

Committee of the Whole, Tuesday, July 21, 2009, 2:30 pm

I got back from the Okanagan (a day early due to the fires) in time for the Committee of the Whole meeting on the morning of July 21st.

The agenda item was a report from CAO Gipps and Director of Public Works Greg Foss on recycling. The background was that the SCRCD had decided to delay the issuing of an RFP to establish curbside recycling and an enhanced recycling depot in order to conduct a community wide survey and educational awareness program. Committee of the Whole did not have "the will at the table" to accept staff's recommendation to go along with a delay in issuing the RFP, and decided, in the end, that Gibsons staff should look into the costs of proceeding with an independent RFP for curbside collection and an enhanced depot in Gibsons, and report back to the September 22 meeting of the Corporate Services Committee.

Pretty straightforward you would think. I remember an old expression -

"beware the short agenda - it means a long meeting". So it was here.

Intergovernmental relationships had to be clarified - apparently the Province has mandated regional districts with responsibility for solid waste management, limiting a municipality's ability to review an RD plan. Costs were a concern, both of recycling generally, and of hiring a consultant to write the RFP (a figure of \$20,000 was alluded to, though I must admit that in 23 years of consulting practice, I have never heard of a consultant outside of the defence establishment, receiving such a sum to write an RFP).

And finally, the situation of Gibsons Recycling Depot was discussed. Generally, facts weren't given by GRD supporters, they were alluded to.

Reading between the lines, I got the impression that GRD had shut down due

to a credit problem, and that GRD supporters felt that local government

could solve the problem by making GRD the local enhanced recycling depot.

Councillor Koopmans made it clear that the Town would have to follow a

transparent bid process to develop the specs for the recycling program and subsequently choose a method of operation. He also made it clear that it is the RD who is slowing the process down. Finally, he said that GRD would be welcome to respond to the RFP when it is issued. This was probably not the news GRD and its supporters wanted to hear, but Koopmans' response was the right one, and so the Committee of the Whole made its recommendation to Council. It all took about two hours.

Hamilton McClymont