



MINUTES - VICTORIA CITY COUNCIL

December 12, 2024, 6:30 P.M.

Council Chambers, City Hall, 1 Centennial Square

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and Xwsepsum Nation

PRESENT: Mayor Alto in the Chair, Councillor Caradonna, Councillor Coleman

PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY: Councillor Dell, Councillor Gardiner, Councillor Hammond, Councillor Kim, Councillor Loughton, Councillor Thompson

STAFF PRESENT: J. Jenkyns - City Manager, T. Zworski - City Solicitor, C. Kingsley - City Clerk, D. Atkinson - Fire Chief, K. Hoese – Director of Planning & Development, W. Doyle - Acting Director, Engineering & Public Works, C. Mycroft - Manager, Intergovernmental and Media Relations, K. Stevenot – Senior Heritage Planner, A. Potvin – Acting Manager of Communications & Engagement, B. Roder – Deputy City Clerk, G. Diamond - Senior Legislative Coordinator

B. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Council acknowledged that the City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees First Nation and Xwsepsum First Nation communities and thanked them for the stewardship that the nations have undertaken for centuries, and paid homage to the current Chiefs and Chiefs past.

A. POETRY

Council received a poetry reading by Marie Metaphor Specht, Poet Laureate.

C. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

There were no late items.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved and Seconded:

That the agenda be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E. REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Moved and Seconded:

That the following speakers be permitted to address Council.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E.1 Brian Jacobsen: The Absurdities of the CoV Principal Resident Short Term Rental Application and Appeals Process (In-person, 5 minutes)

Outlined concerns related to his treatment during the Victoria short-term rental application process, and the challenges he faced to obtain his licence. He described the timeline of his application, and concerns about what he found in a Freedom of Information request.

E.2 Darryl Williams: An education on the miseducation on homeless solutions (In-person, 5 minutes)

Outlined concerns regarding the homeless situation and the closing of parks to sheltering and the impact this has had on the community. He shared concerns about bylaw officers seizing personal items, and the challenges he has faced finding suitable shelter for him and his son. He suggested that Council work with him and the community to help address the situation.

E.3 Kyam Sankeralli: Homeless, Tourism (In-person, 5 minutes)

The Chair noted that this speaker was not present to address Council.

E.4 Alison Clark: STR Principal Residence License Process (In-person, 5 minutes)

Outlined concerns related to the short-term rental application process, particularly when your licence is denied and you have to appeal. She suggested improvements to the appeal process including a more objective inspection process that is transparent and fair, and that a step should be added to allow input from the applicant before issuing the denial.

E.5 Alexa Stanley: Address unsatisfactory levels of operations within the City of Victoria, especially concerning Arts & Culture, Entertainment, and Small Business Initiatives. (In-person, 5 minutes)

Outlined a proposal for an alliance between the arts community and the City, and shared concerns that the Arts and Culture Master Plan vision does not necessarily align with the reality. She described initiatives in other jurisdictions, and the social and economic benefits of the Electronic Dance Music (EDM) scene.

E.6 Gabriel Bettey, Dubversified Culture: where can arts organizations reference information that will allow them to find secure and affordable spaces to operate as performing arts venues - where bylaw won't interrupt their operations? (In-person, 5 minutes)

Described how the artistic community depends on a healthy supply of venues, and how a healthy nightlife contributes to eyes on the street which can increase safety at night. He suggested that regulatory barriers be removed and how bylaw officers often shut down venues which were set up with significant investment from entrepreneurs.

E.7 Ian Case: Support for The Other Guise application to Council for support for establishing 716 Johnson as an arts and culture hub (In-person, 5 minutes)

Described how designated and affordable arts spaces are important for this city as they provide positive health and well-being benefits, and promote cultural diversity, and keep artists in Victoria. He described how the project would be permanent, and would provide decades of benefits.

E.8 Matthew Payne, The Other Guise Theatre Society: 716 Johnson St MCIE Grant request (In-person, 5 minutes)

Described the proposed performance spaces at the venue and the demand that exists for such arts spaces, and that this would be the only venue in the 100-150 seat range in the downtown. He also described the benefits and the opportunities which would open up for funding if Council approved the grant request, and the next steps for other funding opportunities that depend on this.

E.9 Niki Ottosen, Backpack project Victoria: Bylaw sweeps and how displacement is causing deaths in our community (In-person, 5 minutes)

Outlined concerns related to interactions between Bylaw and the homeless community, and shared how there are not enough shelter spaces in the City to accommodate those displaced from parks. She acknowledged recent deaths in the community and suggested Council do more to ensure important personal belongings are not seized.

F. PUBLIC AND STATUTORY HEARINGS

F.1 1885 Government Street: Heritage Designation Application No. 000209

F.1.a Public Hearing & Consideration of Approval

Kristal Stevenot (Heritage Planner): Advised that the application is to designate the exterior of the building located at 1885 Government Street, legally described as protected heritage property.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 7:40 p.m.

The Chair called a first and second time for members of the public wishing to speak on the proposed application.

Council recessed from 7:42 p.m. until 7:48 p.m. to provide an opportunity for members of the public to call to speak live.

No persons called in to speak to the proposed application.

The Chair called a third and final time for members of the public wishing to speak on the proposed application.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

Council discussed the following:

- *The importance of preserving heritage buildings around China Town*

Moved and Seconded:

That the following bylaw **be given third reading:**

1. Heritage Designation (1885 Government Street) Bylaw, No. 24-087

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

G. CLOSED MEETING, IF REQUIRED

Moved and Seconded:

MOTION TO CLOSE THE DECEMBER 12, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

That Council convene a closed meeting that excludes the public under Section 90 of the *Community Charter* for the reason that the following agenda items deal with matters specified in Sections 90(1) and/or (2) of the *Community Charter*, namely:

Section 90(1) A part of a council meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following:

Section 90(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 position appointed by the municipality;

Section 90(1)(f) law enforcement, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an enactment;

Section 90(1)(i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose; and

Section 90(2) A part of a council meeting must be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to one or more of the following:

Section 90(2)(b) the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Council meeting was closed to the public at 7:51 p.m.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Moved and Seconded:

That the Council Meeting be adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CITY CLERK

MAYOR