



Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Friday, March 4, 2022
Electronic and in Meeting Room G
Lower Level, City Hall

PRESENT

Councillor Mary Trentadue*	Chair
Councillor Chinu Das*	Council Representative
Monita Cheng*	Community Representative from Commercial Area
Mark Evans*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Jolene Foreman*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Jordan Foss*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Imran Gill*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Kendra Johnston*	Representative, Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association
Vera Kobalia*	Community Representative from Commercial Area
Nikki Morris*	Representative, New Westminster Chamber of Commerce
Paul Romein*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community
Bart Slotman*	Representative, Uptown Business Association
Catherine Williams*	Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community

GUESTS

Justin Barer	Urban Systems
David Bell	Urban Systems

STAFF PRESENT

Jen Arbo	Economic Development Coordinator
Carolyn Armanini	Economic Development Planner

Blair Fryer	Manager, Communications and Economic Development
Lynn Roxburgh	Acting Supervisor, Land Use Planning and Climate Action
Meredith Seeton	Policy Planner
Katie Stobbart	Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

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

Councillor Trentadue opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem-speaking peoples. She acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. She recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

At the start of the meeting, Vera Kobalia, Community Representative from Commercial Area, provided a statement of gratitude for Canada and New Westminster's support of Ukraine, noting that one million people have left Ukraine with the expectation that many more will try to leave the country. She shared that many friends have spent their week in bomb shelters and subways trying to protect themselves and their families. Canada took in Ms. Kobalia and her family in the 90s, and she hopes to now give the love and support they received to new refugees coming to Canada.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS**

Committee members and staff responded in turn to the question, "What brought you to this committee?"

2.1 Legislative Services Committee Orientation

Katie Stobbart, Committee Clerk, provided a presentation entitled "Committee Orientation."

a. Oaths of Office

New committee members recited their Oaths of Office together.

b. Election of Alternate Chair

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Kendra Johnston be appointed as the Alternate Chair for the 2022 term of the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agenda of the Economic Development Advisory Committee be adopted with the addition of Business License Fees under New Business.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 Minutes of January 7, 2022

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held on January 7, 2022 be adopted.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Retail Strategy

Blair Fryer, Manager, Communications and Economic Development, introduced David Bell and Justin Barer from Urban Systems, who provided a presentation entitled "New Westminster Retail Strategy".

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Bell and Mr. Barer advised:

- A summary of this report will be taken to Council and posted to the website. Can work toward a highlight document that our partners could use to share the information;
- The trade areas that were investigated are not just to look at numbers and spending but to highlight demographics and the fact that New West is an increasingly diverse community surrounded by increasingly diverse communities; and
- There were a lot of people reaching the end of their careers without anyone to take over their business, and some instances of people saying things were already hard and COVID-19 made it impossible to keep going.

The Committee had the following comments on the presentation:

- The community should know that Council and the Committee are taking care of their needs this way;
- Like the idea of workshops but people may not have time to attend;
- Interested in using this information to determine future land use;
- Although the analysis shows that vacancy Downtown has decreased, it appears that there are a lot of vacancies;
- Would like to see what specific, quick wins could look like for each community;
- Suggest doing some door-to-door engagement Downtown, and to engage with the various boards and associations that represent businesses; and
- Businesses have had to do a lot of surveys on negative topics, like construction, but this is forward-looking and motivational, so it may be easier to get people on board for surveys and focus groups.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no items.

7. STANDING REPORTS AND UPDATES

Catherine Williams, Sectoral Representative from Local Business Community, advised that Douglas College has an unpaid 12-hours-per-week internship, which is ideal for specific marketing projects, bookkeeping, etc. They are also hiring paid full-time co-op students for summer.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

8.1 Business License Fees

Kendra Johnston, Representative, Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association requested that staff address the steps the City plans to take around reviewing business license fees.

Blair Fryer, Manager, Communications and Economic Development, and Carolyn Armanini, Economic Development Planner, advised:

- Staff want to complete a business license bylaw review by the end of 2022;
- There are historical reasons for the liquor primary fees being how they are in New Westminster, as about 25 years ago there were approximately 5,000 licensed liquor seats Downtown, and costs associated with the activity generated by those seats on a Friday or Saturday night, so the fees went up;
- Want to collaborate with our colleagues across Metro Vancouver, to ensure we are consistent and competitive with our neighbours;
- Will also be doing a review of our liquor policy overall, which will help inform the business license bylaw and fee bylaw in tandem; and
- Liquor and cannabis licensing are separate processes within the City. Currently we charge the same large fee for a new liquor primary license application as we do for a cannabis retail store.

The Committee noted that cannabis should also be reviewed so we do not end up in the same place with cannabis as we are with liquor stores in the future.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend the business license review be prioritized, specifically in the liquor and cannabis categories.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

9. **END OF MEETING**

On MOTION, the meeting ended at 10:59 a.m.

10. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Remaining scheduled meetings for 2022, which take place at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted:

- May 6
- July 8
- September 2
- December 2

Certified Correct,

Councillor Mary Trentadue
Chair

Katie Stobbart
Committee Clerk