.3 Regular Council Meeting Minutes - March 16, 2020

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-04

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on March 16, 2020 be adopted

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

5. PUBLIC HEARING

6. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognitions

6.1 TRU Co-op Student Presentation

Presentation by Duong Trinh, 4th year TRU Bachelor of Tourism Management student.

This item has been deferred to a future Council meeting.

6.2 Creating an Age Friendly City

Presentation by Craig and Judy Gray.

This item has been deferred to a future Council meeting.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Notice of Motion

At the February 25, 2020 Regular Meeting of Council, Councillor Luck made the following notice of motion:

Councillor Luck moved the motion, and Councillors outlined the details they would like in the report.

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-05

THAT Council direct staff to prepare a report regarding the current practice of giving water meters for new builds, in circumstances where the City does not have a program for metering water

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

7.2 Committee of the Whole - Budget Recommendations

The Committee of the Whole made the following recommendations at the March 3, 2020 meeting:

Ms Thiessen introduced the report, and noted that projects would be prioritized as required.

Councillors expressed concern about project delivery during the ongoing pandemic.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-06

THAT Council direct staff to include operating requests totaling $251,646 in the 2020-2024 Financial Plan, as presented in the March 3, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-07

That Council direct staff to include capital requests totaling $1,826,300 in the 2020-2024 Financial Plan, as presented in the March 3, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

7.3 Recommendations from the Airport Advisory Committee

The AAC made the following recommendations to Council at their March 6, 2020 meeting:

Councillor Christopherson introduced the recommendations. He and Mr Smith explained they would allow for development, and that the current airport classification is unclear. AGN (Aircraft Group Number) II defines the type of planes that can use the airport; the resolution would merely recognize the current situation and in no way limit future uses.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-08

THAT Council direct staff to research and prepare an amendment to the Official Community Plan that would allow runway access from properties on the West side.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-09

THAT the the airport be recognized at the current classification of AGN2 non-instrument.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-10

THAT Council direct staff to research and prepare a report regarding setbacks, in light of the current airport classification and potential future airport classifications.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8. BYLAWS

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Situation Table Resolution

Marlene Jones, Community Policing Office Coordinator, is in the process of preparing a grant application for funding to establish a situation table called the Merritt Agency Support Table (MAST).

Situation Tables are frontline, multi-sector collaborations that enable public safety, health, and social service agencies to proactively identify and rapidly mitigate the underlying risks associated with criminal offending, victimization, and personal crisis or trauma (e.g., overdose, eviction, etc.) by connecting vulnerable people to the services they need.

While not required, Council's are encouraged to submit supporting documents as part of this application process.

Mr Hildebrand explained this grant would allow Merritt to set up the Situation Table and train participants. It requires a Council resolution to move forward.

Councillors expressed their support for the idea.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-11

THAT Council express full support for the establishment of a situation table in the City of Merritt;

AND THAT the Mayor provide a letter of support to accompany the City's grant application.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.2 Age Friendly and Accessibility Committee

The following names were brought forward from the Closed Council meeting of February 25, 2020.

Councillors reiterated that this committee was overdue, and expressed their support for it and the appointed members.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-12

THAT Council appoint the following persons to the Age Friendly and Accessibility Committee:

1. Travis Fehr

2. Mike Bhangu

3. Gail Bloom

4. Ava Dean

5. John Philp

6. Judy Gray

7. Susan Fischer

8. Chris Kurik

9. Cathy Ann Norris

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.3 Community Emergency Preparedness Fund - Evacuation Route Planning Grant

Mr Hildebrand explained a grant was available for emergency route planning, and staff felt it would be desirable to apply. A resolution by Council is required.

Councillors expressed their support for planning, and preparedness.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-13

THAT Council direct staff to apply for the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund-Evacuation Route Planning grant, in accordance with the application attached to this report as Schedule "A";

AND THAT Council express support for the proposed activities and indicate willingness to provide overall grant management.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.4 Claybanks RV Park - Fees

Mr Smith explained the Claybanks park is city-owned, contractor-operated, and the contractor has queried the low rates. These were last reviewed 7 years ago, and staff intend to review city fees in all areas at least every other year.

Councillors discussed the need to review fees, to establish a fair price and to avoid detrimental outcomes.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-14

THAT Council direct staff to research the fee structure of the Claybanks RV Park, including high and low season dates, and prepare a report and accompanying amendment to the fee bylaw.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.5 BC PNP - Request for Council Direction

Mr George explained the committee were seeking Council's direction about whether or not full business plans were required instead of concepts.

Option 2 (full business plans) was moved and second. Councillors expressed concern about approving business plans without detailed information, and discussed the appropriate role of the City in duplicating items required by the Province, its effect on demand for the program, and whether or not the committee was functioning as intended.

It was proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed to defer the item.

Recommendation:

THAT Council direct staff to accept only full business plans, as opposed to business concept plans, as part of the BC PNP application process;
AND THAT Council maintain the BC PNP Committee.

Resolved to:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-15

Defer the item to a later meeting

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.6 COVID-19 Response - Resolutions from Council

Staff will provide oral reports in relation to these items.

9.6.1 Committee Meetings

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-16

THAT Council direct that all in-person Committee meetings be paused until further notice.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.6.2 Quarterly Utility Billing - Delay of Due Date

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-17

THAT Council direct staff to defer the Q1 commercial utility billing cycle and send out a combined Q1/Q2 invoice in July, with an extended discount date of August 31st, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.6.3 Council Procedure Bylaw - Electronic Meetings

Mr Smith noted that Cllrs have suggested moving the start time of meetings to 6pm and holding any required Closed meetings after the Regular meeting, of which notice would also be required, and asked if any Cllrs wished to move an amendment to that effect.

Recommendation:

Resolution No: 2020RC-06-19

THAT Council provide notice of its intention to amend the Council Procedure Bylaw, in accordance with section 124(3) of the Community Charter, to allow for electronic Council meetings in emergency situations;

AND THAT Council direct staff to bring forward this amendment bylaw for first, second and third readings at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Amendment:Resolution No: 2020RC-06-18

add after "situations;":

and to move the Regular Council meeting time to 6pm;

Against (1): Adam Etchart

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.7 CAO Update

Mr Hildebrand wanted to thank all front line workers, fire, RCMP, and first responders for their work during the current COVID-19 outbreak.

He noted that all projects will be examined for viability in the current situation.

City Hall and all facilities are currently closed. All staff except for essential services are asked to remain at home. Management team are working remotely, and have a daily videoconference. The city switchboard is set up so residents can still call in. As of today, Merritt has moved to 24 hour police coverage. Staff are also planning for flooding and forest fires to react if necessary.

He spoke about the need to follow the Province's and Interior Health's lead. The only buses currently coming through Merritt are safely operated e-bus that provides transportation to the Lower Mainland.

Stores are limiting specific items that can be purchased, and he would encourage this further as needed.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

None

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

12.1 Ombudsperson Quarterly Report

12.2 Strategic Planning Priorities

13. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The Mayor declared the meeting ended at 8.51pm

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Corporate Officer

Sean Smith

Certified correct in accordance with Section 124(2) (c) of the Community Charter

Confirmed on the ____ day of _____, 20____

_____

Mayor

Linda Brown