



# **MINUTES**

## **CITY OF MERRITT**

### **REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL**

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

7:00 P.M.

Held online due to social distancing requirements

Public access link published on City website

& social media accounts

**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 G. Lowis, Deputy Corporate Officer**

**Mr. W. George, Tourism & Economic Development Manager**

**Mr. W. Anderson, Financial Services Manager**

**Mr. D. McArthur, Planning & Development Services Manager**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

**2. LATE ITEMS**

**3. PUBLIC INPUT**

Nil

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

#### **4.1 Regular Council Meeting Minutes- May 12th, 2020**

*Resolution No:*

***THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on May 12th, 2020 be adopted***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

#### **5. PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **6. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognitions**

##### **6.1 Fraser Basin Council - Gas Tax proposal**

Presentation by Mike Simpson

Mr Lowis explained that Mr Simpson had attempted to join the meeting, but the City had had technical problems. He passed on a message from Mr Simpson that the project has recieved notional approval from the selection committee. It is now pending the Ministerial budget letter before funds will be released; the Province will be proceeding with some groundwater work on the Coldwater and Nicola rivers this year

##### **6.2 Merritt Chamber of Commerce - Covid-19 Economic Recovery Initiatives**

Presentation by Ryan Wuthe

Mr Wuthe presented as to how the "shop local" program would work, as Merritt Supporting Merritt and BeLocal, BuyLocal. He introduced sample products that would bear this messaging, and explained some of the campaigns they intended to run.

After granting unanimous consent to consider the request, Councillors expressed support for the idea, and wondered if the funds requested would suffice. It was pointed out that there would be other avenues of support for the project, and this would be a start.

*Under s21(c) of the City of Merritt Council Procedures Bylaw 2055 2008, a delegation request can only be acted on by Council at the same meeting with a unanimous vote by Council. Considering the fast moving situation and need to respond to the economic downturn wrought by Covid-19, staff have included a resolution that would allow Council to consider this*

*request at this meeting. If this motion does not receive unanimous support, the next scheduled meeting where the delegation could be discussed is June 16th 2020.*

*Resolution No:*

***THAT Council unanimously agrees to Consider the delegation at the same meeting, under s21(c) of the City of Merritt Council Procedures Bylaw 2055, 2008.***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

*Amendment: Resolution No:*

***THAT Council allocate \$5,000 from the Council contingency fund to support the marketing initiatives of the Economic Recovery Task Force, as presented by Mr. Wuthe.***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

### **6.3 Draft 2019 Audited Financial Statements**

**File: 1680**

Draft 2019 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Merritt.

Presentation by Mario Piroddi, CPA, CA, CISA Partner through a corporation BDO Canada LLP

Mr Piroddi introduced the financial statements, and explained their significance for the City's financial position.

### **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Nil

### **8. BYLAWS**

Nil

### **9. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **9.1 2019 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Merritt**

**File: 1680**

Mr Piroddi proposed a clean audit opinion.

He explained that the overall funds are relatively stable, although there are increases and reductions in specific funds. He explained how accounting standards influenced where surpluses appeared in specific years, and what reserves represent.

Councillors had no questions on the financial statements.

Mr Piroddi wanted to praise Ms Thiessen and her team for helping him do all their work as the Covid 19 pandemic unfolded.

*Resolution No:*

***THAT Council accept the Draft 2019 Audited Financial Statements for the City of Merritt;***

***AND THAT the Mayor and Director of Financial Services & IT be authorized to sign on behalf of the City***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

## **9.2 Economic Recovery Initiatives: Permit Relaxations**

To be introduced by Mr D. McArthur, Planning and Development Services Manager

Mr McArthur introduced the proposals and how they were anticipated to aid revitalization.

He noted that patios would have two different types, depending whether any converted parking was city, or privately-owned. He noted there would be separation between traffic and patios for city-owned, and that there would be relaxation of parking required for privately owned, to reflect the reduced capacity.

Councillors spoke in strong support of the proposals, but Cllr Etchart suggested altering the insurance requirements to additional insured, not named insured. Mr McArthur confirmed this would be changed.

*Resolution No:*

***THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee and requirement to submit professional design drawings for commercial patio construction;***

***AND THAT Council temporarily waives the Sign Permit application fee and requirement to submit a colour rendering for sign installation;***

***AND THAT Council temporarily waives the Development Permit application fee for commercial façade improvements;***

***AND THAT Council temporarily enables retail businesses to apply for approval of outdoor display of goods which do not conform to the Business Licence Bylaw regulations, subject to approval by the Planning and Development Manager.***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

**9.3 Agreement to Remove or Demolish, 1550 Williams Cres., PID 003-963-934**

Mr McArthur introduced the report, and explained the current owner is applying for a building permit and intends to live in a mobile home while it is being built, but that the current zoning bylaw does not allow two dwellings. The attached agreement reflects that the property owners would be able to live there during construction, and would have 60 days to remove the mobile home after an occupancy permit was issued.

*Resolution No:*

***THAT Council accepts the Agreement to remove or demolish the mobile home at 1550 Williams Crescent, following the issuance of an occupancy permit for the new dwelling;***

***AND THAT the Mayor and Director of Corporate Services be authorized to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

**9.4 Economic Development Committee - Terms of Reference**

*Mayor Brown requested that this item be brought forward for the May 26th, 2020 meeting, to support and provide framework for the Economic Recovery Task Force.*

*Council may amend the proposed Terms of Reference at its discretion by resolution.*

Mayor Brown introduced the motion, saying that if a Task Force was to create work, it would have to be a Committee of the City.

Councillors discussed terms of service, and how appointments of Cllrs would be made.

*Resolution No:*

***THAT Council establish the Economic Development Committee with the attached Terms of Reference;***

***AND THAT Council direct staff to post notice and begin accepting applications for this Committee.***

**Moved, Seconded, CARRIED**

## **9.5 Public Works Update**

Oral report provided by Charlie Henderson

Mr Henderson explained the progression from essential to core services, and the staffing implications. The seasonal plan is currently behind schedule, but crews are working diligently to maintain services in the face of high water and reduced staff. He noted that the Voght St project is underway, and other projects are in progress, including the airport crack sealing program.

## **9.6 Recreation and Facilities Oral Update**

Oral report provided by Sky McKeown

Mr McKeown updated Council on the status of recreation and facilities re-opening plans, including proper signage and working with the relevant regulating bodies.

## **9.7 Finance Department Update**

Oral report on re-opening from Sheila Thiessen/Wayne Anderson

Ms Thiessen thanked the finance team for the work in getting the budget and financial statements out, well ahead of the extended deadlines.

Mr Anderson explained the status at City Hall after 2.5 months of Covid, with staff returning and a front counter opened on the first floor. Payments were similar values to this time last year.

#### **9.8 CAO Update**

Oral report provided by Scott Hildebrand

Mr Hildebrand updated Council on the status of the Active Transportation Plan, the new RCMP online crime reporting resource on the City website, new signage on De Wolf Way, and the City's recreation resources guide. He also praised the City's staff for the work done to keep the City running during Covid-19, and talked about the current main focus on water levels and potential flooding.

### **10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **10.1 Kurt Christopherson**

Councillor Christopherson gave notice of a motion to direct staff to monitor reduced residential speeds especially during Voght St project

### **11. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL**

Cllr Bhangu said wearing a face mask reduces transmission of Covid-19, and he would encourage Merritonians to wear masks.

### **12. INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### **12.1 City of North Vancouver**

#### **12.2 City of Nanaimo**

#### **12.3 Mr D Osborne**

Cllr Luck wanted to say this communication has been seen, and to note that a report on water meters has already been requested, and that the Fraser Basin Water Council had submitted a delegation to this meeting on groundwater issues.

#### **12.4 Strategic Planning Priorities**

### **13. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The Mayor declared the meeting ended at 8:40pm

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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\_\_\_\_

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Mayor

Linda Brown