

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Friday, November 23, 2023**

**Open to public attendance in Council Chamber, City Hall  
Committee members may attend electronically**

### **PRESENT**

|                          |                                                          |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Councillor Ruby Campbell | Chair                                                    |
| Jolene Foreman           | Sectoral Representative from Local Business<br>Community |
| Jorden Foss              | Sectoral Representative from Local Business<br>Community |
| Imran Gill*              | Sectoral Representative from Local Business<br>Community |
| Vera Kobalia             | Community Representative from Commercial Area            |
| Paul Romein*             | Sectoral Representative from Local Business<br>Community |
| Paige Strand*            | Community Representative from Commercial Area            |
| Catherine Williams       | Sectoral Representative from Local Business<br>Community |

### **REGRETS**

|                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Councillor Paul Minhas | Council Representative |
|------------------------|------------------------|

### **GUESTS**

|                   |                                                              |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Angelene Prakash* | Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement<br>Association |
| Gwen Maddock      | New Westminster Chamber of Commerce                          |

### **STAFF PRESENT**

|                  |                                                            |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jen Arbo         | Lead Economic Development Coordinator                      |
| Carolyn Armanini | Senior Planner, Economic Development                       |
| Brad Davie       | Deputy Fire Chief                                          |
| Blair Fryer      | Senior Manager, Communications and Economic<br>Development |
| Katie Stobbart   | Committee Clerk                                            |

\*Denotes electronic attendance

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Ruby Campbell opened the meeting at 9:04 a.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. She acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. She recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on. She also encouraged the Committee to read the City's "A Year of Truth" booklet and website.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS**

The Committee began with a round of introductions.

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**4.1 Minutes of March 3, 2023**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee Minutes of May 25, 2023 be adopted.

**Carried.**

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

**5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Procedural Note:** Item 5.1 was addressed following Item 5.2.

**5.1 Business License Bylaw Update**

Carolyn Armanini, Senior Planner, Economic Development, provided a presentation titled "Business License Bylaw Modernization".

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Armanini advised that staff do not know and will investigate whether Tempest, the system used for business licensing, allows for auto-renewal.

The Committee had the following comments:

- There need to be clear definitions around lobbying groups versus social-benefit not-for-profit organizations;

- Extended patios were one of the few good things to come out of the COVID-19 pandemic—they increase the livability of the neighbourhood; and
- The extension of patio hours to 11:00 p.m. does not seem to be an issue in other communities and the Committee would like to see that here.

## **5.2 Three Crises Response Pilot Program**

Brad Davie, Deputy Fire Chief, provided a presentation titled “Responding to the Homelessness, Mental Health, and Substance Use Crises: The City’s new Crises Response Team.”

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Davie advised:

- Most unsheltered people remain in the community where they have supports and networks from when they were housed;
- There is a communications strategy which includes not just getting feedback from the community but promoting understanding and removing stigma, encouraging the community to be part of the solution; and
- To ensure the City is communicating consistently, the Communications, Public Engagement, and Advocacy teams are providing assistance.

In response to a question from the Committee, Councillor Campbell advised that while every project is vulnerable to political change, she is hopeful that regardless of political alignment, people will be able to see the benefits of this work and continue supporting it.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

**Procedural Note:** Item 6.1 was addressed after Item 6.4.

### **6.1 Making New Westminster a Safe Place for 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Members**

Councillor Campbell advised that recently a community member delegated to Council regarding making New Westminster a safe community for 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and that she would like to discuss how the business community can be supportive of that goal. Councillor Campbell noted that Economic Development staff have organized a workshop and asked committee members if they thought it would be a good idea to receive the training first.

The Committee had the following comments:

- It is good to do the work internally before going out and asking others to do the same, so it is not performative, though many larger organizations are already conducting this kind of training through their own learning and development programs;
- Would like to see the new committee participate in the learning if they don't otherwise have access;
- Expressed concern around how the workshop participants would be kept safe during the training.

Staff provided clarification on the workshop, noting the following:

- It is part of the Economic Development division's recurring Business Education Series and will take place January 17<sup>th</sup> 2024 in the early evening, virtually;
- The training would be provided by TransFocus Consulting Inc. who specialize in training people to make their spaces more inclusive beyond just putting a Pride flag in the window;
- The facilitator is experienced and capable of keeping the session safe for all and managing any potential disruption;
- The workshop is open to all members of the local business community, including current EDAC members and the new Arts, Culture, and Economic Development Advisory Committee (ACEDAC) members (if appointed by the time promotion starts), to take the training if desired;
- The workshop will be promoted to the business community through the *Invest New West* newsletter and business stakeholder communications before being promoted publicly;
- Staff will ensure that current EDAC members are given the opportunity to sign up when the registration link is ready, and that if it is very popular a second session can be scheduled.

Committee members noted that there is an opportunity for the City to partner with the LGBT Chamber of Commerce, which registers businesses as safe spaces for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and have a map showing rainbow-registered businesses across Canada;

## **6.2 EDAC / ACEDAC Update**

Councillor Campbell summarized the upcoming changes to the committee structure to include a new Advisory Assembly as well as a new committee focusing on Arts, Culture, and Economic Development (ACEDAC), noting that Blair Fryer, Senior Manager, Economic Development, and Todd Ayotte, Manager, Community Arts and Theatre, will be the staff liaisons for the new ACEDAC.

### **6.3 Future Forward: An Economic Development Plan for New Westminster 2018-2023 – Review of Work Completed and Next Steps**

Jen Arbo, Lead Economic Development Coordinator, provided a presentation titled “Future Forward: An Economic Development Plan for New Westminster 2018-2023” that summarized the actions completed to date with the plan’s timeline coming to a close and outlined the high level plans to develop a new Economic Development Plan. She noted that there were outstanding items that were delayed as a result of the pandemic that staff would continue to work on these while a new plan was under development.

There were no questions or comments from the Committee.

### **6.4 Securing BC Business Fund, Small Business Rebate Program, Economic Driving Event Attraction – New Westminster Chamber of Commerce**

Gwen Maddock, New Westminster Chamber of Commerce, advised that a small business rebate program (backdated to January 2023) will be administered through the Chamber’s network. The Chamber would like the Committee to know that they are representing small businesses in the community and want to be greater advocates on communicating to businesses about this program.

In response to a question from the Committee, Ms. Maddock advised that repairs and prevention are eligible for the program as well as vandalism, and noted that in the event something does happen, the business does have to file a police report before applying.

## **7. REPORTS**

### **7.1 Standing Reports**

This item was not addressed.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

This is the final meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee; future meetings of the Arts, Culture, and Economic Development Advisory Committee are to be determined.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting ended at 11:10 a.m.