



Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

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

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

Monday, March 11, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

**Meeting held in Council Chamber,
City Hall**

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy

STAFF PRESENT:

Lisa Spitale	Chief Administrative Officer
Dennis Back	Corporate Officer
Brad Davie	Deputy Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services
Dean Gibson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Lisa Leblanc	Director of Engineering Services
Shehzad Somji	Director of Finance and Chief Financial Officer
John Stark	Manager of Community Planning
Denise Tambellini	Intergovernmental and Community Relations Manager
Jackie Teed	Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Eva Yip	Senior Manager, Human Resources
Marius Miklela	Assistant Corporate Officer, Legislative Services

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminister 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. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt the agenda as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. CONSENT AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt the recommendations for items 3.1-3.9 on consent.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3.1 City of New Westminster and Fraser Health Authority Second Responder Program (Post-opioid overdose follow-up program)

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council accept and approve this report titled City of New Westminster and Fraser Health Authority Second Responder Program (Post-opioid overdose follow-up program) and dated March 11, 2024.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.2 Construction Noise Bylaw Exemption Request: 32 Eighth Street (New Westminster SkyTrain Station) and 2126 Seventh Avenue (22nd Street SkyTrain Station)

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council grant an exemption from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992 to TransLink from 12 AM to 7 AM from Tuesday March 12, 2024 to Thursday August 1, 2024 including ten Sundays and excluding all Statutory Holidays, to demolish original maintenance walkways, install new maintenance walkways, and make operational equipment modifications to the New Westminster SkyTrain Station located at 32 Eighth Street and the 22nd Street SkyTrain Station located at 2126 Seventh Avenue.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.3 Construction Noise Bylaw Exemption Request: 2126 Seventh Avenue (22nd Street SkyTrain Station)

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council grant an exemption from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992 to TransLink from 8:00 PM to 7:00 AM six days per week (not including Thursdays and Statutory Holidays) for the period of Monday March 11, 2024 to Monday December 23, 2024 to recoat the 22nd Street SkyTrain Station located at 2126 Seventh Avenue.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.4 Construction Noise Bylaw Exemption Request: Metro Vancouver Valve Replacements (660 East Columbia Street)

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council grant an exemption to Metro Vancouver from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992 from:

- 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM Saturday March 16, 2024;
- 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM Sunday March 17, 2024;
- 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM Saturday March 23, 2024; and
- 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM Sunday March 24, 2024

to enable construction activity at the entrance of Lower Hume Park at 660 East Columbia Street.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.5 Memo re: Bylaw Number Correction

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.6 Proclamation: World Tuberculosis Day, March 24, 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.7 Proclamation: International Purple Day for Epilepsy Awareness, March 26, 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.8 Proclamation: Green Shirt Day, April 7, 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

3.9 Proclamation: Amyloidosis Awareness Month, March 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

Procedural Note: At this time, Council skipped item 4. Opportunity to Speak to Council, to return at 7:00 p.m.

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

Stephen Carter, a resident of New Westminster and author of several books on the Civil War, presented to Mayor and Council a poem he wrote for the City of New Westminster, about the City of New Westminster, titled *An Ode to New Westminster*.

Mehrnoush Hemmati made a presentation regarding her request for a consistent size, look, location of residential and commercial addresses. It is hard for both business owners and residents who cannot see the address numbers of buildings and dwellings from the street. Consistency often affects delivery personnel, enhancing the efficiency of business-to-business dealings and increases safety on the roads.

Discussion ensued regarding which City bylaws contain a requirement of house numbers being visible. Staff informed Mayor and Council there is a bylaw pertaining to properties subject to inspection – business, multi-family residential and commercial. The address number must meet a minimum size and be in colour contrast.

Maria Kidney requested the City not reduce the budget for further development of cycle pathway expansion and that Council vote in favour of maintaining the budget allocation to the active transportation network. She informed that cyclists are essentially pedestrians on the road and that bike lanes are important for all including those using it who are on mobility scooters. She made a comparison to The Netherlands which spends ~\$600M in building and maintaining bike paths, but saves approximately \$19B in health care costs. An additional benefit to maintaining a robust cycling path network is the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions automobile drivers shifting over to bicycles.

Gail North presented on several events taking place in New Westminster. Heritage New West is hosting their annual general meeting on March 13, 2024, at the Bernie Legge Theatre. She thanked The Vagabond Players for sharing their usual space and there will also be a presentation by Britney Dack to speak on a variety of heritage issues relevant to the City. Sunday, May 26, 2024, is the date of the 2024 Homes Tour and includes a variety of homes all over New Westminster. The event needs volunteers and anyone who does volunteer will be provided with an event ticket.

David Brett presented on the historical perspective of antisemitism, namely that Jewish people have been portrayed as a secretive group of power brokers rather than as a marginalized minority. He noted that such beliefs throughout history led to eugenics and Nazism, and that antisemitism as a topic needs to be reviewed and put in higher priority in today's society.

Lorraine Brett and Scott Raines presented on the history of May Day in New Westminster which was started through dance lessons in the ancient tradition by Beatrice Cave-Brown-Cave. This year's event will take place on May 25 at Queen's Park Stadium. Scott thanked Council for the \$500 increase to the annual May Day event but noted a large reduction in funding toward traditional cultural events and requires significant fundraising by the volunteers of May Day to make up for the cultural funding shortfall.

Discussion ensued regarding comparing New Westminster to Port Coquitlam also having a number of May Day traditions with varying levels of support from their respective municipalities.

Larry Church voiced his concern to how utility rates are applied to residents of New Westminster. He noted that the current system of water services metering is unfair for those who live in single-family homes when there are single-family homes with upwards of seven individuals all living in the same dwelling. Because New Westminster does not individually meter houses, it is necessary that the Metro Vancouver Regional District water premium is applied City-wide and this causes hardship for those who seek to conserve water individually.

5. SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

5.1 Break (15 minutes)

6. BYLAWS

6.1 Bylaws for adoption

a. Development Cost Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 8444, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt Development Cost Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 8444, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Five-Year Financial Plan (2024-2028) Bylaw No. 8442, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt Five-Year Financial Plan (2024-2028) Bylaw No. 8442, 2024.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

7. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

7.1 Motions for Discussion and Decision

a. Supporting childcare development across the City

Submitted by Councillor Henderson

WHEREAS the City of New Westminster recognizes a shortage in childcare spaces across the region and is committed to supporting the development of additional local childcare spaces; and

WHEREAS the City will be updating current residential zoning bylaws as part of the work to reflect the Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing Provincial legislation;

MOVED and SECONDED

BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff explore opportunities to amend the City's current zoning bylaws to increase the allowable maximum of childcare spaces in residential areas.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council vary the agenda to have 7.1.b after 4. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council.

Mayor Johnstone and Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

b. Closing possible loopholes in BC's Elections Act as they pertain to municipal elections

Submitted by Councillors Fontaine and Minhas

WHEREAS to ensure a level playing field the Government of BC banned municipal candidates and elector organizations from accepting any direct financial donations from corporations, unions and non-for-profit entities; and

WHEREAS the Local Elections Campaign Financing Act continues to allow corporations, unions and not-for-profit entities to actively spend unlimited funds and reallocate internal resources to promote a particular municipal candidate and/or elector organization with their members or staff without any requirements for open and transparent public reporting;

MOVED and SECONDED

BE IT RESOLVED THAT a letter be drafted to the BC Minister of Municipal Affairs requesting that the following changes be made to the Local Elections Campaign Financing Act in time for the 2026 municipal election;

- a. Any corporation, labour union or not-for-profit entity actively utilizing internal resources to promote an individual candidate or municipal elector organization within six months prior to the municipal election is required to publicly record and report to Elections BC the total funds expended;
- b. Public reporting by the respective corporation, labour union or not-for-profit entity would include items such as the estimated use of staff time, overhead costs and marketing/promotion activities including those accessible to the broader public through social media;
- c. A maximum of \$500 of resources can be expended by a corporation, labour union or BC-based not-for-profit for the purposes of promoting municipal candidates or elector organizations in British Columbia with their members or staff during an election year;

- d. Corporations, labour unions and not-for-profit entities are banned from pooling their resources so as to effectively increase the maximum limit they can utilize to promote and market a municipal candidate or an elector organization
- e. Only BC-based corporations, labour unions and not-for-profit entities are permitted to undertake the election related activities listed above with all non-BC-based entities strictly prohibited from actively promoting a municipal candidate or elector organization

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this motion be distributed to the Union of BC Municipalities and the Lower Mainland Local Government Association for their information.

Discussion ensued on:

- There was urgency expressed that the opportunity for amendments to the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* is to send the letter in time for legislative changes to take place and be adopted in time before the 2026 BC General Local Election; and
- The proposed change to legislation could reduce the capacity of community groups and non-profits to mobilize their own members. Alberta's third party endorsement laws for elections is restrictive but does not itself restrict internal communication of community groups and non-profits, which this proposed amendment does.

Procedural Note: An amendment was proposed.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT section c. be deleted from the motion and subsequent points be re-numbered accordingly.

CARRIED

Mayor Johnstone and Councillor Campbell opposed

It was noted that if striking out section c., it will require corporations and trade unions and others to simply record and report; there

would not be any financial consequences. However, the requirement around election reporting takes place within 89 days of the election and it could be burdensome to ask this of non-profits which are poorly resourced.

Procedural Note: A further amendment was proposed.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT section a. be amended to read: a. Any corporation, labour union or not-for-profit entity actively utilizing internal resources to promote an individual candidate or municipal elector organization within 90 days prior to the municipal election is required to publicly record and report to Elections BC the total funds expended.

CARRIED

Councillor Campbell opposed

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

MOVED and SECONDED as AMENDED

BE IT RESOLVED THAT a letter be drafted to the BC Minister of Municipal Affairs requesting that the following changes be made to the Local Elections Campaign Financing Act in time for the 2026 municipal election;

- a. Any corporation, labour union or not-for-profit entity actively utilizing internal resources to promote an individual candidate or municipal elector organization within 90 days prior to the municipal election is required to publicly record and report to Elections BC the total funds expended;
- b. Public reporting by the respective corporation, labour union or not-for-profit entity would include items such as the estimated use of staff time, overhead costs and marketing/promotion activities including those accessible to the broader public through social media;
- c. Corporations, labour unions and not-for-profit entities are banned from pooling their resources so as to effectively increase the maximum limit they can utilize to promote and market a municipal candidate or an elector organization

- d. Only BC-based corporations, labour unions and not-for-profit entities are permitted to undertake the election related activities listed above with all non-BC-based entities strictly prohibited from actively promoting a municipal candidate or elector organization

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this motion be distributed to the Union of BC Municipalities and the Lower Mainland Local Government Association for their information.

DEFEATED

Mayor Johnstone and Councillors Campbell, Henderson and Nakagawa opposed

c. Participating in the Provincial Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Program

Submitted by Councillor Campbell

WHEREAS Active Transportation and the safety of vulnerable road users are priorities for New Westminster; and

WHEREAS the Walkers Caucus, HUB New Westminster, and the New Westminster community have expressed concerns around user group conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and eMicromobility users as we work to build out our Active Transportation Network Plan; and

WHEREAS the City's E-Mobility strategy includes actions to incorporate eMicromobility into City planning and outreach and to advance supportive eMicromobility policy; and

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has extended the Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Project for up to four more years and is inviting new communities to join the program with updated terms;

MOVED and SECONDED

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to evaluate the opportunity for the City of New Westminster to join the Provincial Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Program, and report back to Council with a recommendation on participation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Procedural Note: At this time Council proceeded to item 4. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council.

7.2 Notices of Motion

a. **Ensuring that ground level retail spaces in new developments prioritize community-supporting businesses and organizations**

Submitted by Councillor Nakagawa

WHEREAS the City of New Westminster has developed a retail strategy; and

WHEREAS community-serving businesses are essential for meeting our climate goals

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City review and refresh current policies relating to ground level retail to ensure that they are responsive to current market forces; and

THAT the City develop a policy to ensure that future ground level retail spaces in new development are built to prioritize community-supporting businesses and organizations in alignment with the retail strategy.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

9. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

Councillor Henderson announced the City is receiving funding from the Building Safer Communities Project, which has been used for the launch of The Situation Table. This project consists of 20 stakeholders meeting on a regular basis to review how can the community come together to support young people when they are feeling vulnerable and further initiates interventions on behalf of at-risk youth. This project has funding for approximately two years.

Councillor Fontaine announced he and Councillor Minhas will be hosting a forum on the challenges of obtaining & retaining childcare in New Westminster on April 11, 2024 at Unity of New Westminster Church. He further thanked the 20 representatives from organized sports which attended his and Councillor Minhas' Future of Organized Sport Forum.

Mayor Johnstone announced that Muslims around the world are celebrating Ramadan and that it is a time of generosity, spending time with family, and for charity to each other.

10. END OF THE MEETING

Mayor Johnstone terminated the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Patrick Johnstone
MAYOR

Dennis Back
CORPORATE OFFICER