



Special Utility Commission Meeting

MINUTES

Thursday, June 29, 2023
Meeting Held Electronically

PRESENT

Sally Bhullar-Gill	Commissioner
Councillor Paul Minhas	Commissioner
Lino Siracusa	Commissioner
Lisa Spitale	Commissioner

REGRETS

Mayor Patrick Johnstone	Commissioner
Maya Chorobik	Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Ronald Au	Senior Financial Services Analyst
Rod Carle	General Manager, Electrical Operations
Brad Davie	Deputy Fire Chief
Patrick Shannon	Manager, Purchasing
Erin Williams	Fire Chief
Katie Stobbart	Committee Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Lino Siracusa opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered 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. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. **REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

3.1 **City Staff's Heat Plan Response to Extreme Heat in New Westminster: Accelerated Funding for Summer 2023 - Recommendation from the Utility Commission**

Rod Carle, General Manager, Electrical Operations, reviewed the discussion from the June 20, 2023, Utility Commission meeting regarding the June 12, 2023, motion referred from Council, noting that staff presented the Commission's recommendation to Council on June 26, 2023. This item is to ensure the Commission is in support of the recommendation that went to and was referred by Council.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Utility Commission endorse the accelerated Heat Plan response work plan and the \$268,000 one-time budget increase to be funded from the Climate levy, collected from electric utility bills in the Climate Action Reserve Fund, as presented at Regular Council on June 26, 2023.

Carried.

All Commissioners present voted in favour of the motion.

3.2 **Email from Lisa Spitale, CAO regarding 3 options in response to the BC Hydro portable air conditioner program**

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Carle advised that the Province had not contacted New Westminister Electrical Utility regarding the new plan for an air conditioner rebate, but that he reached out to the representative at BC Hydro, confirming that New Westminister residents are eligible.

Brad Davie, Deputy Fire Chief, reviewed what is being put forward by both the Province and New Westminister's Emergency Management Office, noting the following:

- The Province will provide one air conditioning unit per 634 residents, which leaves a large number of people out of the program;
- The Emergency Management Office is managing several at-risk people with one air conditioning unit (i.e. in a common area of their building)

- Overall, the Emergency Management Office's work plan proposes 21 initiatives, many of which are not part of the Province's program.

The Commission had the following comment arising from discussion:

- While the Province should be responsible for more of this work, as there are long-term impacts of downloading this cost to municipal governments, there are doubts about how much the Province will be able to accomplish for this year. Their air conditioning program has a three-year rollout, and New Westminster's Emergency Management team and partners can be quicker.

For information purposes only, Mr. Carle advised that he spoke with Maya Chorobik and Mayor Patrick Johnstone sent an email to Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer, with both Commissioners noting their support of option 3 from the Chief Administrative Officer's email.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Utility Commission endorse staff recommendation (option 3) from the June 28, 2023 email from the Chief Administrative Officer to both continue with the City's accelerated heat response work plan and have City of New Westminster residents receive their air conditioners directly from BC Hydro.

Carried.

All Commissioners present voted in favour of the motion.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items.

5. **END OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 4:35 p.m.

6. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

The next scheduled meeting will take place on July 11, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.