



Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

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

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

Monday, January 8, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

**Meeting held electronically and in Council Chamber
City Hall**

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Mayor Patrick Johnstone

STAFF PRESENT:

Ms. Lisa Leblanc	Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Lisa Zwarn	Acting Corporate Officer
Mr. Peter DeJong	Corporate Officer
Mr. Kwaku Agyare-Manu	Acting Director of Engineering Services
Mr. Mike Anderson	Manager of Transportation, Engineering Services
Mr. Rod Carle	General Manager, Electrical Utility
Mr. Brad Davie	Deputy Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services
Ms. Kim Deighton	Manager, Integrated Services
Mr. Richard Fong	Director of Human Resources and Information Technology
Mr. Dean Gibson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Mr. Craig MacFarlane	Manager of Legal Services
Mr. Rob McCullough	Manager, Museums & Heritage Services
Mr. Shehzad Somji	Director of Finance and Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Denise Tambellini	Intergovernmental and Community Relations Manager
Ms. Jackie Teed	Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Mr. Erin Williams	Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services

Mr. Marius Miklea

Assistant Corporate Officer, Legislative Services

OTHERS:

Ms. Lynda Edmonds

Fraserside Community Services Society

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

Acting Mayor McEvoy opened the meeting at 6:00 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**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt the agenda and on table items.

Procedural Note: An amendment was proposed.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Item 10.3 be moved to Reports and Presentations for Council Discussion and Action.

Procedural Note: Discussion proceeded regarding the amendment.

Discussion ensued regarding the process of information reports being required to be pulled at the end of the night and then pushed to the next Council meeting delays potentially urgent debate.

Procedural Note: The question on the proposed amendment was called.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Item 10.3 be moved to Reports and Presentations for Council Discussion and Action.

Defeated

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

Procedural Note: A further amendment was proposed.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda be amended by adding Councillor Fontaine's Notice of Motion, submitted December 28, 2023, be added to the agenda at tonight's Council meeting for discussion and debate at the next Council meeting.

Carried

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

Procedural Note: The question on the main motion, as amended, was called.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council receive on table items and adopt the agenda as amended to include Councillor Fontaine's Notice of Motion, submitted December 28, 2023, be added to the agenda at tonight's Council meeting for discussion debate at the next Council meeting.

Carried

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.1 Construction Noise Bylaw Variance Request: Metro Vancouver Front Street Pressure Sewer - Manhole Abandonments

Discussion ensued regarding the level of potential disturbances to residents. Staff clarified that no floodlights will be used and projects workers will have headlamps. Due to Pattullo bridge work, this work has become a priority and will need to be completed through extended hours.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT Council grant a Construction Noise exemption to Metro Vancouver and its contractor RAM Consulting from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992 from Monday, January 15, 2024 to Thursday, February 29, 2024 from 8:00 PM to 7:00 AM (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or Statutory Holidays) for construction activity related to maintenance/repair of manhole abandonments from 300 Front Street to 700 Front Street.

Carried

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK TO COUNCIL – 7:00 PM

4.1 Presentation: Fraserside Community Services Society

Board Chair Lynda Edmonds presented on the various Fraserside projects and their new Hub concept. The vision of Fraserside Community Services Society is to create communities of belonging where the diversity of all

people is welcome and its mission is to support people needing housing, seeking work, and/or living with developmental disabilities, mental health, or substance use issues, or low income and a focus on New Westminster and neighbouring communities.

Acting Mayor McEvoy declared a recess at 6:44 p.m.

Acting Mayor McEvoy called the meeting back to order at 7:17 p.m.

4.2 Open Delegations

Staff advised that delegations were prioritized to allow the greatest number of topics to be heard by Council, individuals on a topic with more than one applicant were prioritized by whose request was received first and that multiple speakers are allowed on a single topic if there are fewer than 10 topics.

Acting Mayor McEvoy reminded the audience that some personal information is collected and archived by the City of New Westminster under Section 26(g)(ii) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and for the purpose of the City's ongoing commitment to open and transparent government. If anyone has any questions about the collection of personal information please contact Legislative Services at 604-527-4523.

Rick Folka apologized regarding his behaviour at the previous Council meeting which caused a disruption during the delegation portion of the meeting. Mr. Folka explained he had reached out to the delegates he had interrupted.

Daniela Brake spoke regarding Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation and how it can be included into the school curriculum. She explained various ways this ties in with the situation taking place in the territories of Palestine.

John Folka presented on the experience of his family, including his wife who suffers from multiple sclerosis, the Sixth Street and Sixth Avenue intersection, including the proposed upgrades. This can be improved by making it a pedestrian scramble intersection. Arguments for a pedestrian scramble indicate there are potentially reduced pedestrian and vehicle accidents, but there are arguments against as well.

Staff indicated there was an analysis done for that intersection and further clarified that the intersection does not have significant enough volume of foot traffic to support a scramble., Instead, they are decreasing the cycle

time of lights and increasing the amount of time for pedestrians to cross the intersection.

Amanda Renyard spoke to Council regarding meaningful reconciliation among colonized nations, that respect of lives and children be expanded worldwide. She asked Council to consider assisting constituents who may be suffering due to unsafe and unsanitary conditions not only in New Westminster but included Palestinians currently experiencing similar conditions due to the conflict in Israel and Palestine.

Tamir Avraman made a presentation regarding the City's and Canada's rezoning and justice and the comparisons to standing idly by while an injustice is taking place, connecting it to the motion for debate and decision tonight regarding Gaza.

Afsana Nitol presented on a perceived increase of the homeless population in New Westminster. Afsana proceeded to connect the homelessness crisis in Vancouver with an increase in homelessness in Gaza City, Palestine, as the shelling of the city by the Israeli military would displace countless civilians.

Acting Mayor McEvoy declared a recess at 7:57 p.m.

Acting Mayor McEvoy called the meeting back to order at 8:11 p.m.

Elyse Molly spoke to council regarding the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War and the impacts the refugee crisis may cause in New Westminster.

Deborah Folka spoke to Council regarding the motion Agenda item 6.1.a Call for a Ceasefire in Gaza and noted it is beyond the jurisdiction of Council and made moot by Canada's UN motion. She noted that Premier David Eby said "hateful words precede violent acts", in the case of tonight's Council meeting which may have the motion or words spoken at delegations interpreted in a similar vein.

Sid Shniad presented on behalf of Independent Jewish Voices which fully supported New Westminster's motion regarding the ceasefire. He reminded Council of the actions by the USA at the United Nations, which vetoed any attempts at peace. He supported that Mayor and Council urge the Canadian government to end its role as a provider of armaments.

5. SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY - 8:00 PM

5.1 Break (15 minutes)

6. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

6.1 Motions for Discussion and Decision

a. Call for a Ceasefire in Gaza

WHEREAS human rights groups such as Save the Children, Doctors Without Borders and the United Nations have cited growing atrocities in Israel and Gaza including the deaths of many civilians, including children; and

WHEREAS the City of New Westminster condemns the rising incidences of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in our communities; and

WHEREAS the City of New Westminster stands up strongly for human rights everywhere

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of New Westminster write a letter to the Prime Minister urging the Canadian government to immediately:

- Call for a ceasefire
- Support unrestricted access to humanitarian aid
- Secure the release of all hostages.

Procedural Note: An amendment was proposed.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the motion be amended to read:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of New Westminster write a letter to the Prime Minister urging the Canadian government to immediately:

- Call for an end to the siege of Gaza,
- Support unrestricted access to humanitarian aid,
- Support actions to secure the release of all hostages, including both Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and
- Stop all arms shipments, sales, and trade to Israel in compliance with Canadian law.

Procedural Note: Discussion ensued regarding Council's ability to vote on this matter.

Discussion ensued on the amendment going beyond the jurisdiction of Council

Councillor Fontaine left the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Councillor Minhas left the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Procedural Note: The question on the proposed amendment was called.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the motion be amended to read:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of New Westminster write a letter to the Prime Minister urging the Canadian government to immediately:

- Call for an end to the siege of Gaza,
- Support unrestricted access to humanitarian aid,
- Support actions to secure the release of all hostages, including both Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and
- Stop all arms shipments, sales, and trade to Israel in compliance with Canadian law.

Carried

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

Discussion continued:

- The topic of what Council should or should not discuss has been debated before. The City is fairly broad in terms of demographics and culture, which allows for a variety of topics to be discussed at City Council.

Procedural Note: The question on the main motion, as amended, was called.

MOVED and SECONDED

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of New Westminster write a letter to the Prime Minister urging the Canadian government to immediately:

- Call for an end to the siege of Gaza,
- Support unrestricted access to humanitarian aid,
- Support actions to secure the release of all hostages, including both Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, and
- Stop all arms shipments, sales, and trade to Israel in compliance with Canadian law.

Carried

All members present voted in favour of the motion, as amended.

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas re-joined the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Acting Mayor McEvoy declared a recess at 8:59 p.m.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Councillor Fontaine read his notice of motion to be added to the agenda of January 22, 2024:

BE IT RESOLVED **THAT** the Mayor provide a report to Council regarding the details pertaining to his recent business trip to Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED **THAT** the report include the following information:

1. Detailed breakdown of the financial costs pertaining to the trip including items such as meals, flights, hotel accommodation, ground transportation, etc.;
2. Detailed summary of what the third party funder offered the Mayor's Office by way of free trips to Dubai for either himself, City staff or any members of his family;
3. A day-by-day itinerary of all meetings and events attended by the Mayor while in Dubai;
4. Estimated carbon footprint of attending the Dubai conference in-person rather than virtually;
5. Summary of the direct benefits to the City of New Westminster of the Mayor's office delegation to Dubai; and

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED **THAT** the City's new Ethics Commissioner be requested to conduct a workshop with Council regarding the *Community Charter Act* with a particular emphasis on section 105 pertaining to the restrictions imposed on municipal officials by the Province of BC regarding the acceptance of gifts.

Councillor Campbell acknowledged the passing of Dr. Gurdev Singh Gill who came to Canada in 1949 and worked tirelessly to support villages in India. He was a founding member of the Indo-Canadian Friendship Society.

9. END OF THE MEETING

Acting Mayor McEvoy terminated the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

Patrick Johnstone

MAYOR

Peter DeJong

CORPORATE OFFICER