



MINUTES

CITY OF MERRITT

REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, September 15, 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, Director of Corporate Services**
- 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**
- Mr. S. Strang, Deputy Director of Finance & IT**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. LATE ITEMS

Nil

3. PUBLIC INPUT

Craig Gray spoke about the need for committees and democracy in Merritt.

Judy Gray raised concerns about notifying members of committees, and the ability of committees to meet with precautions in place.

Kris Van Elswyck spoke to item 8.3, and asked about modular development, and raised concerns of water supply

Penny Turcow also spoke to item 8.3, and wanted to know more information about the proposed development, including the impact on a City Right of Way, parks, and information available to residents of the immediate area and down the slope.

The Mayor suggested an Open House could be held prior to the Public Hearing for item 8.3 to ensure people were aware of the proposals.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Special Council Meeting Minutes - September 1st, 2020

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-1

THAT the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on September 1st, 2020 be adopted.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

5. PUBLIC HEARING

5.1 Public Hearing

Nil

6. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognitions

Nil

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 New Murals in the City of Merritt

To be introduced by Mr. George

Mr. George introduced the item, explaining that there were three murals in various stages of approval and construction.

Councillor Bhangu withdrew his notice of motion, and noted he would seek to fund artwork personally.

Councillors discussed the downtown beautification projects proposed.

It was moved and seconded that the proposed \$5,000 grant for the Nicola Valley Arts Council come from the Rural Dividend Grant. Mr. George confirmed that this would be a valid application.

Ms. Haworth from the Arts Council confirmed that they had many different plans for downtown beautification.

After voting to approve the grant to be made from Rural Divident Fund application, it was moved and seconded that the proposed grant be increased to \$10,000 in order to match the funding committed to the sports mural. This was discussed and defeated.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-2

THAT Council provided the Nicola Valley Arts Council with \$5,000 for the Economic Recovery City Beautification Mural Project.

Against (1): Mike Bhangu

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Amendment: Resolution No: 2020RC-15-3

and THAT the City alter the Rural Dividend Fund application to request \$5,000 for this grant instead of a component currently listed.

Against (1): Mike Bhangu

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Amendment: Resolution No: 2020RC-15-4

amend the motion to award the Nicola Valley Arts Council \$10,000 for the City Beautification project

Against (4): Mike Bhangu, Kurt Christopherson, Travis Fehr, and Tony Luck

DEFEATED

8. BYLAWS

8.1 Animal Control Bylaw No 2287, 2020

The Mayor asked for the adoption to be moved.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-5

THAT Animal Control Bylaw No. 2287, 2020 be adopted

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8.2 Permissive Tax Exemptions

To be introduced by Mr. Anderson

Mr. Anderson explained that the last permissive tax exemption round expired in 2020, and that the City's current policy allows for exemptions to run for a 4 year period in order to reduce the burden on staff and Council.

Mr. Strang introduced the report, explained Council's options, and took questions. Mayor and Council discussed the differences between downtown revitalization tax exemptions and permissive tax exemptions, who pays for permissive tax exemptions, the impact for organizations that receive both grant in aid and a permissive exemption, and the statutory nature of the exemption for religious organizations.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-6

THAT Council read the proposed City of Merritt Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw 2288 as presented a first time.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-7

THAT Council read the proposed City of Merritt Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw 2288 as presented a second time.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-8

THAT Council read the proposed City of Merritt Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw 2288 as presented a third time.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8.3 OCP Amendment Bylaw No. 2289, 2020 and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2290, 2020 (3350 Voght Street and 3155 Grimmatt Street)

To be introduced by Mr. McArthur

Mr. McArthur introduced the report, and said this was the first stage of the process, and that if the Rezoning application were approved, subdivision and building permit issues would be considered at the appropriate time. He explained that the proposed use would allow for lower density and height than are currently allowed, which would not normally be supported by a planning department, but that the developer had argued the less intense use would make it more acceptable to residents.

Mr. McArthur provided images of the types of units that would be included, and explained the difference between modular homes and mobile homes. Mayor and Council then discussed a variety of considerations including the reduced density, the traffic impacts, potential screening, and whether or not rentals would be included or limited.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-9

THAT Council give First Reading to Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2289, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-10

THAT Council give Second Reading to Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2289, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-11

THAT Council direct staff to schedule a Public Hearing date for Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2289, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-12

THAT Council give First Reading to Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2290, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-13

THAT Council give Second Reading to Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2290, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-14

THAT Council direct staff to schedule a Public Hearing date for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2290, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

8.4 Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2291, 2020 (2201, 2213, 2225, and 2237 Nicola Avenue)

Mr. McArthur explained the propoosed rezoning aligned with the existing OCP classification for the area.

Mayor and Council asked for clarification about the location and identity of the relevant lots, and expressed concern about the lack of high quality commercial buildings in Merritt.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-15

THAT Council give First Reading to Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2291, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-16

THAT Council give Second Reading to Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2291, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-17

THAT Council direct staff to schedule a Public Hearing for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2291, 2020.

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Rural Development Fund

To be introduced by Mr. George.

Mr. George introduced the report, and explained the approved projects, proposed changes, and the impact of Council's vote earlier this meeting. His revised recommendation would be to reduce the signage application by \$5,000 in order to make room for the Arts Council funding.

Councillors expressed their support and concerns about the proposals, including a feeling that Council would like to see more options to choose from in future rounds of applications.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-18

THAT Council adopts the proposed changes to the RDF grant application projects, including the \$5,000 reduction in the signage application and new \$5,000 request for Arts Council funding.

Against (2): Mike Bhangu, and Melvina White

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-19

THAT Council directs staff to apply for the staff recommended changes with the Province of BC.

Against (2): Mike Bhangu, and Melvina White

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

9.2 Committees

Mr. Lowis to introduce report on the situation of committees in Merritt

Mr. Lowis introduced the report, and explained that while staff wish to take advantage of the current reductions in activity, there is no intention to hold back committees from meeting and working while these recommendations are brought forward.

Resolution No: 2020RC-15-20

THAT Council instruct staff to bring forward recommendations on how the Committee Policy and City's Bylaws should be altered to improve the role of Committees at the City of Merritt

Moved, Seconded, CARRIED

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

Cllr Bhangu: That a small fund be attached to committees in order to provide refreshments.

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL

Cllr Luck praised the fly in event at Merritt Airport, which was a good afternoon, and appreciated the work done by staff to encourage it.

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

12.1 Active Transportation Plan – Draft Cycle Network Map

Mr. McArthur asked Council to provide input on the draft map attached to the report either immediately or to him directly. He was asked and explained how any barriers could be used for protected bike lanes.

12.2 Official Community Plan Update

Mr. McArthur asked for input from Council on the update so far. He was asked for and promised physical copies of the file for any Councillor who wanted to read it.

12.3 Annual Report

Mr. Lewis to introduce the annual report for 2019

Mr. Lewis introduced the annual report providing information required by section 98 of the *Community Charter*. Mr. Smith noted that future reports were intended to be aligned more closely with the Council's strategic plan, and would provide more useful metrics.

13. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The Mayor declared the meeting ended at 9:43pm

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