

Hi everyone:

I was a little late for last night's Gibsons Council meeting (a Community Futures meeting in Sechelt ran overtime), so I missed the approval of the agenda, the adoption of minutes and the review of the Post-meeting Action Checklist. The agenda is at <http://www.gowebtide.com/gibsonsddocuments/090616CouncilAgenda.pdf>

Administration Reports

The order of proceedings was adjusted to allow Bill Cox of BDO Dunwoody LLP, auditor of the Town's 2008 financial statements, to present his report. He noted that a "clean audit opinion" has been given and that the overall financial position of the Town is healthy, particularly in relation to similar sized communities. Last year's financial operating performance was "close to breakeven". Council received the auditor's report and referred it to the Corporate Services Committee.

Council approved the Municipal Security Issuing Resolution, requesting the Regional District to include the amount to be borrowed for the capital projects covered by last fall's referendum (water metering, cross connection control etc) in the RD's request to the Municipal Finance Authority. MF requires requests for borrowings by municipalities to go through regional districts. Presumably it lightens MFA's workload.

Planning Committee

Council approved recommendations regarding

- (1) a DP for a new gazebo at 280 Gower Point Road
- (2) the revised Phase 1 Harbour Area Plan RFP
- (3) a request to the Ministry of the Attorney General to enact a regulation establishing a local government bylaw dispute adjudication system. Council also asked staff to draft a bylaw to enable the Town to use the Bylaw Enforcement Notice Adjudication System. This will enable the Town to enforce the collection of fines for bylaw infractions by non-residents.

Three items, one under Delegations, the other two under Correspondence, raised issues regarding what requirements the Town needs to have met before it will give approval in principle to projects that are seeking grants from senior levels of government. In all three cases, community organizations are applying for grants from ICET (Island Coastal Economic Trust), a \$50 million economic development fund established by the Province in 2006 to

assist communities on the North Island and Sunshine Coast, and CAF (Community Adjustment Fund), a \$1 billion federal "stimulus" program of which \$125 million is earmarked for BC. The CAF program, announced mid-May, requires urgent response; the deadline for applications is June 25th, and to qualify, projects must be "shovel ready" to start within 60 days and must be completed by 31 March 2011. Here's what happened.

Resource Recovery Centre

Andrea Goldsmith and Marilyn Magas made a Delegation to Council on behalf of Independent Opportunities Unlimited (IOU), a non-profit society. IOU and its partners, 2nd Byte Computers, Gibsons Recycling Depot (GRD) and the Sunshine Coast Community Employment Centre are developing a concept to create a Resource Recovery Park in Gibsons. The project has the support of community associations in Roberts Creek, Elphinstone, West Howe Sound and Gibsons. The proponents have been encouraged by Community Futures to develop their application to CAF. Project benefits include increased employment of as much as 30-40 jobs. Councillor Koopmans asked if a business plan has been prepared that the Town could review and whether there might be a conflict of interest, given the involvement of GRD and the Town's RFP (Request for Proposals) regarding recycling which GRD may respond to. Goldsmith replied that the business plan is being developed, and that GRD is just one partner in IOU. Mayor Janyk asked "Why the hurry?". He noted that ICET is an ongoing program with regular project application intakes and that in any event, he believes that chasing grant deadlines is bad policy. While supporting the concept of a Resource Recovery Park, the mayor said it is not a given that it should be located in the industrial park in Upper Gibsons, and that much more dialogue will be needed before the Town can provide an endorsement of the project.

Gibsons Landing Harbour Authority (GLHA) expansion plan

A letter (page 33 of the Agenda) from GCI's (Gibsons Community Initiatives Assn.) Chair Bob Hoy, regarding the Gibsons Landing Harbour Authority's long-planned expansion program, was the reason GCI Chair Bob Hoy, Economic Development Coordinator Michael McLaughlin and GLHA Chair Carol Doyle were in attendance. Without welcoming them, the Mayor began the discussion by asking CAO (Chief Administrative Officer) Paul Gipps to clarify for GCI and GLHA what process will need to take place. Gipps said that while the harbour expansion project does not require a development permit and that

zoning is in place, Town staff will have to assess all aspects of the project in terms of servicing, access, and parking. The Mayor noted that the Harbour Authority has yet to provide the Town with a significant presentation on the changes to the expansion plan. As Chair of ICET the Mayor is privy to the Stage Two application which the Harbour Authority has made to ICET, and he said it is "substantially different" to the original application. (The Harbour Authority and GCIAC say that all that has changed with the application is the funding mix occasioned by the opportunity presented by the fed's new CAF program.)

Councillor Koopmans respectfully disagreed with the Mayor's interpretation of the situation, pointing out that the previous Council had required the Harbour Authority to partner with the Shoal Bay and Tugboat Landing (Fuerniss Enterprises) projects for the purposes of obtaining input from the public, and that on the basis of that positive input, Council had given the green light to the Harbour Authority's Stage One presentation to ICET. Councillor Rowe noted that CAF funded projects need to start within 60 days, and so if the funding comes, the Town must streamline its process. Koopmans quoted a number of statistics from Stats Canada's May 28 report; residential construction on the Sunshine Coast has collapsed from 330 building permits in 2006 to 28 so far this year (nearly 15% of jobs on the Coast were in construction), and unemployment on the Coast has risen from 5.4% to 8.2%, now the third highest in BC. Koopmans noted that with CAF, we have a unique opportunity for funding that will not come along again for a long time and that the Town needs to cut red tape and show leadership for economic development.

The Mayor held his ground, saying we have a major project we're not privy to that needs a discussion of all the issues. He suggested the Town in Committee of the Whole, the Harbour Authority and GCIAC meet early in July. Councillor Rowe noted that the Mayor's (confidential) email to Michael McLaughlin suggested that Council would act in a certain way, and reminded the Mayor that Council has yet to act. CKAY has the story on their site under "Changes to Gibsons Harbour Expansion Plan Causing Friction".
<http://www.ckay.ca/news.php>

Botanical Garden

A letter from the Botanical Garden Society asking for the Town's support of their ICET and CAF applications was next. The Mayor noted that he has not seen their application and that no one was present to address the issue. Gipps stated that this evening Council is establishing a standard for dealing with these requests for declarations of support, and that Council should be consistent. There was no further discussion.

The result of all of this is that the applications for CAF funding (deadline June 25) will go forward without the expressed support of the Town of Gibsons. This may or may not matter, but Western Diversification, administrators of the CAF program have helped more than 700 people to develop applications. The process will be competitive, and an application that does not have the support of its local government might lose out to one that does. It could turn out to be a shame.

Bylaws

Final adoption was given to Bylaw 1106, 2009 regarding development procedures and fees.

Council reports

Councillors reported on their attendance at sessions on affordable housing and food self-sustainability on the Coast.

Councillor Rowe reported on the Sea Cavalcade fundraiser, the St Mary's Hospital Foundation AGM at which Bill Hubbs efforts were recognized, the Elphinstone Elector's Association (the Vision Quest controversy) and the Sunshine Coast Community Foundation Awards.

Councillor Koopmans attended the Jazz festival and noticed Friday night seemed to be quiet. Perhaps the Festival misses "The Club" as focal point for its program.

Councillor Johnson reported that she attended the 2nd Inclusive Communities Forum. Council can expect to receive a request to make a proclamation of the "Welcoming Accord" the Forum has drafted.

The Mayor listed a number of upcoming meetings.

In the interests of full disclosure, I remind my readers that for three years I was contracted by GCIA as EDO (Economic Development Officer) for Gibsons, Elphinstone and West Howe Sound, and so I have a bias in favour of economic development. Since I've come here, I've said that the key to economic development on the Sunshine Coast is to make the place welcoming to visitors, to newcomers and to business. I found it ironic that Councillor Johnson should speak so warmly

about welcoming people of diverse cultures who are immigrating here, while at the same time Council greeted local organizations (mostly volunteer) trying to develop projects that will improve our economy and our life here with nothing but disabling "process". It was an unwelcoming performance, as unwelcoming as I have seen Council in my time here.

PS At one point Councillor Koopmans pleaded to "cut the red tape". "What red tape?" asked the Mayor. "The Barrycade!" he might have replied, but no one thought of it until this morning.

The COW with GCIA and the Harbour Authority early in July might be worth attending. Until then,

Cheers,

Hammy

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