MINUTES

CITY OF MERRITT

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, August 18, 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**
IN ATTENDANCE:	**Mr. S. Smith, Chief Administrative Officer** **Mr. G. Lowis, Deputy Corporate Officer** **Mr. W. George, Economic Development, Communications & Tourism Manager** **Mr. W. Anderson, Director of Finance and IT** **Mr. D. McArthur, Planning & Development Services Manager**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

2. LATE ITEMS

2.1 Voght Street Phase 2 - Grimmett and Walters Conceptual Design Update

Presentation by Charlie Henderson, Superintendent of Public Works and Engineering Services

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-1

THAT Council add a report from Charlie Henderson, regarding the Voght Street Phase 2 design, to the agenda as item 9.4.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

2.2 Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw 2286, 2020 - Trucked Liquid Waste

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-2

That Council add consideration of Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw 2286, 2020 to the agenda as item 8.2.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

3. PUBLIC INPUT

Nil

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Special Council Meeting Minutes - August 4th, 2020

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-3

THAT the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on August 4th, 2020 be adopted.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

5. PUBLIC HEARING

5.1 Public Hearing

Mayor Brown recessed to the public hearing at 7:06pm

Mayor Brown reconvened the regular meeting at 7:13pm

5.1.1 Introduction of Bylaw

5.1.2 Staff report

To be introduced by Mr. McArthur

Mr. McArthur introduced the report. He explained that 21 amendments had been accepted, and that this was a continuation

of the public hearing for the public to speak to those or any other issues.

5.1.3 Public submissions

Oral submissions on the proposed Zoning Bylaw from the public.

First session - August 4th, 2020

Ginny Prowal of 2070 Aspen St, Merritt, spoke to express confusion about the parks on Springbank Avenue. Mr. McArthur explained how they were intended. Ms. Prowal said she was very pleased. She asked about 1302 Voght St, said Voght Park was flood mitigation, and Centennial was green space. She asked about development and access at Windy Canyon and Mr. McArthur said it was in the OCP as park, but as private property was zoned M1. She asked about parks in Diamondvale and Collettville, and Mr. McArthur spoke to them.

Linda Hamerton of 3301 Boyd Road, Merritt, asked about a proposed park on Parker. Mr. McArthur said there was no specific plan for it, but ultimately it could become some kind of neighbourhood park. Ms. Hamerton expressed concerns about parking.

Chen Xiang of 2201 Voght St, Merritt, spoke in support of the zoning bylaw saying it would allow Merritt to grow in a sustainable way, retaining its character.

Parvinda Harry of 2057 Ridegway St, Abbotsford, said he supported the Zoning Bylaw and would go further; he and his family had had to leave Merritt due to the lack of housing, and he wanted to begin further development to help Merritt grow.

Shinder Gill of 4399 Emily Carr Place, Abbotsford, said there was not enough multi-family housing in Merritt, and that more options of this as allowed in the new Zoning Bylaw would encourage younger families to move in.

Second session - August 18th, 2020

Ginny Prowal of 2070 Aspen St, Merritt, spoke about the Collett Island site, saying that she believed the Province had agreed to make it a protected area, and that a dedication ceremony had been promised to the family when the land had been designated a City park, but was yet to come to pass.

The Mayor asked three times if anyone else wished to come forward and speak for or against the Bylaw.

5.1.4 Written submissions

The attached submission was received in response to the public notices placed.

5.1.5 Termination of public hearing

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-4

THAT the Zoning Bylaw 2284 2020 be returned to a regular session of Council for Third Reading

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

6. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognitions

6.1 Creating an Age Friendly City

Presentation by Craig and Judy Gray.

This item was deferred from March 24th, 2020.

Mr. Gray spoke about difficulties accessing services such as the post office, housing, and communications, and also spoke about the difficulty new residents sometimes had integrating into a community. He believed that wearing masks would allow the continuation of normal social activities threatened by Covid-19.

Ms. Gray talked about fear, both travelling, and going about daily life while feeling vulnerable. She spoke of difficulties accessing doctors, and the effect the pandemic had on retail supplies. She advocated tax reductions to allow people to stay in their own homes, and reductions in utilities.

6.2 Nicola Valley Community Arts Council

Jano Howarth and Mischelle Pierce to present on Downtown Beautification Mural project.

Ms. Howarth asked Mr. George to speak briefly about why they were here. He explained that the local business information guide had contained multiple projects, which began with the Buy Local campaign, downtown

pedestrianisation, beautification, street parking, and outdoor display of goods.

Ms. Howarth and Ms. Pierce spoke about street arts projects and organizations, and the hopes to expand these going forward. They asked the City Council for $5,000 to support local artists.

Mayor Brown noted that when this was considered by Council, they would expect a report from staff on which budget this money would come from. It was moved and Seconded to consider the request at the Special Meeting on September 1st (unanimous support required). The item will be considered at the Regular Meeting on September 15th.

Council briefly discussed the benefits of arts in the community.

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-5

THAT Council consider the Arts Council request on September 1st, 2020 instead of September 15th, 2020.

Against (1): Mike Bhangu

DEFEATED

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 Correspondence Policy

Item deferred from the August 4th, 2020 meeting

Mr. Smith introduced the item, and explained the need for a policy to ensure Councillors know how information is being dealt with.

Mayor and Councillors asked questions about the policy, and the distinction between operational and policy matters, which Mr. Smith answered.

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-6

THAT Council adopt the proposed Correspondence Policy as attached

Against (2): Mike Bhangu, and Melvina White

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

7.2 Visual symbol of diversity and inclusion

Mr. George introduced the report and the proposed logos that staff were putting forward for debate and consideration.

Council discussed at length both the visual imagery, and the merits of whether or not it included text, and what that should be.

Councillors discussed if this would be a City or community logo, and what types of material it would appear on.

Mr. George confirmed that he had received direction on what Council would like to see come back to a future meeting, and that he had discretion to work with the Arts Council should he choose.

8. BYLAWS

8.1 Zoning Bylaw 2284, 2020

To be introduced by Mr. McArthur

Mr. McArthur introduced the Zoning Bylaw, and explained following the public hearing, staff were recommending third reading to the Bylaw as amended.

Mayor and Council expressed praise for staff getting the Bylaw this far, with so little negative feedback.

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-7

THAT Zoning Bylaw 2284, 2020 as amended be given Third Reading

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8.2 Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw 2286, 2020 - Trucked Liquid Waste

This item will only be considered if Council unanimously resolves to accept this proposed amendment as a late item.

Mr. Lowis introduced the item, and explained how the proposed Bylaw amendment would allow for the City to accept trucked sludge, and how the proposed fee was reasonable in terms of both the City's costs and the local commercial environment.

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-8

THAT Council give first reading to the Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2286, 2020

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-9

THAT Council give second reading to the Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2286, 2020

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-10

THAT Council give third reading to the Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2286, 2020

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Communications Plan

Mr. George introduced the proposed communications plan and the research that had gone into it. He thanked Steven Bauwens for his work on this, as well as the City's new website and visual design projects.

Council asked about the plan's impacts on communications, particularly at reaching seniors and other groups who are not connected through social media.

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-11

THAT Council adopt the City of Merritt Communication Plan

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-12

AND THAT Council directs staff to execute the recommended Implementation Plan in the Communications Plan.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.2 North Bench Neighbourhood Development Plan Engagement Strategy

To be introduced by Mr. McArthur

Mr. McArthur introduced the report on the engagement strategy. He explained it was a draft plan, and encouraged Council to provide any proposed amendments or revisions. He noted a risk of public burnout, and so a desire to integrate engagement projects, such as doing the Official Community Plan and North Bench Neighbourhood Development Plan at once.

Mayor and Council praised the plan, and thanked Mr. McArthur for bringing it forward.

9.3 CAO Update

Mr. Smith explained how he would like to reconfigure the CAO update on the agenda. This would reduce its frequency, but increase its depth when it appeared.

He thanked Council for allowing him to become the new CAO at Merritt, and praised the City's staff. He expressed his hope to get Council and the community working together to make Merritt better.

Finally, he thanked staff for their work on many projects recently.

9.4 Voght Street Phase 2 - Grimmett and Walters Conceptual Design Update

Presentation by Charlie Henderson, Superintendent of Public Works and Engineering Services

Mr. Henderson spoke to introduce the item, and explained the possibility of roundabouts on Voght St. He also discussed some of the challenges that would be involved, and contrasted their benefits and drawbacks to signalled intersections. Mr. Smith noted that these are high-level, conceptual ideas that are potential future development rather than specific plans at this point.

Mr. Henderson informed Council that Voght St phase 1 is currently around a month ahead of schedule.

Mayor wanted to thank staff for the incredible work done to move Merritt forwards.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL

Cllr Luck wanted to add to the Mayor's statement, and to say that amazing work has been done in the last couple of years. He wanted to note that people from outside Merritt, eg the Lower Mainland, are noticing Merritt and want to move here, and start businesses, which he thought was exciting, and meant future jobs for citizens and youth.

Cllr Bhangu said the Mayor had asked Cllrs to report on their liaison activities. He wanted to remind everyone about the farmer's market on Saturdays, and they want a sign.

Cllr Etchart wanted to comment on how nice it was to see new projects, and the hard work with the staff. It was nice to see how quickly people respond to emergencies, and to see the City's equipment in action and why it needs to be updated.

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

Nil.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.35pm.

13. CLOSED SESSION

The meeting resumed at 9.42pm

13.1 Vote to Close

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-C1

THAT this meeting be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(a) of the Community Charter: personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the municipality or another position appointed by the municipality;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

13.2 Agenda item

13.3 Staff update

13.4 Staff update

13.5 Vote to leave Closed session

Resolution No: 2020RC-14-C4

THAT this meeting return to open session, having concluded the business that require it be closed to the public pursuant to Section 90(1)(a) of the Community Charter: personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the municipality or another position appointed by the municipality;

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

14. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The Mayor declared the meeting ended at 10.43pm

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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