



FRASER VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING - BUDGET REVIEW
OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 26, 2019

5:00 pm

FVRD Boardroom, 45950 Cheam Avenue, Chilliwack, BC

Members Present:

Director Jason Lum, City of Chilliwack, Chair
Director Patricia Ross, City of Abbotsford, Vice Chair
Director Dennis Adamson, Electoral Area B
Director Pam Alexis, District of Mission
Director Wendy Bales, Electoral Area C
Director Henry Braun, City of Abbotsford
Director Kelly Chahal, City of Abbotsford (*arrived 5:25 p.m.*)
Director Hugh Davidson, Electoral Area F
Director Bill Dickey, Electoral Area D
Director Taryn Dixon, Electoral Area H
Director Orion Engar, Electoral Area E
Director Leo Facio, Village of Harrison Hot Springs
Director Brenda Falk, City of Abbotsford
Director Carol Hamilton, District of Mission
Director Chris Kloot, City of Chilliwack
Director Dave Loewen, City of Abbotsford
Director, Bud Mercer, City of Chilliwack
Director Ken Popove, City of Chilliwack
Director Sylvia Pranger, District of Kent
Director Terry Raymond, Electoral Area A
Director Peter Robb, District of Hope
Director Ross Siemens, City of Abbotsford
Director Al Stobbart, Electoral Area G:

Staff Present:

Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer
Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services
Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs
Tareq Islam, Director of Engineering & Community Services
Margaret-Ann Thornton, Director of Planning & Development
Jennifer Kinneman, Director of Corporate Affairs
Stacey Barker, Deputy Director of Regional Programs
Jaime Reilly, Manager of Corporate Administration

Kristy Hodson, Manager of Financial Operations
Christina Vugteveen, Manager of Parks
Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning
David Urban, Manager of Outdoor Recreation Planning
Jody Castle, Manager of Recreation, Culture & Airpark Services
Matthew Fang, Network Analyst IT
Maggie Mazurkewich, Executive Assistant to CAO
Chris Lee, Executive Assistant (Recording Secretary)

There was one member of the public present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lum called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA, ADDENDA AND LATE ITEMS

Moved By FACIO

Seconded by KLOOT

THAT the Agenda, Addenda and Late Items for the Committee of the Whole - Budget Review Meeting of February 26, 2019 be approved;

AND THAT all reports, correspondence set to the Agenda be received for information.

CARRIED

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1 2019-2023 Regional and Sub-Regional Services Draft Financial Plan

Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services provided a presentation, giving an overview of the proposed budgets for the regional and sub-regional services. He reported that staff met earlier with Electoral Area Directors on Electoral Area Specific Services and Electoral Area Wide Services. Staff also connected with respective Chief Financial Officers of member municipalities to review the budgets as part of the financial planning process.

Mr. Veenbaas reported that since 2012, there has been no general increase in tax funding and for the first time Staff are proposing a 3% increase for all regional services for 2019.

CAO Paul Gipps spoke to the reasons for the tax increase, citing the following cost drivers:

- Employee Health Tax – 2% benefits increase;
- Increased FOIPPA requests;
- Increasing expectations around Records Management;
- IT Infrastructure – security, redundancy, customer expectations;
- Increasing costs for administrative support function required for each service.

Regional Grant-in-Aid Program

Elizabeth's Wildlife Centre

Discussion ensued and the following points/comments were noted:

- In 2018 a \$5,000 regional grant-in-aid was provided to Elizabeth's Wildlife Centre, funded from all members except Abbotsford as they provide funding directly to the Centre;
- What is the process for consideration of regional grants-in-aid for non-profits?
- Suggestion to develop a matrix to provide guidelines as part of the regional grant-in-aid policy;
- Benefit of this facility to the community;
- Even though the Elizabeth Wildlife Centre is located in Abbotsford, they accept injured birds/animals from surrounding areas in the FVRD; and
- FVRD CARE Centre has benefitted from this service.

Discussion ensued resulting in the following motion:

Moved by ROSS
Seconded by KLOOT

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board authorize a regional grant in-aid in the amount of \$10,000 to the Elizabeth Wildlife Centre, to be funded by all members.

DEFEATED

Further discussion ensued, resulting in the following motion being brought forward:

Moved by ENGAR
Seconded by PRANGER

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board authorize a regional grant in-aid of \$5,000 to the Elizabeth Wildlife Centre for 2019, to be funded from all members except for Abbotsford.

CARRIED

Moved by PRANGER
Seconded by FACIO

THAT staff be directed to prepare a draft policy on a regional grant-in-aid for the Board's consideration.

CARRIED

WildSafeBC Program

- 2019 budget includes \$15,000 grant-in-aid for WildSafeBC Program; and
- Recommended that FVRD hold WildSafeBC accountable to set up minimum parameters for which to measure success.

Sub-Regional Parks (West)

Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs gave a presentation on the Sub-Regional Parks budget, providing background information and governance structure of this service. He reported that FVRD Directors from City of Abbotsford and Electoral Area G Director held an initial workshop with staff from both local governments in June 2018 to discuss the vision, opportunities and priorities for Glen Valley and Matsqui Trail Regional Parks and Sumas Mountain Regional Park.

Budget Considerations:

- Be fiscally prudent while achieving success;
- Jointly identify and prioritize capital improvements;
- Collectively determine desired park planning efforts;
- Explore park land acquisition opportunities

Four budget options were presented for the Board's (Abbotsford and Area G) consideration:

- Option 1: Taxation decrease - (1.2%)
- Option 2: Tax Neutrality - 0%
(transfer in surplus to offset costs)
- Option 3: Growth from Development - 3.25% increase
(to allow for land acquisition)
- Option 4: Taxation Increase - 6.25% increase

Discussion resulted in the following motion:

BRAUN/STOBBART

THAT staff be directed to include a 3.25% increase for the sub-regional parks budget as part of the 2019-2023 financial plan.

CARRIED

Regional Fire Dispatch

- 2019 will see the full financial impact of moving to a full service (E-Comm) for dispatch services for all fire departments located within the Fraser Valley Regional District.

Transit Services

- Agassiz-Harrison Transit - increased net operational costs with depletion of BC Transit fuel reserve;
- FVX – rising fare revenues offset transit operating contract increases

In response to the question on the possibility of applying growth to the FVX Transit budget without an increase to tax requisition, the following motion was brought forward:

Moved By LUM

Seconded by POPOVE

THAT staff be directed to increase the budget without a resulting increase to the tax requisition for the FVX Transit service budget as part of the 2019-2023 financial plan.

CARRIED

Regional Mosquito Control

- 2019 is the final year of the 6 year plan of annual increases in program budgets by approximately 15%; and
- Region significantly impacted by high water events, requiring significant mosquito control efforts, there is a need to restore program reserves.

Comments were provided as to the significance of the Mosquito Control Program and the consequences and concerns of not continuing with the Program, resulting in the following motion:

Moved by FALK
Seconded by POPOVE

THAT the FVRD Mosquito Control Program taxation requisition be increased by 15%;

AND FURTHER THAT the FVRD Mosquito Control Program be extended for a further 2 years.

CARRIED

Directors Bales and Raymond Opposed

Regional Air Quality Management

- Metro Vancouver is seeking an increase in compensation for its efforts as FVRD's service provider to operate and maintain FVRD's air quality monitoring stations;
- Would be very costly for the FVRD to change service providers or consider taking on this responsibility in-house; and
- Continuity of the agreement with Metro Vancouver will assure continuity, uniformity, compliance and high quality of monitoring operations and data management.

Regional Solid Waste Management

- Decrease in the amount of waste has resulted in the amount of tonnage levy generated to fund this program; and
- Staff had earlier brought forward options for the Board's consideration and will reengage on this topic in order to confirm the Board's direction on future program funding.

It was noted that the budgets for Recreation, Culture and Airpark Services are in draft format and will be presented to the Commission at the March 5, 2019 Commission meeting.

Mr. Veenbaas concluded that the financial plans for the regional and sub-regional services will be included in the five year financial plan bylaw to be considered at the March Board meeting.

Moved by FACIO
Seconded by ROSS

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct Staff to bring forward the regional and sub-regional service budgets, including feedback provided, as part of the 2019-2023 Financial Plan Bylaw that the Regional Board will consider at its March 2019 meeting.

CARRIED

3.2 Electoral Area Emergency Management Specialist

Mr. Veenbaas reported that at the Electoral Area Services Committee meeting of February 12, 2019, the Committee endorsed the motion of support for a new Emergency Management Specialist position to be funded from the Electoral Area Emergency Management service. This position will address the workload challenges faced in Electoral Area Emergency Management.

Moved by DICKEY
Seconded by ADAMSON

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board endorse the Electoral Area Services Committee motion of support for a new Emergency Management Specialist position starting in 2019 and that Staff be directed to begin the recruitment process.

CARRIED

4. ADDENDA/LATE ITEMS

No Items.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by FACIO

Seconded by ENGAR

THAT the Committee of the Whole - Budget Review Meeting of February 26, 2019 be adjourned.

CARRIED

The Committee of the Whole – Budget Review Meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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Director Jason Lum, Chair