

Gibsons Council Observations – March 3, 2009

Hi everyone

Gibsons Council considered a fairly short agenda last night.

<http://www.gowebtide.com/gibsonsddocuments/090303CouncilAgenda.pdf>

The Mayor and all Councillors were present.

Ian Poole, Director of Finance, introduced Lorraine Coughlin who has recently arrived from School District 46 to be the Town's new Assistant Treasurer.

In the Inquiry period following receipt and approval of various minutes, Brian Sadler noted that recent Council minutes have not included any details of the Inquiry portions of meetings, and asked why the change was made. Previously, Council minutes had noted the question, the questioner and the response.

- Corporate Officer Michelle Jansson replied that Council minutes are intended to record Council's actions, noting that verbatim minutes are not appropriate to moving business forward. She added that it would be different for reports from a different forum - a public hearing for example.
- Mayor Janyk added that people can put their questions in writing, and they will receive a written reply.
- Sean Eckford (CKAY FM) noted that the District of Sechelt is making digital recordings of its Council meetings available.
- Ms Jansson said that while Gibsons is currently recording on tape, she is working on a transition to digital recording.
- Mayor Janyk said that accuracy, efficiency, but not legacy are the goals of the Town's minutes.

Council approved recommendations from the Infrastructure Committee dealing with two topics:

- The Town has received a draft report from Bunt & Associates on the subject of Traffic Safety. The report proposes Five Corners safety improvements and speed limit recommendations. The Five Corners are recommendations are to be brought forward to the public at an open house in conjunction with the Harbour Area Plan.
- Council will consider a longer term agreement with Construction Aggregates for biosolids disposal.

Council approved a report from CAO Paul Gipps (page 38 of the agenda above) titled Regaining the Confidence - Election Process Review.

- Corporate Officer Jansson will prepare a review.
- Corporate Services Committee will bring forward to Council any recommendations that result from the review.
- While details of the review have yet to be worked out, it is likely that best practices in other communities will be included.

- Councillor Rowe indicated that he hopes the public can be involved.
- Mayor Janyk said that if the process results in getting more people out to vote, we'll have done well.
- All agreed the review should be done sooner rather than later.

Council agreed to participate in the provincial Strategic Community Investment Fund program.

- While in the past municipalities could use the funds in accordance with their own priorities, henceforth the province will be requiring that the funds be more directly aligned with specific projects, and will hold municipalities accountable accordingly.

Council approved a Development Variance Permit Application related to frontage and servicing improvements in a subdivision of the Upper Gibsons neighbourhood.

- As Planning Director Chris Marshall explained the details, approving the variance is far more sensible than sticking to the letter of the law, which would have required unnecessary duplication of work.

Council agreed to provide birthday cake following tomorrow's (March 4th) budget meeting on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the receipt of the Town's letters patent. Happy Birthday Gibsons!

The Town will be applying to ICET for Phase 1 consideration of its plan for a Geo-exchange District Energy Utility.

The Town will also be updating its application to the Build Canada Fund regarding Geothermal and Storm Drain Diversion plans.

Members of Council reported their observations on the recent Regional Growth Strategy meeting. None were impressed. The process could be long, involved and expensive.

Mayor Janyk reported on the progress of the Regional District budget.

- Some Regional Directors are questioning the direction Regional District management is taking regarding the management and operation of recreational facilities, given that the high cost of running the facilities will result in reduced hours and weeks of operations.
- Mayor Janyk believes that an independent third party assessment is needed to ensure taxpayers get the best value from our recreational facilities. (Makes sense to me. If we can't afford to operate the facilities to the point that they have to be closed for big chunks of a day, a week, or the year, there's something very wrong.)

Mayor Janyk reported that the ICET board is working on the matching formula issue with a view to a solution that works in troika with the province and the feds. The ICET Board meets again March 20.

Mayor Janyk attended a meeting on IPPs (Independent Power Projects) and wonders why local government isn't getting into the IPP business. He thinks it will be worth a discussion with UBCM and MFA (Municipal Finance Authority).

Councillor Currie attended the Sea to Sky Air Quality session recently. The SCR D is not a member of the group, and its absence was noted.

Councillor Johnson reported that Gibsons Recycling Centre won the "Going Green" award sponsored by the Town at the recent "Business Awards of Distinction".

The meeting adjourned at 8:18.

Cheers,

Hammy

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