



Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

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

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

Monday, April 22, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

**Meeting held electronically and 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 Leblanc	Acting Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Engineering Services
Dennis Back	Acting Corporate Officer
Hanieh Berg	Corporate Officer
Blair Fryer	Acting Director of Community Services
Dean Gibson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Indeep Johal	Manager of Financial Services
Adam Laranjeiro	Planning Technician
Craig MacFarlane	City Solicitor
Erica Mark	Manager of Recreation Services and Facilities
Jennifer Miller	Manager of Public Engagement
Demian Rueter	Manager, Development Planning
Shehzad Somji	Director of Finance and Chief Financial Officer
Denise Tambellini	Intergovernmental and Community Relations Manager
Jackie Teed	Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Mike Watson	Acting Senior Manager, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Erin Williams	Chief, New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting to order at 6:06 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. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council receive all on table material as presented; and

THAT Council adopt the April 22, 2024, closed council agenda with the following additions:

- ON TABLE Notice of Motion: Supporting increased openness and transparency at City Hall; and
- ON TABLE Notice of Motion: Appointment of new Chair of the Arts Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. MINUTE OF SILENCE

3.1 Honouring the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job, April 28, 2024

Owen Goodwin, representing the New Westminster & District Labour Council, spoke to the importance of worker safety and noted that the Canadian Labour Congress has identified April 28th as the annual day dedicated to workplace safety and to workers who have been injured and killed on the job.

Mayor Johnstone proclaimed April 28, 2024, as the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job and Council observed a minute of silence.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council adopt the recommendations for items 4.3, 4.5, 4.8, 4.9, 4.11 and 4.13 on consent.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4.1 2024 Tax Rate Bylaw No. 8445, 2024

Council considered the annual tax burden on properties in the City of New Westminster as property values go up but as the property tax rate will increase as well, requiring careful consideration of further increases for the rest of this Council term.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give three readings to the Tax Rates Bylaw No. 8445, 2024 as presented in Attachment 1 of this report.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

4.2 Community Advisory Assembly Terms of Reference and Membership Update

Discussion ensued on:

- The Community Advisory Assembly (CAA) lost three members due to various factors, though staff advised this is not unusual for advisory bodies at the beginning of their term; and
- The CAA is a unique advisory body that aims to reach common ground among the membership through dialogue and deliberation, prior to submission of recommendations to Council.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council formally adopt the Terms of Reference for the Community Advisory Assembly, as endorsed by Assembly members and unchanged from the Draft Terms of Reference that were endorsed by Council on August 28, 2023; and

THAT Council approve the appointment of three new members to the Assembly, to replace previous members who stepped down or did not attend.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

4.3 Construction Noise Bylaw Exemption Request: 81 Braid Street (Braid Street SkyTrain Station)

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council grant an exemption from Construction Noise Bylaw No. 6063, 1992 to TransLink from Wednesday May 1, 2024 to Sunday August 31, 2025 from 12:00 AM to 6:00 AM, weekdays and including weekends for a maximum of five days per week, including some Sundays and excluding all Statutory Holidays, to install new maintenance walkways, demolish and restore original maintenance walkways, and make operational equipment modifications to the Braid SkyTrain Station at 81 Braid Street.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

Procedural Note: Due to a delegate intending to present on the next topic, Item 4.4 was moved to be discussed following Item 5. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council.

4.4 Council Code of Conduct Amendment Bylaw No. 8457, 2024

Council considered the proposed bylaw will adversely change the voting dynamics in selecting an Ethics Commissioner for the City of New Westminster. Previous workshops on this topic indicated several members requesting unanimity requirements for the appointment of a commissioner and the proposed amendment stretches too far in the opposite direction.

MOVED and SECONDED

That Council consider Bylaw No. 8457, 2024 being a bylaw to amend the Code of Conduct Bylaw No. 8408, 2023 for First, Second and Third Readings.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

4.5 Riparian Areas Protection Amendment Bylaw No. 8413, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council gives three readings to the Riparian Areas Protection Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 8413, 2024, as presented in Attachment 1 of this report.

THAT Council gives three readings to the Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 8421, 2024, as presented in Attachment 2 of this report.

THAT Council gives three readings to the Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No. 8422, 2024, as presented in Attachment 3 of this report.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.6 Zoning Amendment and Housing Agreement (51 Elliot Street) - Bylaws for First, Second and Third Readings (Circulated Separately)

Discussion ensued on:

- The Elliot Street development has several points and key elements, which could be improved. Staff advised that modifications are limited as there are several complexities with respect to the neighbouring properties and the adjacent park space;
- Consideration if there is a formula applied to building a tower of 46 stories and how the additional residents would affect parking, childcare needs, and schools; and
- As the proposed bylaw is not an OCP amendment bylaw, it is not required to be referred to School District No. 40 for feedback.

Procedural Note: Due to a delegate intending to present on this topic, voting on the motion for Item 4.6 was moved to be discussed following Item 5. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council.

Procedural Note: Following Item 5. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council, Mayor and Council returned to debate the recommendation.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT staff work with the applicant through the Development Permit application process to widen the public pathway on the subject site through a statutory right-of-way to create a better connection to Albert Crescent Park.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council consider Zoning Amendment Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8446, 2024 for First, Second and Third Readings;

THAT Council consider Housing Agreement Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8447, 2024 to secure seven below-market and six non-market rental residential units for First, Second and Third Readings; and

THAT Council, should the Housing Agreement Bylaw No. 8447, 2024 be adopted, direct the Mayor and Corporate Officer to execute the Housing Agreement.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

4.7 Zoning Bylaw Text Amendment: 408 East Columbia Street – Bylaw for Three Readings

Discussion ensued regarding the exceptional allowance of non-retail at-grade businesses. There is an increasing number of medical offices filling the existing spaces zoned for retail and this trend may signal a potential policy gap. New Westminster has approximately 300 retail businesses which are in effect refusing the proposed retail space and the developer is seeking a bylaw text amendment in response.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council consider Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8451, 2024 For First, Second, and Third Readings.

DEFEATED UNANIMOUSLY

Mayor Johnstone declared a recess at 6:55 p.m.

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting back to order at 7:00 p.m.

Procedural Note: At this time, Council proceeded to Item 5. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council.

4.8 Minutes for Adoption

- a. April 8, 2024 City Council Meeting (1:00 p.m.)**
- b. April 8, 2024 Council Workshop**

c. **April 8, 2024 City Council Meeting (6:00 p.m.)**

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.9 Proclamation: Day of Mourning, April 28, 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.10 Proclamation: Red Dress Day, May 5, 2024

Council considered the importance to remember the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and further noted Métis artist Jamie Black was inspired to create the Red Dress imagery.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council proclaim May 5, 2024, as Red Dress Day in support of missing and murdered indigenous women.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4.11 Proclamation: Prevention of Violence Against Women Week, April 14-20, 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

4.12 Proclamation: Youth Week, May 1-7, 2024

Procedural Note: In accordance with Item 5. Opportunity for the Public to Speak to Council – Mayor Johnstone proclaimed May 1-7, 2024, as Youth Week.

4.13 Proclamation: Parkinson's Awareness Month, April 2024

ADOPTED ON CONSENT

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

Mike and Jo-Anne Gauthier presented on behalf of BC People First on the importance to consider accessibility throughout the city. Building on their recent presentation to the Mayor of Cranbrook what they had experienced, such as getting stuck on curbs and in between electric doors, they requested that the City do more for those with accessibility needs of all types. Mike and Jo-Anne then

presented Mayor and Councillors with *You Can Cook If You Want To*, a cookbook printed by BC People First.

Eugene, Marco and Lauren, local youth, presented on the various activities taking place during Youth Week – May 1 to 7, 2024. May 1, Cultural Collaboration, May 2, New West Youth Awards, May 3, First Responders vs. Youth Basketball Showdown, May 4, Spring Thing Middle School Dance, May 4: Wearable Technology at Anvil Centre, May 6, Seniors and Youth Bingo & Brunch, May 6, Multi-Canvas Art Showcase. Finally, Youth Week will be ending with the “It’s a Wrap Party” on May 7th.

Mayor Johnstone proclaimed May 1-7, 2024, as Youth Week

Bereket Kebede, on behalf of the African Canadian Soccer and Cultural Association, spoke to Council in support of the motion for consideration tonight regarding the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The ‘beautiful game’ can bring together the world and noted the importance that residents are both aware and supportive of the World Cup games and cultural events arriving at the doorstep of New Westminster.

Duane Geddes presented, on behalf of the New Westminster Amateur Sports Coalition, to Council the Coalition’s support of using the Growing Communities Fund (GCF) toward amateur sports needs and facilities. D. Geddes noted amateur sports require funding for new facilities and ongoing maintenance of existing ones.

In response, Council advised that the Coalition as well as members of the public, may go online to the City’s Be Heard platform and participate in the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, which seeks information from residents on parks and recreation facilities including the matters addressed by D. Geddes.

Staff advised that the allocation of funds in GCF are at Council’s discretion and that staff are here to listen to the public on their preferences toward funding allocation.

Joanna Pabon presented support of the 2026 FIFA World Cup as it meets the various needs and culture of New Westminster. Sports, activities, diversity, cultural essence and a variety of public spaces.

Monica Bhandari, Chair, New Westminster ACORN, presented to Council the concern of the lack of affordable housing in New Westminster. Particularly, M. Bhandari noted the lack of inclusionary housing among various proposed developments and the increasingly urgent need for Council to provide direction to developers requiring such units in their proposals.

In response, Council indicated housing in general in the City is in short supply and lamented the City is not a builder of housing but rather manages

development throughout the city through zoning. Council considered the potential to find the gap in policy in order to better create affordable housing in the City. Council is awaiting funding from BC Housing – which has left numerous empty lots for several years after approving projects.

Christopher Bell observed that the Columbia Square project had lost the affordable rental housing provision upon Council direction and proposed instead that the City should use the process of density bonus rates. He further noted the proposed Serious Misconduct Policy, Section 3.9.2. appears as a chill on speech which prevents members from proceeding to the media with concerns of misconduct and noted this policy should be brought up to a better level of standard as it does not align with several publications he had reviewed and compared it to.

Council considered the processes and timeline of bringing forward an on table item which allows for Council to review the agenda package but not members of the public if a staff report was submitted late.

Rick Folka presented to Council his concerns on the Code of Conduct Amendment Bylaw which proposed to reduce the 2/3 majority vote to a simple majority vote requirement. The change in requirement of numbers to appoint an Ethics Commissioner for the City of New Westminster will be reduced party lines and that the proposed change will give complete control to any one single bloc on Council for such an appointment.

Procedural Note: At this time, Council proceeded to Item 4.4. Council Code of Conduct Amendment Bylaw No. 8457, 2024.

6. SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

6.1 Break (15 minutes)

7. BYLAWS

7.1 Public Hearing not held

a. Zoning Amendment Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8446, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Zoning Amendment Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8446, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Zoning Amendment Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8446, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Zoning Amendment Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8446, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

b. Zoning Amendment Bylaw (408 East Columbia Street) No. 8451, 2024

Zoning Amendment Bylaw (408 East Columbia Street) No. 8451, 2024 bylaw was not considered.

7.2 Bylaws for readings

a. Tax Rates Bylaw 8445, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Tax Rates Bylaw 8445, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Tax Rates Bylaw 8445, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Tax Rates Bylaw 8445, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

b. Code of Conduct for Council Members Amendment Bylaw No. 8457, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Code of Conduct for Council Members Amendment Bylaw No. 8457, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Code of Conduct for Council Members Amendment Bylaw No. 8457, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Code of Conduct for Council Members Amendment Bylaw No. 8457, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

c. Riparian Areas Protection Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8413, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Riparian Areas Protection Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8413, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Riparian Areas Protection Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8413, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Riparian Areas Protection Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8413, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8421, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8421, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8421, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8421, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8422, 2024

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8422, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8422, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw Amendment Bylaw No 8422, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. Housing Agreement Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8447, 2024 (Circulated Separately)

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Housing Agreement Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8447, 2024 first reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Housing Agreement Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8447, 2024 second reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council give Housing Agreement Bylaw (51 Elliot Street) No. 8447, 2024 third reading.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

8. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

8.1 Motions for Discussion and Decision

a. 2026 FIFA World Cup

Submitted by Mayor Johnstone

Whereas the FIFA World Cup is the most widely viewed and followed single sporting event in the world, and for the first time ever Vancouver will be a host city for seven games in the 2026 event; and

Whereas association football is a truly international sport, with 48 nations from 6 continents participating in the 2026 World Cup, and represents a unique opportunity for a community like New Westminster with its rich diversity of cultures and nations of origin to bring community together and celebrate our diversity through sport and cultural exchange; and

Whereas there are economic and other barriers to direct participation in FIFA events related with the World Cup for many members of the New Westminster community; and

Whereas New Westminster Council has identified Community Connecting and Belonging as a Strategic Priority, including

community-building activities that bring the diverse community together for shared events and experiences;

MOVED and SECONDED

Therefore Be It Resolved that Staff report back to Council with opportunities to activate public spaces across New Westminster, to apply for external funding, and engage local cultural, youth, sports, and business organizations for free and low-barrier public gathering, public viewing, and community celebration to coincide with the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Procedural Note: An amendment was proposed.

MOVED and SECONDED

Be it further resolved that in advance of the World Cup in 2026 we gain further insight into the potential opportunities and pitfalls pilot of this type of sport-based street activation by opening up Hyack Square for a “Canucks on Columbia” 2024 playoffs family-oriented event which would broadcast Vancouver Canucks playoff games; and

THAT We immediately reach out to the Downtown BIA, the Chamber of Commerce and downtown businesses to determine their interest in helping the City initiate a “Canucks on Columbia” concept; and

THAT Staff report back after the playoffs with lessons learned that could be incorporated into street activation for the 2026 World Cup event.

Procedural Note: Mayor Johnstone ruled this amendment out of order, due to the sports being separate this is a totally different motion.

Procedural Note: In response, Councillor Fontaine appealed the ruling of the chair and was immediately put to vote sustain the chair without requiring a seconder.

THAT Mayor Johnstone be sustained as the chair of the regular council meeting of April 22, 2024.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

Procedural note: The question on the main motion, was called.

MOVED and SECONDED

Therefore Be It Resolved that Staff report back to Council with opportunities to activate public spaces across New Westminster, to apply for external funding, and engage local cultural, youth, sports, and business organizations for free and low-barrier public gathering, public viewing, and community celebration to coincide with the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Improving the public's access to trees during the City's bi-annual tree sale

Submitted by Councillor Fontaine

Whereas the City has a goal of a 27% canopy coverage within New Westminster by 2030; and

Whereas by partnering with residents, the City aims to reach its goal of planting 3,300 trees on private land, and a further 8,500 on public land by 2030; and

Whereas the total trees available for purchase as part of our bi-annual tree sale regularly falls well short of demand from local residents.

MOVED and SECONDED

BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff be directed to assess whether the Climate Action Reserve Fund decision-making framework can support the purchase of up to an additional 3000 trees over the next three years (2025-2027) to be sold as part of the City's bi-annual tree sale.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 ON TABLE Programs to Serve Isolated Seniors Funded by the United Way British Columbia

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council endorse the implementation of the City's Social Meals, Community Connector and Volunteer Coordination initiatives to be funded by the United Way of British Columbia as described in this report; and

THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Parks and Recreation be authorized to enter into the project funding agreement with the United Way of British Columbia substantially in the form as per Attachment 2 and subject to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.2 ON TABLE New Westminster Grant Funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies Youth Climate Action Fund Program

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council accept this report for information announcing \$206,000 (\$150,000 USD) from the Bloomberg Philanthropies Youth Climate Action Fund for New Westminster Youth Climate Action initiatives.

CARRIED

Councillors Fontaine and Minhas opposed

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Councillor Campbell reminded residents of a survey regarding the Civic Grants Program on Be Heard New West.

Councillor Fontaine announced that on May 26, 2024, the Heritage Homes Tour of New Westminster will be taking place and he hopes to see many residents there.

Mayor Johnstone announced the passing of Evelyn Benson – known as a singer, author and teacher in New Westminster, greatly missed by friends, family and neighbours.

11. END OF THE MEETING

Mayor Johnstone terminated the meeting at 9:44 p.m.

Patrick Johnstone

MAYOR

Hanieh Berg

CORPORATE OFFICER