



CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER

## **OPEN MEETING OF COUNCIL (WORKING SESSION)**

March 30, 2009 3:29 p.m.  
Committee Room 2, City Hall

### **MINUTES**

#### **PRESENT:**

Mayor Wayne Wright  
Councillor Jonathan Cote  
Councillor Bill Harper  
Councillor Bob Osterman  
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy  
Councillor Betty McIntosh  
Councillor Lorrie Williams

#### **STAFF:**

Mr. Paul Daminato	- City Administrator
Mr. Rick Page	- Corporate Officer/Director of Legislative Services
Ms. Bev Grieve	- Acting Director of Development Services
Mr. Jim Lowrie	- Director of Engineering
Mr. Gary Holowatiuk	- Director of Finance and Information Technology (via conference call)
Ms. Colleen Ponzini	- Finance and Information Technology
Mr. Randy Grant	- Finance and Information Technology
Ms. Julie Spurrell	- City Librarian
Mr. Dean Gibson	- Director of Parks and Recreation
Dep. Chief Dave Jones	- Police Service
Ms. Judi Turner	- Assistant Corporate Officer

## BUSINESS

### 1. **Electrical Utility Rates Report and Bylaw** (on table)

The following report was circulated on table: 2008/2009 Electrical Utility Rates – General Manager of Electric Utility Commission dated March 30, 2009 - seeking approval for changes to electric utility rates effective April 1, 2009.

The General Manager reviewed the March 30, 2009 report and he and Randy Grant, Finance and Information Technology, responded to questions.

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT electrical utility rates be revised to reflect a decrease (from 6.56% TO 2.34%) effective April 1, 2009;*

*THAT electrical utility rates be increased by 8.74%, plus a 2.5% rate rider, April 1, 2009; and*

*THAT the calculation of the amounts to be refunded for the period of April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2009, and interest on those amounts, be applied to the customer accounts in the months of May and June 2009.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Council voted in favour of the motion.

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT Electrical Utility Amendment Bylaw No. 7305, 2009, be read a first time.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Council voted in favour of the motion.

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT Electrical Utility Amendment Bylaw No. 7305, 2009, be read a second time.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Council voted in favour of the motion.

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT Electrical Utility Amendment Bylaw No. 7305, 2009, be read a third time.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Council voted in favour of the motion.

### 2. **Voluntary Amenity Contributions and Industrial Land Rezoning**s

March 2, 2009 report clarifying the City's Voluntary Amenity Contribution system and how it applies to industrial land rezonings.

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT staff be directed to exclude all industrial to industrial rezoning applications from being evaluated for voluntary amenity contributions.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Council voted in favour of the motion.

### 3. Specific 2009 Budget Related Questions

March 30, 2009 providing staff's responses to requests for more information and clarification around the Draft 2009-2013 Financial Plan – General Fund operating and capital budgets presented February 23, 2009.

The Director of Finance and Information Technology (present via conference call) noted that a preliminary package of information was circulated to Council prior to the circulation of a final report on Thursday, March 26, 2009. (The preliminary report will be attached to the agenda package for this meeting.) Members reviewed the report in detail.

During discussion, staff was directed to:

**Economic and Social Indicators:** Obtain more up to date information on Social Assistance figures for New Westminster residents (if possible)

**Economic and Social Indicators:** Clarify whether numbers relating to Business Formations include re-issued business licenses or new businesses

**Question 6 Revenues:** Explain grants in lieu for Port Authority land.

Compare tax revenues generated by Classes 4, 5, 6 with other municipalities in the GVRD

**Question 8 Revenues:** Advise what percentage of the revenue burden is borne by home owners as property taxes?

What percentage of tax revenues are business and what residential?

Are business taxes lower in New Westminster?

**Question 8 Revenues:** Does the City of New Westminster own the property underneath the railways

**Question 8 Revenues:** Consider the relationship with railroads and whether there is anything that can be done in terms of them paying their share

**Question 1 Expenditures:** Staff to review currently vacant positions and report to Council on whether they are necessary (as potential tax savings opportunities); analyze impact of a freeze on vacant positions (see page 4 of my notes)

**Question 3 Expenditures: Police** to report to Council on the two proposed new positions of Human Resources Manager and School Liaison officer

**Question 3 Expenditures: Police** to report on expenses and revenues relating to transit police and whether their investigations appear on City statistics

**Question 7 Expenditures: Human Resources:** Redevelop the chart of 2008 Absentee Statistics with percentages and number of employees

**Question 7 Expenditures: Human Resources:** Provide information on numbers of CUPE inside and CUPE outside and Fire to help

**Question 7 Expenditures: Human Resources:** Provide how program will be implemented and results measured with staff performing the duties and an outside company doing the work

**Question 7 Expenditures: Human Resources:** Supply break down on the duration of what each Plan covers (sick leave, mid term leave, long term sick leave): demonstrate if statistics are affected by long term absences/causes

**Question 7 Expenditures: Human Resources:** Supply this information for Police as well

**Question 3 Legal Costs:** supply information to clarify why the 2009 budget is lower than 2008 and 2007; supply actual costs for 2006; supply information on why legal costs have increased over the last few years/identify unusual events; sort legal costs into categories of costs

**Emergency Command Trailer:** clarify why budget request given that the vehicle is new and on warranty and given the vehicle will not be in continuous use

**Questions 5 150<sup>th</sup> Celebrations:** once grant monies arrive (or not), provide opportunity to Council to re-evaluate events

**Question 8 Consulting Costs:** try to hold the line on these costs and perform some of the tasks internally

**Question 8 Consulting Costs:** provide a break of costs by category to demonstrate where expenses were critical, which are Human Resources, etc., which might have become ongoing activities of staff (where costs may be less)

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Regular Council - Working Session meeting extend beyond 6:00 p.m.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Council voted in favour of the motion.

Members gave the following direction on Proposed Service Enhancements:

**Administration:**

Economic Development advertising and promotion: staff to review

Emergency Management – Planning: reduce by 50%

**Development Services:**

Security Patrols: Reduce

**Engineering Services:**

Animal sterilization: Approved

Legal Fees: provide more information

Manager civic Properties: approved with reduction

Street cleaning: Staff to review and provide more information

Command Trailer: Under review

Tool Replacement: Staff to provide more information

**General Government:**

Special Projects - Strategic Priority: Staff to review

**Human Resources:**

Leadership Training: Denied

Legal Fees: Staff to review

Two Positions for departmental goals: Reduce and report again

**Legislative Services:**

Committee Clerk: Approved

**Library:**

Deputy Chief: Review for a half time position

Consultants: Review

Strategic Plan: Approved up to \$25,000

**Parks and Recreation:**

150<sup>th</sup> Celebration Operating Budget: Delete as this is funded from Reserves

Active Community Initiative: Denied

Legal Fees: Combine all legal fees (and categorize)

Issues for additional consideration/reporting include: legal fees, consultants, creation/use of surplus through tax base increases, the tax rate increase relating to approved Service Enhancements, review existing vacancies.

Members agreed with the public consultation process and a presentation and opportunity for public to be heard on the budget on April 20, 2009.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Certified Correct,

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**WAYNE WRIGHT**  
**MAYOR**

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**RICHARD L. PAGE**  
**CORPORATE OFFICER**