



Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

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

ARTS, CULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, December 12, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

Open to public attendance in Committee Room G, Lower Level, City Hall

PRESENT: Councillor Ruby Campbell, Chair
Councillor Paul Minhas
Gerardo Corro Amador
Jorden Foss
Laura Grady
Vera Kobalia*
Gwendolyn Maddock
Angelene Prakash*
Jessica Schneider*
Paige Strand*
Catherine Williams*
Andy Gomez Zamora*

Committee Clerk – Kristin Unger

ABSENT: Ailed Duarte Martinez
Tamsen McDonough
Fikayo Ogundare
Saurabh Sood

**Attendance by electronic means*

1. CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. They acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. They 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

1. **THAT** two items be added under New Business:
 - i. Arts-based Tenant at 100 Braid Street;
 - ii. Sapperton Business Collective Representation; and
2. **THAT** the December 12, 2024 Arts, Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting agenda be adopted, as amended.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

None.

4. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.1 City of Langford – The Langford Station

Please see Page 6 for action on this matter.

4.2 2024 Review and Discussion on 2025 Workplan for Arts, Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee

Please see Page 3 for action on this matter.

5. STAFF UPDATES

5.1 Arts Service Update

Todd Ayotte, Manager, Community Arts and Theatre, reviewed the Arts, Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee's (ACEDAC) 2024 highlights and gave an update regarding the 2025 Work Plan and Arts Strategy Refresh.

T. Ayotte advised that the 2025 work plan review and Arts Strategy Refresh are anticipated to be finalized by mid-year. Staff will report back to the Committee once work is complete. There will be internal and external engagement. The first community discussion will take place late February/early March.

The term has ended for the New Westminster Poet Laureate, Elliott Slinn, and the selection process for a new poet laureate is ongoing.

A five-year lease is being signed with the Vagabond Players for the Bernie Legge Theatre this month and will contain community access language.

Gordon Duggan and Sarah Joyce are ending their tenure at the Anvil Centre's New Media Gallery.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Gordon Duggan and Sarah Joyce from New Media Gallery be recognized for their contribution to the City's arts community.

CARRIED

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- although early in the transition and replacement process, information regarding the New Media Gallery directorship and its continuance has been picked up by media; and
- the transition of the New Media Gallery is being considered in the 10-year review of the Anvil Theatre and there is opportunity for the community to be involved in the consultations.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Erin Jefferies be permitted to participate in Committee dialogue.

CARRIED

4.2 2024 Review and Discussion on 2025 Work Plan for Arts, Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee

With the aid of a presentation, Carolyn Armanini, Acting Manager, Economic Development, presented the on the 2025 Work Plan and noted that:

- the Anvil Centre 10-year Review has been completed and includes feedback from Council and the community.
- A grants review is proceeding; if the 2025 budget is approved as-is, then Phase 2 and 3 of the review will commence.
- Jenn Arbo, Supervisor, Community Partnerships, is leading a Film Office update under the Community Services Department, with the intention of providing further visibility.
- The Retail Strategy updates will continue into 2025.
- Emerging issues are critical to the Crisis Response Pilot Project
- A business license bylaw has been brought forward and finalized. This change has been significant and has rebalanced and right-sized how much businesses pay.
- There is an ongoing search for an indigenous representative for ACEDAC.

The Community Services Department would like to utilize ACEDAC's expertise and collaborate on ideas, including:

- liquor and cannabis policy updates;

- food truck bylaws;
- retail strategy implementation;
- sponsorship policy;
- Community Grants program updates; and
- special events policy and frameworks;

The Committee considered the importance of reviewing all issues in the City with lenses of reconciliation, public engagement, climate action, equity, inclusion, anti-racism and measurability.

5.2 Crises Response Pilot Project Update

Ria Renouf, Communications Coordinator, provided the Committee with updates regarding the Crises Response Pilot Project including:

- a public-facing email inbox was created to streamline the biohazard form submission process;
- staff consulted with the Downtown New West Business Improvement Association (BIA) and received feedback regarding the program;
- two Compliance and Liaison Officers have been added to the Crises Response Team. They will have identifiable uniforms, focus on compassionate response and enforcement, in an Ambassadorial type role. They are being trained currently, and are working standard hours, but their fully operational schedule will include evening and weekend hours.
- Staff are supporting landlords and business operators in signing of biohazard waivers.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff advised:

- officers are offering to do a “safe walk” for business employees if they are parked further from their place of employment; and
- the insurance component of the waiver can still cause challenges in obtaining signatures, and staff continue to work on this challenge.

5.3 Economic Forum Update

Angelene Prakash, New West BIA, verbally presented on the Economic Development Forum.

New Westminster’s first Economic Forum will be held February 6th at the Anvil Centre. It is a conference-style forum with developers and the local business community regarding the current state of the industry and its potential in New West and the vision for 2030.

The New West Chamber of Commerce and the BIA are having conversations with planners and developers regarding accessible business spaces.

Members of Council have been meeting with the BC Arts Council which has been looking at New West as a prototype to change how the province distributes their funding. There was hope they might participate in the Forum, but it was deemed unlikely due to time constraints.

5.4 First Capital – Shops at New West Update

Chair Campbell verbally presented on First Capital – Shops at New West.

Shops at New West has been challenged in terms of space making and unhoused populations.

The Arts Council organized a meeting between the leasing agents, the Downtown BIA, and Tourism New West to speak to what changes may be required in the space, how community organizations may become involved, and how space might be available to the Arts Council for promotion.

It was noted that 801 Columbia Street is a challenging space to make plans for, but if there is interest shown among artist members, there is possibility to hold events on that space.

5.5 Tin Soldier Time Capsule Opening

Chair Campbell verbally presented on the opening of time capsule inside The World's Tallest Tin Soldier at Westminster Quay, and a motion to this effect will be brought forward to Council on December 16.

6. New Business

6.1 Arts-based Tenant at 100 Braid Street

Arts New West is working to find an arts-based tenant at 100 Braid Street, as the space is designated for cultural art use.

Staff liaisons of this committee will bring that information back to the Planning team who are working on that development.

6.2 Sapperton Business Collective Representation

Chair Campbell advised members of the Committee Sapperton Collective is a new business organization who have requested to have representation on ACEDAC.

The Chair then invited members to provide individual updates:

- Dia de los Muertos event was approved, and there is potential for other events to take place in the City;
- there are different ways to get involved in the community, including the Walking School Bus Group, where one can volunteer to be a Walk Leader;
- Douglas College students will be working at the Chamber of Commerce doing internships in January;
- ACEDAC members are invited to the Combined Winter Social hosted by the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism New West, and the Uptown BIA at The Met Hotel New Westminster;
- Steel & Oak Beer Run, a 5k community run, is coming up in January;
- Tourism New West is working with partners to improve wayfinding, with support from a municipal grant, and underwent an assessment with the Rainbow Register and now certified as welcoming;
- December 16th was the opening date of the Massey Theatre 75 years ago, and there will be a sing-along and community event; and
- the new banners in uptown designed by a local artist have been completed and there will be a silent auction of original art with proceeds going to a local organization.

The Committee considered exploring potential avenues to encourage the provincial government to expedite housing as an issue; for example, the housing project on Agnes Street.

Additionally, staff advised there is work being done to create a plan with an advocacy component geared towards community partners.

4. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.1 City of Langford – The Langford Station

Donna Petrie, Senior Manager, Communications & Economic Development, City of Langford, presented on the Langford Station and its development, history, economic impacts to the City of Langford and current status of business being conducted there.

In response to questions from the Committee, D. Petrie advised:

- there was little pushback from the local brick-and-mortar businesses in the area because the City communicated thoroughly with the business community and the residents prior to implementation. The City of Langford emphasized that they wouldn't be bringing in competing businesses and that they would be creating a better space. The only pushback received were condominium residents using the area as parking;

- there is little turnover due to non-payment of rent. No one has ever been evicted, though a few vendors have moved out on their own. The rate of rent is much lower compared to brick-and-mortar space. The City of Langford only wanted to cover costs. The Junction does not cost money, but they are also not making money for the City;
- there are success stories of vendors doing well enough to move out of the space and fund brick-and-mortar spaces of their own;
- the legal team was involved in all aspects of the project, including licensing agreements. It was carefully considered if the prohibition against assistance to businesses, *Community Charter* sec. 25, was a risk; and
- engineering costs were higher than expected due to the rushed timeline of the project.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the December 12, 2024 Arts Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned (11:33 a.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Arts, Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held on December 12, 2024.

Councillor Ruby Campbell

CHAIR

Kristin Unger

COMMITTEE CLERK