



## **CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

### **MINUTES**

**Monday, November 28, 2022**

**Meeting held electronically and open to public attendance**

**Council Chamber, City Hall**

#### **PRESENT:**

Mayor Patrick Johnstone  
Councillor Ruby Campbell  
Councillor Daniel Fontaine  
Councillor Tasha Henderson  
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy  
Councillor Paul Minhas  
Councillor Nadine Nakagawa

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Ms. Lisa Spitale	Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Jacque Killawee	City Clerk
Ms. Emilie Adin	Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development
Mr. Ronald Au	Senior Financial Analyst, Finance
Ms. Leya Behra	Manager of Climate Action
Mr. Rod Carle	General Manager, Electrical Utility
Mr. Steven Faltas	Business Process Manager, Electrical Utility
Mr. Dean Gibson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Mr. Dave Jansen	Chief Constable
Ms. Lisa Leblanc	Director of Engineering Services
Ms. Harji Varn	Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance
Ms. Lorraine Lyle	Senior Manager, Finance
Ms. Nicole Ludwig	Assistant City Clerk

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#### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mayor Johnstone opened the meeting at 3:40 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the

Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

## **2. PRESENTATIONS**

### **2.1 Budget 2023: Proposed 2023 Utility Budgets and Rate Increases**

#### **a. Budget 2023: Proposed 2023 Utility Budgets and Rate Increases**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the detailed information on the 2023 Proposed Utility Fund Budgets. This report also provides the proposed 2023 Utility rate increases for the Electric, Water, Sewer and Solid Waste Utilities and Five-Year Financial Plans (2023 – 2027). The expectation is that Council will provide staff with feedback at the November 28th Utility Budget Workshop that will set the direction for staff to prepare the necessary bylaws to amend the City's 2023 Utility Rates which will be in effect as of January 1, 2023.

MOVED AND SECONDED

**THAT** Council approve in principle the 2023 Proposed Utility Budgets and Annual Rate Increases with respect to the Electric, Water, Sewer and Solid Waste Utilities, as set out in the November 28, 2022, report, titled "Budget 2023: Proposed 2023 Utility Budgets and Rate Increases"; and

**THAT** Council direct staff to prepare the necessary bylaws to amend the City's utility rates for 2023 as outlined in the November 28, 2022, report, titled "Budget 2023: Proposed 2023 Utility Budgets and Rate Increases".

**Carried.**

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

#### **b. Presentation (On Table)**

The following staff provided presentations on the topics noted:

- Harji Varn, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance and Lorraine Lyle, Senior Manager, Finance: 2023 budget timeline, processes, and proposed utility budgets and rate increases;
- Rod Carle, General Manager, Electrical Utility: electrical operations core services;

- Leya Behra, Manager, Climate Action: an overview of climate action highlights from 2022 and proposed capital projects for 2023;
- Kwaku Agyare-Manu, Senior Manager, Engineering Services, Water Core Services and Sewer and Drainage Core Services, 2022 accomplishments and highlights, and proposed 2023 projects.

In response to Council questions, the above-noted staff, along with Ronald Au, Senior Financial Services Analyst, and Steven Faltas, Business Process Manager, Electrical Utility, provided the following information:

- Installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) (smart meters) are occurring now due to existing equipment reaching end of life quickly;
- The AMI program will be brought back to Council in the strategic planning sessions in the new year;
- Fountain attachments for hydrants are not being considered as the program detailed in the report is for 1:1 replacement;
- Engineering Technologists assist the Engineering Department by performing calculations that are needed to support engineering projects and decisions;
- Solid waste fees at the recycling depot are mostly tipping fees; Finance staff agreed to provide the total cost related to the recycling program; and,
- Solid waste trucks are replaced every 7 years, pursuant to industry standard.

In discussion, Council members noted the following:

- There may be an opportunity to reduce recycling costs by contracting glass recycling to Recycle BC;
- The Climate Action levy has generated \$4M total over the last few years, and Council should do what it can to help residents who are facing drastic cost of living increases;
- Inflationary pressure due to the climate crisis is already here; and,
- Council needs to have an in-depth discussion regarding the use of funds in the Climate Action Reserve.

MOVED and SECONDED

**THAT** Council direct staff to allocate \$1.5M from the Climate Action Reserve to the Electrical Utility to ensure a 0% increase in electrical fees for 2023.

**DEFEATED.**

Councillors Campbell, Henderson, McEvoy, Nakagawa, and Mayor Johnstone opposed.

In further discussion, Council members noted:

- It would be appropriate to have some uses for the Climate Action Fund prior to deciding on the 2023 budget; and,
- It would be more appropriate to develop a framework for using the Climate Action Fund during the strategic planning phase of Council's tenure.

MOVED AND SECONDED

**THAT** Council refer uses of the Climate Action fund to staff and request a report back on the same for this budget cycle.

**DEFEATED.**

Councillors Campbell, Fontaine, Henderson, Minhas, Nakagawa, and Mayor Johnstone opposed.

Finance staff advised options for the Climate Action Fund will be provided to Council for decision.

Following discussion, Council considered the recommendations contained in the report (see Item 2.1a)

### **3. END OF THE MEETING**

The meeting ended at 5:25 p.m.

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Patrick Johnstone

MAYOR

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Jacque Killawee

CITY CLERK