

TOWN OF SMITHERS

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1027 ALDOUS STREET, SMITHERS, B.C. ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2012, AT NOON.

Council Present:

Taylor Bachrach, Mayor
Norm Adomeit, Councillor
Mark Bandstra, Councillor
Bill Goodacre, Councillor
Charlie Northrup, Councillor
Frank Wray, Councillor.

Council Excused:

Phil Brienesse, Council.

2013 Celebration Committee:

Gladys Atrill
Dave McKenzie
Sean Mitchell.

Bulkley Valley Economic
Development Association:

Allan Stroet
Ian Grieve
Al McCreary
Paul Wellington.

Media Present: K. Koppitz, CFTK-TV, and D. Mesec, The Interior News.

Staff Present:

Deborah Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer
Susan Bassett, Director of Corporate Services
Leslie Ford, Director of Finance
Mark Allen, Director of Development Services
Andrew Hillaby, Director of Recreation, Parks
and Culture
Rob Blackburn, Airport Manager
Janice McKay, Recording Secretary.

Staff Excused:

Keith Stecko, Fire Chief
Wilf Taekema, Director of Works and
Operations.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bachrach called the meeting to order (12:10 p.m.).

2. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS

2.1 & 2.2 Adomeit/

THAT the following be received:

- 2.1 2013 Legacy Project survey results and minutes from the Committee of the Whole meeting held December 9, 2011; and
- 2.2 Bulkley Valley Economic Development Association's 2012 draft budget, 2012 work plan, and 2011 fourth quarter report.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2.1 **2013 LEGACY PROJECT**

S. Mitchell explained the survey process. Project ideas resulting from the survey were sorted into four categories, with the following scores: a) 36 for skatepark; b) 12 for a plaza or square; c) 11 for recreation facilities; and d) 4 for Library/Museum. S. Mitchell read the 2013 Legacy Committee's recommendation for the second highest rated project for a "Main Street green space, beautifully landscaped, user friendly, power sourced, maintainable, restful, artistic, showcasing arts/culture/scenic". S. Mitchell advised that he envisions a stage area with multi-tiered seating, rather than a gazebo-type structure. S. Mitchell and McKenzie voiced preference for the Square being located on the Town-owned property at the corner of Broadway Avenue and Main Street, rather than being tied into the proposed "mainstreet entrance" project.

S. Mitchell presented timelines beginning with conducting the survey in December 2011, through to the construction phase in May 2013. Steps to be completed in 2012 and 2013 include: a) project feasibility; b) working with the Town on ownership; c) conceptual stage; d) sponsorship development; e) hiring an engineer of draft plans; f) grant applications; g) contract tender and award; and h) construction phase. Regarding funding, the submission deadline for the Heritage Canada grant application is April 1, 2012, and successful applicants would not be advised until October 2012. The Main Street square is a \$200,000 project which fits into the Heritage Canada criteria. In order to be eligible for a Heritage Canada grant, the project cannot be a Town project, but can be on Town-owned land. The Committee intends to source out other funding through grants. The project could be split into separate components to achieve smaller grants.

The highest-rated survey category, for enhanced skateboarding/BMX opportunities, was discussed, including whether or not it would be considered a "lasting legacy" given that the current facility has become outdated in twenty years' time. Dr. Haskins, parent of a snowboarding enthusiast, emphasized that encouraging youth to be active is an excellent Legacy Project. It was suggested that the skateboard park expansion could be referred to budget, if it is not selected by Council as the 2013 Legacy Project, and that the skateboard park users may also wish to make a presentation at a future Council meeting. It was noted that to be a Legacy Project, a project champion is required.

S. Mitchell requested that the Town of Smithers contribute one-third of the total cost of the Legacy Project, which, in the case of the Town Square would be approximately \$66,000 for the \$200,000 project.

There was discussion regarding the effectiveness of the survey and the small number of completed surveys received. It was noted that the intent of the survey was to generate project ideas rather than measure community support, and to allow the Legacy Committee to be able to select a specific project that it feels it would like to put its energy behind.

G. Atrill advised that the event-planning Committee will be meeting at 7:00 p.m. on January 19, 2012, at St. Joseph's.

The Committee of the Whole made the following recommendations to Council:

Bandstra/

THAT Council refer the request for \$66,000 from the 2013 Legacy Committee, to go towards the cost of the Legacy Project, to the Finance Committee meeting regarding capital budgets being held January 16, 2012.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Northrup/

THAT Council refer the selection of the 2013 Legacy Project to the Regular Meeting of Council being held January 10, 2012.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2.2 BULKLEY VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

A. Stroet, Economic Development Officer, introduced Directors A. McCreary, P. Wellington, and I. Grieve. The presentation included the Bulkley Valley Economic Development Association's 2012 draft budget and work plan, and the 2011 fourth quarter report.

A. Stroet advised that: a) the BVEDA is anticipating a \$25,000 surplus from 2011; b) Hotel Tax funds were higher than originally forecast; c) the office is frugally managed, i.e. office furniture was donated; d) the tourism budget fluctuates, due to the Travel Guide being published every two years; e) hiring a student, to take on projects to spur economic development, in partnership with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, is in the discussion stage and therefore not reflected in the budget; f) the \$10,000 HST rebate is being shown in the 2012

revenue instead of a 2011 receivables; g) the Community Futures Corporation is considering sub-leasing office space with the BVEDA, but this has not been finalized and is therefore not included in the budget; and h) grant revenues for 2012 are unknown, and cannot be relied upon, and therefore not included in the budget.

There was discussion regarding the rationale for disbanding the Tourism Advisory Committee and the decision to start up an economic development office, which was an initiative of the Economic Development Committee. It was suggested that the Board revisit the Lions Gate Consultants' Report which laid out functions and goals, to determine if the work plan is achieving its original objectives. I. Grieve advised that the Board chose the best goals to put its energy behind from the 14 items in the Report. It was recommended that the Board position, left vacant when H. Tremblay resigned, be filled as soon as possible. Council emphasized that it does not wish to manage the BVEDA or to direct the entire Board, but only to liaise with the Town of Smithers' representatives to the Board.

A. Stroet explained: a) his key tasks as Economic Development Officer; b) the types of questions he researches and fields; c) collaboration with other EDO's in the region; d) investment into the website "InvestNorthwestBC" being returned by a multiplier of thirty; and d) the working relationship with the Tourism Coordinator.

Staff confirmed that a printout of all business licenses will be provided to A. Stroet as soon as it is updated and that new business licenses are listed in Council agenda packages, under Staff 'B' Reports.

Mayor Bachrach noted that the Lions Gate report did not distinguish between tourism and economic development. He questioned the meaning of "self sufficiency", as referenced in the Report and acknowledged the challenges regarding evaluation (connecting work to achievements) and the methodology to connect. The Directors agreed that anecdotal information is not as reliable as hard numbers and that even though feedback has been positive and A. Stroet's efforts have been appreciated by companies he has assisted, it is difficult to assign hard numbers to those efforts in terms of companies relocating to Smithers, etc.

D. Sargent suggested that the Work Plan address: a) focus for 2012 (global objectives); b) expected outcomes; and c) how is the BVEDA strategically placing itself? A. Stroet summarized his focus as follows: a) working with regional counterparts; b) strengthening existing, local businesses; and c) fostering the relationship between tourism and economic development.

In reply to Council's questions regarding measures to enhance the amenity migration sector, i.e. Internet connectivity, A. Stroet advised that "InvestNorthwestBC" is one of the tools being used to attract amenity migrants from major centres.

Mayor Bachrach thanked A. Stroet and the Directors for the update.

3. OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS

4. ADJOURNMENT

Northrup/

THAT the meeting be adjourned (1:34 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO

Taylor Bachrach
Mayor

Certified a True and Correct Copy of the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held Thursday, January 5, 2012, at 12:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO