



## MINUTES - COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

December 4, 2025, 9:02 A.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, Councillor Dell, Councillor Gardiner, Councillor Hammond (*joined at 9:36 a.m.*), Councillor Kim

PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY: Councillor Loughton, Councillor Thompson

STAFF PRESENT: J. Jenkyns - City Manager, S. Thompson - Deputy City Manager / Chief Financial Officer, C. Kingsley - City Clerk, P. Rantucci - Director of Community Safety, Wellbeing and Partnership, K. Hoeser - Director of Planning and Development, A. Hudson - Assistant Director of Citywide Planning, D. Newman - Director of Parks and Recreation, C. Mycroft - Manager of Intergovernmental & Media Relations, A. Johnston - Assistant Director of Development Services, S. Webb - Assistant Director of Corporate Planning and Strategic Partnerships, B. Roder - Deputy City Clerk, S. Maichen - Legislative Coordinator

### **A. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Committee 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 generations they have spent stewarding these lands and the waters around them, noting for us to find a moment to say thanks.

### **B. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

*There were no late items.*

### **C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved and Seconded:

That the agenda be approved.

ABSENT (1): Councillor Hammond

**CARRIED (8 to 0)**

**D. CONSENT AGENDA**

*Committee requested the following items be removed from the Consent Agenda:*

- *G.2 - Towing, Immobilizing, and Storing Fees Update*
- *G.3 - Public Notice Bylaw*
- *I.1 - Council Member Motion: BC Rent Bank*

**E. PRESENTATIONS**

**E.1 Greater Victoria Public Library 2026 Budget**

Committee received a presentation from Maureen Sawa, Chief Executive Officer for the Greater Victoria Public Library, and Councillor Duncan Cavens, Vice-Chair of the Greater Victoria Public Library Board of Trustees, regarding the Greater Victoria Public Library's 2026 budget.

*Councillor Hammond joined the meeting at 9:36 a.m.*

*Committee discussed the following:*

- *Budgetary constraints with overhead costs*
- *Arts and culture aspect of libraries*
- *Operating hours of Greater Victoria libraries*

**F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**F.1 Council Member Motion: Halt Centennial Square Revitalization Project**

Committee received a Council Member Motion from Councillor Hammond, Councillor Gardiner, and Councillor Coleman dated October 30, 2025 requesting the halt of the Centennial Square Revitalization Project and reallocation of its grant funding.

Moved and Seconded:

1. That Council halt the Centennial Square Revitalization Project which was adopted by Council on July 18, 2024.
2. That Council direct staff to enquire into, and report back to Council, other uses for grant funding that has been pledged for the Centennial Square Revitalization Project. This may include improvements on Centennial Square. Further, none of the suggested uses can add to the City's 2026 budget or further debt.
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime council meeting of December 4, 2025, for consideration.

**Amendment:**

Moved and Seconded:

1. That Council halt the Centennial Square Revitalization Project which was adopted by Council on July 18, 2024.
2. That Council direct staff to **re-allocate the remaining \$2million allocated to the Centennial Square project from the Growing Communities Fund to the Crystal Pool project or to improvements at Royal Athletic Park, at the discretion of staff. ~~enquire into, and report back to Council, other uses for grant funding that has been pledged for the Centennial Square Revitalization Project. This may include improvements on Centennial Square. Further, none of the suggested uses can add to the City's 2026 budget or further debt.~~**
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime council meeting of December 4, 2025, for consideration.

**Amendment to the amendment:**

Moved and Seconded:

1. That Council halt the Centennial Square Revitalization Project which was adopted by Council on July 18, 2024.
2. That Council direct staff to **re-allocate the remaining \$2million allocated to the Centennial Square project from the Growing Communities Fund to the Crystal Pool project or to improvements at Royal Athletic Park, or other suitable projects downtown at the discretion of staff. ~~enquire into, and report back to Council, other uses for grant funding that has been pledged for the Centennial Square Revitalization Project. This may include improvements on Centennial Square. Further, none of the suggested uses can add to the City's 2026 budget or further debt.~~**
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime council meeting of December 4, 2025, for consideration.

OPPOSED (6): Mayor Alto, Councillor Hammond, Councillor Kim, Councillor Caradonna, Councillor Dell, Councillor Gardiner

**DEFEATED (3 to 6)**

**On the amendment:**

1. That Council halt the Centennial Square Revitalization Project which was adopted by Council on July 18, 2024.
2. That Council direct staff to **re-allocate the remaining \$2million allocated to the Centennial Square project from the Growing Communities Fund to the Crystal Pool project or to improvements at Royal Athletic Park, at the discretion of staff. ~~enquire into, and report back to Council, other uses for grant funding that has been pledged for the Centennial Square Revitalization Project. This may include improvements on Centennial Square. Further, none of the suggested uses can add to the City's 2026 budget or further debt.~~**
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime council meeting of December 4, 2025, for consideration.

OPPOSED (1): Councillor Caradonna

**CARRIED (8 to 1)**

**On the main motion as amended:**

1. That Council halt the Centennial Square Revitalization Project which was adopted by Council on July 18, 2024.
2. That Council direct staff to re-allocate the remaining \$2million allocated to the Centennial Square project from the Growing Communities Fund to the Crystal Pool project or to improvements at Royal Athletic Park, at the discretion of staff.
3. That this motion be forwarded to the daytime council meeting of December 4, 2025, for consideration.

OPPOSED (1): Councillor Caradonna

**CARRIED (8 to 1)**

*Council recessed at 11:10 a.m. and reconvened at 11:23 a.m.*

## **G. STAFF REPORTS**

### **G.1 Staff Delegation of Liquor License Referrals**

Committee received a report dated October 3, 2025 from the City Clerk regarding an opportunity to reduce wait time for businesses seeking Provincial liquor license referrals by delegating local government recommendations to staff.

*Committee discussed the following:*

- *Amount of liquor license applications handled by Council in their current term*
- *Appeal process and relevant legislation*
- *How the City would handle recommended declines if Council delegated authority*

Moved and Seconded:

That Council delegate “low impact” liquor license referrals to staff, excluding recommended declines.

**Amendment:**

Moved:

That Council delegate **all “low impact”** liquor license referrals to staff, excluding recommended declines.

*The Chair ruled the amendment out of order on the grounds that it was contrary to the main motion.*

Council recessed at 12:03 p.m. and reconvened at 1:05 p.m.

**On the main motion:**

That Council delegate “low impact” liquor license referrals to staff, excluding recommended declines.

OPPOSED (5): Councillor Dell, Councillor Gardiner, Councillor Hammond, Councillor Loughton, Councillor Thompson

**DEFEATED (4 to 5)**

Moved and Seconded:

That Council direct staff to prepare the necessary bylaw amendments to delegate to staff the authority to provide local government recommendations for Provincial liquor license referrals, excluding recommendations to decline.

OPPOSED (2) Councillor Coleman, Councillor Gardiner

**CARRIED (7 to 2)**

**G.2 Towing, Immobilizing, and Storing Fees Update**

Committee received a report dated October 29, 2025 from the City Clerk seeking Council direction to amend the *Towing and Immobilizing Companies Bylaw* to increase the maximum fee for towing, immobilizing, and storing vehicles to support the economic viability of applicable businesses.

Moved and Seconded:

That Council directs staff to amend Schedule A of the Towing and Immobilizing Companies Bylaw to align with the BC Lien on Impounded Motor Vehicle Regulation.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**G.3 Public Notice Bylaw**

Committee received a report dated November 12, 2025 from the City Clerk seeking Council direction to provide public notice by alternative methods other than the local newspaper to meet statutory requirements.

*Committee discussed the following:*

- *Opportunities for public input*
- *Cost of current public notification method*

Moved and Seconded:

That Council direct staff to bring forward a public notice bylaw to permit the City to fulfill statutory public notice requirements through alternative methods.

**Motion to postpone:**

Moved:

That Council postpone consideration of this matter until receipt of the data regarding Times Colonist circulation.

*The motion failed due to no seconder.*

**On the main motion:**

That Council direct staff to bring forward a public notice bylaw to permit the City to fulfill statutory public notice requirements through alternative methods.

OPPOSED (1): Councillor Gardiner

**CARRIED (8 to 1)**

**I. NEW BUSINESS**

**I.1 Council Member Motion: BC Rent Bank**

Committee received a Council Member Motion dated November 20, 2025 from Councillor Loughton and Councillor Thompson regarding provincial funding for the B.C. Rent Bank, whose current agreement ends in spring 2026.

Moved and Seconded:

That Council request that the Mayor write to the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and the Minister of Finance (cc UBCM, CRD, and other municipalities in the region encouraging them to join our advocacy efforts) to highlight the importance of the B.C. Rent Bank as a cost-effective homelessness-prevention tool, and ask that the provincial government commit to stable, multi-year funding to the BC Rent Bank to ensure its continued operation.

**Amendment:**

Moved and Seconded:

That Council request that the Mayor write to the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and the Minister of Finance (cc UBCM, CRD, and other municipalities in the region encouraging them to join our advocacy efforts) to highlight the importance of the B.C. Rent Bank as a cost-effective homelessness-prevention tool, and ask that the provincial government commit to stable, multi-year funding to the BC Rent Bank to ensure its continued operation **including additional funding for grants and rent supplements administered through the program.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Amendment:**

Moved and Seconded:

That Council request that the Mayor write to the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and the Minister of Finance (cc UBCM, CRD, and other municipalities in the region encouraging them to join our advocacy efforts) to highlight the importance of the B.C. Rent Bank as a cost-effective homelessness-prevention tool, and ask that the provincial government commit to stable, multi-year funding to the BC Rent Bank to ensure its continued operation including additional funding for grants and rent supplements administered through the program.

**And that the Mayor send copies of the letters to the Prime Minister, Federal Minister of Housing, and Federation of Canadian Municipalities.**

**Amendment to the amendment:**

Moved and Seconded:

That Council request that the Mayor write to the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and the Minister of Finance (cc UBCM, CRD, and other municipalities in the region encouraging them to join our advocacy efforts) to highlight the importance of the B.C. Rent Bank as a cost-effective homelessness-prevention tool, and ask that the provincial government commit to stable, multi-year funding to the BC Rent Bank to ensure its continued operation including additional funding for grants and rent supplements administered through the program.

**And that the Mayor send copies of the letters to the Prime Minister, Federal Minister of Housing, and Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the office of the Federal Housing Advocate.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**On the amendment as amended:**

That Council request that the Mayor write to the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and the Minister of Finance (cc UBCM, CRD, and other municipalities in the region encouraging them to join our advocacy efforts) to highlight the importance of the B.C. Rent Bank as a cost-effective homelessness-prevention tool, and ask that the provincial government commit to stable, multi-year funding to the BC Rent Bank to ensure its continued operation including additional funding for grants and rent supplements administered through the program.

**And that the Mayor send copies of the letters to the Prime Minister, Federal Minister of Housing, and Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the office of the Federal Housing Advocate.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**On the main motion as amended:**

That Council request that the Mayor write to the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and the Minister of Finance (cc UBCM, CRD, and other municipalities in the region encouraging them to join our advocacy efforts) to highlight the importance of the B.C. Rent Bank as a cost-effective homelessness-prevention tool, and ask that the provincial government commit to stable, multi-year funding to the BC Rent Bank to ensure its continued operation including additional funding for grants and rent supplements administered through the program.

And that the Mayor send copies of the letters to the Prime Minister, Federal Minister of Housing, and Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the office of the Federal Housing Advocate.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**I.2 Council Member Motion: Council Travel Expenses and Stipend/Honoraria Payments**

Committee received a Council Member Motion dated November 26, 2025 from Councillor Gardiner regarding limiting Councillor travel and conference reimbursements and redirecting external stipends into a Council Fund for Council-determined uses.

Moved and Seconded:

1. Reimbursement of Councillor expenditures be limited to duties directly aligned with Council responsibilities, such as Council endorsed external appointments, attendance at AVICC, UBCM, and FCM, or other Council endorsed travel related to Council or City obligations.
2. Reimbursement for attendance or participation at only one of AICC, UBCM, or FCM conferences each year for each Councillor.
3. The creation and use of a "Council Fund" to which Per-diems or stipends paid to Councillors (except for CRD Per-diems or stipends), are placed. Use of which is determined by Council on an annual basis, at calendar year end.
4. This motion be forwarded to the daytime Council meeting of December 4th, 2025, for consideration.

**Motion to call the question on the matter:**

Moved and Seconded:

That the previous question be called.

OPPOSED (3): Mayor Alto, Councillor Coleman, Councillor Gardiner

**CARRIED (6 to 3)**

*Council requested that each part of the motion be considered separately.*

**On number one:**

1. Reimbursement of Councillor expenditures be limited to duties directly aligned with Council responsibilities, such as Council endorsed external appointments, attendance at AVICC, UBCM, and FCM, or other Council endorsed travel related to Council or City obligations.

OPPOSED (4): Councillor Dell, Councillor Caradonna, Councillor Loughton, Councillor Thompson

**CARRIED (5 to 4)**

**On number two:**

2. Reimbursement for attendance or participation at only one of AICC, UBCM, or FCM conferences each year for each Councillor.

OPPOSED (7): Mayor Alto, Councillor Caradonna, Councillor Coleman, Councillor Dell, Councillor Kim, Councillor Loughton, Councillor Thompson

**DEFEATED (2 to 7)**

**On number three:**

3. The creation and use of a “Council Fund” to which Per-diems or stipends paid to Councillors (except for CRD Per-diems or stipends), are placed. Use of which is determined by Council on an annual basis, at calendar year end.

OPPOSED (6): Mayor Alto, Councillor Caradonna, Councillor Coleman, Councillor Dell, Councillor Kim, Councillor Loughton

**DEFEATED (3 to 6)**

**On number four:**

4. This motion be forwarded to the daytime Council meeting of December 4th, 2025, for consideration.

*The Chair ruled this portion of the motion out of order due to the lack of time sensitivity.*

**I.3 Council Member Motion: Permit Fees**

Committee received a report dated November 27, 2025 from Mayor Alto regarding the suspension of permit fees such as building and inspection, plumbing, rezoning and development permits and the drawing of funds from the City’s Development Stabilization Reserve to pay for City costs.

*Committee discussed the following:*

- *Correlation of the suspension of permit fees with the Development Stabilization Reserve Fund*
- *Administrative cost of providing permit fees*

- *Typical cost of an application fee*
- *Potential high volume of applications if Council approves the recommendation*

Moved and Seconded:

That Council direct staff to bring forward bylaw(s) to suspend, for 12 months following adoption of the relevant bylaw(s), City of Victoria fees arising from permits such as building and inspection, plumbing, rezoning and development permits, and draw funds from the City's Development Stabilization Reserve to pay for City costs related to development regulations, and that the bylaw amendments include a 'sunset' clause to ensure its application concludes and is repealed 12 months after adoption of the relevant bylaws.

OPPOSED (1): Councillor Kim

**CARRIED (8 to 1)**

**I.4 Council Member Motion: Proceeding with the Revised Centennial Square Revitalization Project**

*The Chair ruled this item out of order due to it no longer being relevant given the decision made on the unfinished business item.*

**J. CLOSED MEETING, IF REQUIRED**

*A closed meeting was not required.*

**K. ADJOURNMENT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Moved and Seconded:

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR