MINUTES - JOINT CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY COUNCIL COMMITTEE

July 26, 2019, 9:03 A.M.
Joint Meeting with Victoria & Saanich Committees
Saanich Municipal Hall - Council Chambers - 770 Vernon Avenue

CITY OF VICTORIA:
PRESENT: Mayor Helps, Councillor Young, Councillor Potts, Councillor Alto

STAFF PRESENT: J. Jenkyns - City Manager, C. Havelka - Deputy City Clerk, M. Fedyczkowska – Legislation and Policy Analyst, B. Eisenhauer - Head of Engagement, P. Angelblazer - Committee Secretary

DISTRICT OF SAANICH:
PRESENT: Mayor Haynes, Councillor Brownoff, Councillor Chambers, Councillor Mersereau

STAFF PRESENT: P. Thorkelsson – Chief Administrative Officer, A. Bains – Manager, Legislative Services/Municipal Clerk, L. Merry – Senior Committee Clerk

A.   CALL TO ORDER

B.   APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved By Councillor Alto
Seconded By Councillor Potts

That the agenda be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D.   INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Committee remarks:

- *Expression of willingness to work together to facilitate the Citizens' Assembly*
- *General background*
- *Necessity for compromise*
- *Accessibility of the Assembly and its deliberations is key to a transparent and fair democratic process*

E.   NEW BUSINESS

E.1   Rules of Order

E.2 Discussion on Terms of Reference for Citizen's Assembly

3.0 Mandate

General Agreement:

- The mandate of the assembly shall be that of the ballot question which received voter assent in 2018.

3.1

Saanich:

- Outcome of discussion with the Ministry was that there is no explicit requirement for a yes or no recommendation from the assembly.
- Overt prescription on the question of amalgamation might limit or reduce focus on other potential service integration opportunities.

Victoria:

- Appreciation of original Saanich wording
- Importance that the proposed verbiage is included in the terms of reference

Recommended changes:

- **Use the original Saanich wording**

- **That the text "This Assembly will make fact-based, evidence-based and informed recommendations to the Councils in order to determine a path forward" will be discussed later in the meeting**

3.3

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.4

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.3 (Saanich) / 3.5 (Victoria)

General agreement:

- That consideration be taken to combine section 3.3, 3.4, and 3.18

3.4 (Saanich) / 3.6 (Victoria) / 3.7 (Victoria)

Saanich:

- Importance of protecting Saanich's unique agricultural heritage
- Updates to the Regional Growth Strategy would be left to the Council of an amalgamated municipality as opposed to being discussed by the Assembly

Victoria:

- Agreement with the importance of preserving local farms

Recommended change:

- **Saanich and Victoria will consider adding Urban Containment Boundary Strategy language to this document**

3.5 (Saanich) / 3.9 (Victoria) / 3.10 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike 3.9**

General agreement:

- Saanich will refer Victoria's proposed 3.10 to their respective Council

3.8 (Victoria) / 3.10 (Saanich)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.6 (Saanich) / 3.12 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.11 (Vic) / 3.11 (Saanich)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.7 (Saanich) / 3.13 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.8 (Saanich) / 3.15 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.14 (Victoria)

Victoria:

- Importance of ensuring that core principles of democratic representation and accessibility of elected officials remain untouched as a part of the Assembly's proceedings

General Agreement:

- Saanich will refer Victoria's proposed language to their respective Council.

3.9 (Saanich) / 3.16 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.12 (Saanich) / 3.17 (Victoria)

Victoria:

- Intent of the proposed change is to improve clarity of the document
- No disagreement with proposed Saanich wording
- Mandate as voted on by citizens does not explicitly include service integration

Saanich:

- Considered an aspect of the mandate
- Proposed language pre-empts the purpose of the Assembly to be amalgamation, and could impede study of service integration
- Recommendations should arise as part of the process of the assembly

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

3.13 (Saanich) / 3.18 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

General agreement:

- That consideration be taken to combine section 3.3, 3.4, and 3.18

3.14 (Saanich) / 3.18 (Victoria)

Saanich:

- Consistent with previous understanding
- Agreement with the general intent of the proposed changes

Victoria:

- Importance of ensuring that views outside of the majority and minority reports are considered as part of the final report.
- Concern that without an outlet, participants of the Assembly would express themselves outside of conventional channels

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike 'and community members'**

4.0

Saanich:

- Disagreement with the proposed wording
- Need for an unbiased, well-informed process that is able to make recommendations on topics outside amalgamation directly

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will adopt Saanich's proposed wording with an alteration**
- **Add the previously discussed language of "this Assembly will make fact-based, evidence-based, and informed recommendations to the Councils in order to determine a path forward"**

General Agreement:

- The proposed language will be referred to respective Councils

5.0 Schedule of the Citizens' Assembly

Recommended change:

- **That the number of days be amended to be 4-12**

7.2 Number of Members

Victoria:

- Best practices from previous Assemblies have limited the amount of participants at 50
- Difficulty of having 100 participants deliberate with Roberts' Rules
- Appreciation of Saanich's reasoning, but concern that the ratio of representatives should not be a dominating factor for the assembly size, but rather the functioning of the Assembly

Saanich:

- In order to properly represent the views of citizens, including special groups with targeted levels of participation, there needs to be a large number to ensure a meaningful sample size
- A number of 49 might be more appropriate for a smaller region such as Duncan or for topics such as the future of healthcare in Ontario
- Facilitators that would not be able to manage 100 person need not apply

General Agreement:

- That a middle number of 73 be referred to respective Councils for consideration

7.2.6

Victoria:

- Discussion on specific interest groups that have publically opted out of the process
- Discomfort with the current language due to the broad and uncertain nature of groups and individuals captured
- Impossibility of excluding participants based on past public commentary

Saanich:

- Discussion on what level of detail is needed to exclude participants
- Challenges with ongoing lobbying by interest groups
- Intention that members are open-minded, not empty-minded

Recommended change:

- **That applicants will be asked to indicate organization that they have participated in that they may perceive to give them a conflict in participating in this process**

7.3 Assembly Composition

General agreement:

- Consistent reference to census agreed upon, though will be referred to Council due to Victoria's disproportionately female population

7.4

Victoria:

- Importance of providing proper incentives for participants especially those who are low-income
- Honourarium ensures that self-selection is equal and consistent

Saanich:

- No need for an honourarium due to an already engaged populace

Recommended changes:

Saanich:

- **Should a participant wish to receive an honourarium, they may voluntarily declare it on their application**

Victoria**:**

- **Each municipality may follow their own honourarium policy**

Committees recessed at 10:47 a.m., and reconvened at 10:57 a.m.

7.5

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

8.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Citizens' Assembly Members

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

General agreement:

- Purpose and topics of the open house forums shall be decided at a later time

8.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Facilitator

General agreement:

- No conflict in language

8.2.3 / 8.2.4

On the advisory working group

Victoria:

- Concern with facilitator potentially having too much authority
- Need for oversight in the process
- Possibility of embedding the language in a request for proposals

Saanich:

- Concern that many experts in the field of amalgamation have public opinions on the topic and therefore could be perceived as biased
- Instead of a single facilitator, there could be a facilitation team

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

General agreement:

- Will be referred to respective Councils

Rest of sections

Victoria:

- Language being considered is appropriate
- Importance of ensuring that the ability to call a vote has a proportionate number of both Saanich and Victoria residents

Saanich:

- Some elements of Roberts Rules can be inserted in the terms of reference

Recommendation:

- **That the language may be kept in roles and responsibilities, and that it can also be added to section 2 under guided principles.**

General Agreement:

- Consideration of elements of Roberts Rules in the terms of reference
- Number of members for a vote to be determined at a later date
- Will be referred to respective Councils

8.2.9

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

8.3 (Saanich) / 8.4 (Victoria)

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike the proposed language**

8.3.2

Victoria:

- As there will be webcasts, there is no requirement to keep this language

General agreement:

- Will be referred to respective Councils

8.4 (Saanich) / 8.5 (Victoria)

Recommendation:

- **Keep Saanich wording**
- **Add to the end of first paragraph: "And will not comment publicly on the work of the Assembly while it is underway"**

General agreement:

- Will be referred to respective Councils

9.0 Decision Making of the Assembly

Victoria:

- Strong dissenters still need a space for their voice to be represented

Recommended change:

- **Victoria will strike proposed wording**
- **If consensus cannot be reached then a group of *X* members may ask the Facilitator to call an item to a vote"**

10.0 Process Concerns

Victoria:

- Should the process fail, there would need to be recourse to bring the matter forward to Council

Saanich:

- Disagreement with the use of a standing committee
- Agreement with the idea of a contingency
- Preference for deciding the terms of reference for the Assembly first, and then opening the matter

Recommended change:

- **That there be the possibility of an appeal for a review to a joint Council meeting of both Saanich and Victoria**

E.3   Next Meeting

General agreement:

- Both Councils will bring draft terms of reference back to their respective Councils near the middle of September for further discussion
- Pending the outcome of this discussion, if there is an agreed upon draft terms of reference it will be sent to the Province for discussion

F.   ADJOURNMENT

Moved By Councillor Alto
Seconded By Councillor Potts

That the meeting be adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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CITY CLERK   MAYOR