

**Utility Commission**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, May 9, 2023**

**Meeting held electronically and in Committee Room 2  
City Hall**

**PRESENT**

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Mayor Patrick Johnstone | Commissioner |
| Sally Bhullar-Gill      | Commissioner |
| Maya Chorobik           | Commissioner |
| Councillor Paul Minhas  | Commissioner |
| Lino Siracusa           | Commissioner |
| Lisa Spitale            | Commissioner |

**STAFF**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Ron Au         | Senior Financial Services Analyst      |
| Leya Behra     | Manager, Climate Action                |
| Rod Carle      | General Manager, Electrical Operations |
| Phil Kotyk     | Fibre Networks Operations Manager      |
| Katie Stobbart | Committee Clerk                        |

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

Lino Siracusa opened the meeting at 2:01 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

**2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the May 9, 2023 Utility Commission Agenda be adopted, addressing item 3 at the end of the open meeting.

**Carried.**

All Commissioners present voted in favour of the motion.

**Procedural Note:** Item 3 was addressed at the end of the open meeting. The minutes are recorded in numerical order.

**3. MOTION TO MOVE INTO CLOSED MEETING**

*MOVED and SECONDED*

*THAT the Utility Commission will now go into a meeting which is closed to the public in accordance with Section 90 of the Community Charter, on the basis that the subject matter for all agenda items relate to matters listed under sections:*

*(1)(a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee, or agent of the municipality or another person appointed by the municipality;*

*(1)(c) labour relations or other employee relations;*

*(1)(k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.*

**Carried.**

All Commissioners present voted in favour of the motion.

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

**4.1 Minutes of March 21, 2023**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the March 21, 2023 Utility Commission meeting be adopted.

**Carried.**

All Commissioners present voted in favour of the motion.

## 5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

### 5.1 **BC Building Code Updates: Energy Step Code and the new Zero Carbon Step Code**

Leya Behra, Manager, Climate Action, provided a presentation titled “BC Building Code Updates and Electric Utility Considerations.”

In response to questions from the Commission, Ms. Behra advised:

- The Province has done some cost studies related to following the Zero Carbon Step Code. Property value also can increase after making the recommended changes;
- The City has an incentive program called High Performance Homes through Energy Save New West;
- There are also municipal top-ups on existing incentive programs;
- Transportation emissions are calculated based on vehicle ownership within New Westminster; and
- The municipality is also looking at who the programs are not reaching.

The Commission had the following comments:

- Increasing the cost of new builds may present challenges in terms of building affordable housing, as developers are likely to pass that increased cost onto the eventual resident; and
- Would like to explore using Energy Save New West as a way of accelerating housing starts through the strategic plan.

In response to questions from staff, the Commission advised:

- Accelerated adoption of the Zero Carbon Step Code should be considered in parallel with the Energy Step Code to support the industry in getting ahead given the relatively quick timeline;
- Concerned about the cost impact to citizens;
- There is a need to discuss how the Zero Carbon Step Code fits with the Seven Bold Steps and the City’s goals; and
- Concerned about distribution, getting the energy where it needs to go.

The Commission is supportive in principle of the accelerated adoption of the Zero Carbon Step Code in parallel with the Energy Step Code. The Commission is supportive of the delivery of municipal conservation and demand management programs through Energy Save New West.

At an upcoming meeting the new Council strategic plan will be brought before the Commission, and the Climate Action team should be brought in following that discussion so there is workplan alignment.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

**6.1 Electrical Purchases & Sales Report (March 2023)**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Item 6.1 be adopted on Consent.

**Carried.**

All Commissioners present voted in favour of the motion.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

Items added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

**8. END OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 3:02 p.m.

**9. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

The next meeting is scheduled for June 20, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.