



## MINUTES – INAUGURAL MEETING OF VICTORIA CITY COUNCIL

November 1, 2018, 10:00 A.M.

Council Chambers, City Hall, 1 Centennial Square

Located on the traditional territory of the Esquimalt and Songhees People

PRESENT: Mayor Helps in the Chair, Councillor Alto, Councillor Collins, Councillor Dubow, Councillor Isitt, Councillor Loveday, Councillor Potts, Councillor Thornton-Joe, Councillor Young

STAFF PRESENT: J. Jenkyns - City Manager, C. Coates - City Clerk, P. Bruce - Fire Chief, T. Zworski - City Solicitor, S. Thompson - Director of Finance, F. Work - Director of Engineering & Public Works, T. Soulliere - Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities, B. Eisenhauer - Head of Engagement, C. Havelka - Deputy City Clerk, A. Meyer - Assistant Director of Development Services, A. Hudson - Assistant Director of Community Planning, C. Mycroft - Manager of Executive Operations, P. Martin - Council Secretary

**B. FIRST NATIONS BLESSING**

On the invitation of the Mayor-Elect, Lisa Helps, Songhees Nation Councillor Garry Sam gave a blessing for the Inaugural Meeting of the Victoria City Council.

**C. POETRY READING**

City of Victoria Poet Laureate, Yvonne Blomer, read a poem titled "How to live in history", in honour of the Inaugural Meeting of the Victoria City Council.

**E. OATH OF OFFICE**

The Honourable Regional Administrative Judge Carmen Rogers administered the Oath of Office to Lisa Helps, Marianne Alto, Laurel Collins, Sharmarke Dubow, Ben Isitt, Jeremy Loveday, Sarah Potts, Charlayne Thornton-Joe, and Geoffrey Young who each swore or affirmed the Oath of Office before the Judge as required under the provisions of the *Local Government Act*. In addition, Charlayne Thornton-Joe and Geoffrey Young took the Oath of Allegiance.

**F. INVOCATION**

On the invitation of the City of Victoria, the Very Reverend Ansley Tucker gave the invocation for the Inaugural Meeting of Victoria City Council.

**G. INAUGURAL ADDRESS - Mayor Lisa Helps**

I want to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered this morning on the homelands of the Songhees and the Esquimalt Nations and I want to thank Councillor Gary Sam for the Blessing. And I want to thank the Lekwungen singers and dancers for drumming us and singing us into the Chambers this morning. This blessing by the Councillor and the dancing and drumming and singing is evidence of the work of reconciliation that we've been doing over the past four years, and that we'll continue to do for the next four years. Reconciliation is hard work, and it's real work and it manifests in welcoming our friends

from the Songhees into the Chambers this morning because we are *always already on their land*. I'd also like to thank the outgoing Poet Laureate Yvonne Blomer for taking my challenge and writing a poem for us for today; I appreciate that. And Dean Ansley Tucker thank you also for very very inspiring words about the importance of hope, faith and love, and indeed in my remarks this morning some of that will actually be reflected.

On the first day of orientation – so we've all been together informally for the last three days, learning about what it means to run a city, what it means to govern – and on the first day of orientation I had some time alone with Council, which I requested, and the first time we sat together I asked the Council, Councillors, each of them, what do you love about the City of Victoria? And we all love what you all love about the City of Victoria. We love the people who live here, and how the people here are dedicated to making the community better. We love the natural environment. We love our great little neighbourhood streets, and we want to keep them that way. We love our small town becoming a small city. We love our small businesses. We love that our city is human scale, and that it's easy to get around. We love downtown and we love Chinatown. We love that this is a place where so many people want to call home. And we love the potential. Our job, as a Council, working alongside all of you here today, and alongside those who have never set foot into City Hall, and everyone in between, is to nurture and steward all of these things that we love, at the same time as the city grows and changes.

So that was the introduction, the reminder of my address will be in three parts. The first part is what we will do, the second part is why we will do what we do, and the third part, and really what is most important to me, is how we will do what we do.

There are four key things that we need to do and we all heard this very loud and clear when we were out knocking on doors and listening in the community. The first is to tackle affordability in a meaningful way. We are, as we all heard and we all know, in the midst of an affordability crisis which means this is an opportunity, and indeed a mandate, to act. There are three main approaches to affordability that we'll take. The first is housing on all fronts. You will see bold ideas rolling out from this fine group of people behind me and I'd encourage you to question these ideas to make them better and stronger. Ideas like buying land for housing, larger garden suites, movable tiny homes, inclusionary housing policy, creative partnerships with other levels of government and other entities, doing more with the land we already have, co-ops, community land trusts and more. But secondly, affordability is more than just housing. Affordability means things like affordable childcare for workers and families and that's something you're going to see us working on. And affordability also means making transportation more affordable. And the thing that I love, and I think most of Council, or probably all of Council, would agree with is that transit, walking, and cycling are not only low cost, they are also low carbon. The third approach to affordability is making sure that taxes and fees are affordable so that we're not asking our residents and our businesses to live beyond their means.

The second big challenge that we have as city, province, country and indeed as a globe, is climate change. Probably many of you in this room read the IPCC – the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – report when it came out midway through the election campaign, and it was a very stark warning to all of us and hopefully a motivational document, not just a warning, that we basically have twelve years as a human society to keep the temperature of the planet from not rising more than 1.5 degrees. And this, as I said, is a serious warning and a wakeup call. So what does this

have to do with Victoria? Cities around the world have a key role to play in terms of addressing climate change and cities contribute fully seventy percent of all greenhouse gas emissions on the planet. Cities around the world are leading and Victoria must lead too. In our city, fifty percent of carbon emissions come from buildings, forty percent comes from transportation, and ten percent comes from waste. So like affordability, we must act boldly. One of the things I'd encourage you to do is to read the City's Climate Leadership Plan. Please read it and please join us. One percent of emissions in the city comes from the City's operations. Ninety-nine percent come from the community. And so in order for us to truly succeed we need your leadership. One of the things I would like to roll out in the new year is a Climate Ambassador Program, where we, you, select one child, one youth, one adult, and one elder from each neighbourhood and they become the neighbourhood Climate Ambassadors, to lead and inspire change on their own streets, schools, and workplaces. And there's a real opportunity globally – we're working with the City of Heidelberg in Germany – to potentially co-create a conference in Heidelberg in May 2019 on climate neighbourhoods. And again, we love our neighbourhoods, our neighbourhoods are the structure of this city and I think if we come together as neighbourhoods with this Climate Ambassador program we are really poised to lead. And with our human scale, compact city with people who care profoundly about the climate and climate justice, we know that now is the time to act.

The number three challenge and opportunity for us here and all of you is to ensure continued prosperity, inclusion, and wellbeing. We are so lucky in Victoria to have such a strong small business community, it is amazing. And the thing about businesses in Victoria that I love is business and community are two sides of the same coin. There's nothing that divides us. And so we need to build on our current economic strength on our current prosperity, and at the same time as making sure that there is room in the economy for everyone. And this is why in the past term, and hopefully in this term, the City will continue to play a leadership role in the creation of the Vancouver Island Community Benefit Hub, which really focuses on economic inclusion for marginalized people, as well as why the City will continue to play a role in the South Island Prosperity Project which we were a founding member of in 2016. And it's a key reason why the city needs a long-term jobs plan. When we got the five year report on the Official Community Plan from 2012 – 2017 we saw only a 2% increase in jobs, about 1100 jobs. Whereas by 2041 we need to create 10,000 new jobs that will be household sustaining jobs and so that's one of the things we will be working on in this term. We have also heard from the business community that transportation and affordable housing are their key issues. So if we take care of the first two that I listed, we are also serving the business community and serving the community.

The fourth thing that we need to work on because we have a mandate from you, is a Citizen's Assembly. People in Victoria and Saanich voted yes to exploring the potential – lots of exploring, lots of potential – of the amalgamation of the District of Saanich and the City of Victoria and that's going to be the interesting process for all of us. The Citizen's Assembly will be a randomly selected group of citizens who will work independently and come together to make a recommendation to their councils.

So very broadly, that is part of the what that we will be doing in the next four years.

But why? Why will we do these things? Interestingly, *because this is the very purpose of local government*. Our City Solicitor Tom Zworski read a section of the Community Charter to us, as solicitors do, in our orientation session. He read Section 7 and I'm just

going to quote from one portion of it: “The purposes of a municipality include,” and there are four - I’m just going to read one, “Fostering the economic social and environmental wellbeing of its community.” So our very purpose is to ensure that through everything we do, we’re enhancing community wellbeing. That’s our job. And so, one of the key commitments this term is not only working to enhance wellbeing but also measuring. How are we doing? Are the actions that we are taking actually increasing individual and collective wellbeing? Now, thankfully we don’t have to invent any measuring tools. The economists and others have been putting their minds to this; for a long time, the only way to measure progress was through measuring the economy. If the economy is doing well, everybody must be doing well. Well, we know that this is not true and so our commitment this term is to measuring wellbeing and ensuring we are making investments through the city’s budget that are actually going to increase peoples wellbeing and connections with each other and with this place.

So that’s the what, and that’s the why but most importantly is how, and the how is most important because if we get this wrong we are going to fail miserably at all of the important work that I already outlined that we need to do.

So how are we going to do this work? There are four things, four ways. The first is to develop with you and the wider you, who are at work or school or not here today, a four year strategic plan just as we did last time that will clearly outline what you can expect from your Council in the next four years and what we’ll do this term. What I think we probably learned from last term, what we could have done last term (that’s why we have more terms so we can do more things) is to outline very clearly in the plan from its inception, what kind of engagement we’re going to be doing on which topic and how and when and why. And so Council already on Tuesday will be digging into the creation of our four year strategic plan, we’ll roll up our sleeves, we’ll work very hard to see if we can get it right and then in December and January there’s an opportunity for all of you to weigh in to share with us your thoughts and ideas because it’s really important that we get this plan right.

So that’s the first how and there’s an invitation there for you to join us. Second important how, is really cultivating a sense that we are all in this together. That City Hall and the community have the same interest: to make life better for all of us in the community. And the we – who is this we all in this together? Council, staff residents, business owners, immigrants, refugees, visitors, all of us. And from our point of view here at City Hall, what we need to do, and again this is a lesson learned from last term – we need to look *first* from the perspective of the community and *then* from the perspective from City Hall. And we need to value the expertise of our staff – and we have fantastic staff here; I was reminded of this as they all made their presentations to the new council, we have fantastic staff here with a wealth of expertise. We need to value the expertise of staff alongside the expertise that people have from living on Linden street or living in Burnside Gorge or running a business on Wharf Street. When we co-value this expertise, it allows us to co-develop and co-create the city based on shared expertise.

The third how and I think probably you’ll all agree, this is one of the most important ones, is that we really need to restore civility and decorum to public dialogue. And I don’t just mean in election campaigns I mean always. I mean every day. I mean when Council comes out with what might seem like a wacky idea or one of your neighbours says something that you think, “Really?”, that we first always respond with curiosity and generosity. That we give each other, that we give Council, that *we give new ideas* the

benefit of the doubt. That we assume the best of intention and that we show up to a consultation or an engagement session without our minds made up. And that means all of us [gesturing to Council], as well not only all of you. Because if we cannot do this as a society – and this is not just Victoria, this is around the world – if we cannot do this as a society, we are not going to be able to solve the biggest problems that we have.

Now thankfully you elected an amazing Council and we are already working in this way together. I have to admit I was surprised and delighted that in three short sessions together, we have come up with a Declaration of Principles and Values about how we're going to work with each other and how we're going to work with you and even though it hasn't been officially approved because we haven't been official until just a few minutes ago, Council has given me permission to share this with you this morning. And I'd like to just stress to you that this document was arrived at through dialogue, deliberation and indeed by consensus.

### So the Victoria City Council 2018 – 2022 Declaration of Principles and Values

In order to create a culture of deep respect, to build the relationships we need to do the work, and to aspire to be our highest selves even when it feels hard and when difficult decisions could stand to divide us, we are committed to:

1. Governing with **integrity, transparency** and an unwavering dedication to **public service**.
2. Welcoming **diversity** and fostering a spirit of **inclusion** and **equity** in everything we do.
3. **Leading with creativity** and
4. **Deep listening** and **critical thinking**.
5. Assuming that everyone is here with **good intention** to make the community better.
6. Nurturing a culture of **continuous learning** with each other, staff and the public.
7. Working **collaboratively** and **cooperatively** with each other, staff and the public while welcoming a **diversity of opinion and thought**.
8. Practicing **generosity, curiosity** and **compassion**.
9. Being **patient, kind** and **caring**.
10. Bringing a spirit of **open-mindedness** and **open-heartedness** to all of our work.
11. Keeping a **sense of humour** and **light-heartedness** with each other.
12. Reviewing these principles once a quarter with the same **humility, honesty** and **candour** with which we govern.

So that's our commitment to each other and that's our commitment to you and I can't tell you how wonderful it feels to stand in front of a group of people who in a very short time has agreed to this way of working together.

In closing, what do we require from you? We require the benefit of the doubt. We require powerful questions and generous challenges to the ideas we bring forward. But most of all we require that you continue to be the people of Victoria that we identified at the outset that we love so much: passionate, committed and dedicated to making this place on earth that we all love, better ... together ... every day.

Thank you so much.

**H. APPOINTMENTS**

**Moved By** Councillor Thornton-Joe  
**Seconded By** Councillor Collins

That Council appoint the following Council members to the position of Municipal Directors and Alternate Municipal Directors to the Capital Regional District Board and the Capital Regional District Hospital Board for a four year term:

1. Mayor Helps
2. Councillor Isitt
3. Councillor Loveday
4. Councillor Young
5. Councillor Collins (1st Alternate)
6. Councillor Alto (2nd Alternate)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved By** Councillor Alto  
**Seconded By** Councillor Dubow

That the Council Meeting adjourn.  
Time: 11:12 a.m.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR