



Corporation of the City of
NEW WESTMINSTER

A vibrant, compassionate, resilient city where everyone can thrive.

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

MINUTES

Monday, October 30, 2023, 10:30 a.m.

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
Mr. Peter DeJong	Corporate Officer
Mr. Kwaku Agyare-Manu	Senior Manager of Engineering Services
Mr. Rod Carle	General Manager, Electrical Utility
Ms. Christina Coolidge	Indigenous Relations Advisor
Ms. Jacqueline Dairon	Acting Director of Finance and Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Brad Davie	Assistant Deputy Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services
Mr. Steven Faltas	Acting Senior Manager, Electrical Utility
Mr. Richard Fong	Director of Human Resources and Information Technology
Mr. Dean Gibson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Mr. Jeff Gill	Assistant Deputy Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services
Ms. Jacque Killawee	Acting Records Information Administrator
Mr. Craig MacFarlane	Manager, Legal Services
Ms. Tobi May	Manager, Civic Buildings, Engineering
Ms. Erika Mashig	Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Design and Construction

Mr. Robert McCullough	Manager, Museums and Heritage Services
Ms. Jennifer Miller	Manager of Public Engagement
Mr. Demian Rueter	Manager, Development Planning
Mr. Gary So	Senior Manager, Financial Services
Ms. Serena Trachta	Manager, Inspections, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Mr. Erin Williams	Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services
Ms. Eva Yip	Senior Manager, Human Resources
Mr. Marius Miklea	Assistant Corporate Officer, Legislative Services

OTHERS:

Ms. Amy O'Connor	Young Anderson
Ms. Rena Soutar (Cha'an Dtut)	Reconciliation and Intergovernmental Relations
Ms. Donnie Rosa	Leadership & Consulting
Chief Rhonda Larabee	Qayqayt Nation

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Johnstone called meeting the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Mayor Johnstone 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. WORKSHOP 1 - 10:30 AM

2.1 Council Code of Conduct Bylaw Amendments

Young Anderson and staff presented various changes made to Code of Conduct Bylaw No. 8408, 2023, which included mundane error corrections and additional substantial changes such as newly added definitions.

Discussion ensued on:

- Section 18 was expanded to require that Council only communicate through the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or directors. The Code originally required communication only through the CAO. The exception is committee work; it does not need direct CAO oversight. Council considered if this makes sense for the culture of New Westminster City Hall;

- Regarding Section 21, a verbal discussion between two councillors in a Council meeting may be considered a breach of the code. Text and email are considered a breach but this is not reflective of modern day technology or methods of communication;
- Regarding Section 31, elected officials may be invited to events in the community – while this section is intended to prevent personal initiatives. The final iteration of the Code will likely encourage elected officials to attend community events and offer clarity on different types of events;
- Section 37 was amended to reflect legal counsel’s advice that requirement of a unanimous vote for appointment, suspension or termination may not be legal;
- Section 11 indicating personal behavior in the community is a political act may be vague and could lead to vexatious complaints;
- Section 19 notes a disclaimer is required when giving interviews or speaking with media, this may need amending as elected officials frequently speak publicly; and
- Section 80 notes penalties for frivolous or vexatious complaints and could be hinder staff’s ability to make legitimate complaints. In response, legal counsel is developing a separate whistle blower policy.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt Section 37 of the City of New Westminster Code Conduct Bylaw No. 8408, 2023 as it is written at first reading that an Ethics Commissioner appointment, suspension or termination requires a 2/3 vote of Council.

Carried.

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed.

4. ADJOURNMENT - 11:30 AM

Mayor Patrick Johnstone declared a recess at meeting at 11:50 a.m.

5. WORKSHOP 2 - 3:30 PM

Mayor Patrick Johnstone called the meeting at back to order at 4:00 p.m.

5.1 Riverfront Projects - Collaboration with First Nations - Process and Aspirations

Staff presented on the City of New Westminster's Official Community Plan Bylaw 2017, acknowledged the importance and history of the river, Westminster Pier Park Master Plan, and where the fire site is situated within it, new approaches to co-developing a plan for the park and potential future public engagement with residents and First Nations partners.

Discussion ensued on:

- Whether the park development process will have federal or provincial funding;
- The need to connect Sapperton to the rest of the waterfront park system;
- Plans to extend the boardwalk at this time have not been contemplated past the west side of Quayside and into the industrial lands;
- Historically not much focus on the river as a recreational amenity as it was primarily used for industrial purposes;
- City intends to further develop relationships and engage with First Nations partners to determine how the park can be co-managed; and
- This project is an opportunity for education and historical truth, such as storyboards and graphics on the site.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council invite Chief Rhonda Larabee to speak to Council.

Carried.

All members voted in favour of the motion.

Chief Larabee spoke regarding her family's history and how colonizers at the time moved Qayqayt to the portion of South Westminster across the Fraser River in what is now the City of Surrey, and that Qayqayt intends to discuss the future of Westminster Pier Park due to their historical relationship with the land and river in this spot.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council provides feedback on the process and aspirations for the potential partnership with First Nations to ensure Indigenous rights, land title, history, values, and priorities are understood and established as a first step towards work on a future riverfront project(s), and

THAT Council endorse the next steps of hosting an informal information session, and subsequent iterative conversations, with each of the six Nations the City consults.

Carried.

All members voted in favour of the motion.

6. END OF THE MEETING

Mayor Patrick Johnstone terminated the meeting at 5:14 p.m.

Patrick Johnstone

MAYOR

Peter DeJong

CORPORATE OFFICER