



# DISTRICT OF MISSION

## MAYOR PAM ALEXIS - INAUGURAL ADDRESS

CLARKE THEATRE, HERITAGE PARK CENTRE  
NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Good afternoon. Welcome all Dignitaries, Freeman, Friends, and Family!

Thank you so much for participating in today's Inaugural Council Meeting. In particular, I would like to thank:

- Johnny Williams, Sq'ewlets First Nation Councillor and aboriginal cultural worker with the Mission Public Schools for the welcome song;
- Barry Johnston, who kindly served as our piper;
- both Kulwant Singh, Head Priest of the Gur Sikh Society and Andy Kwak, the Chaplain for the Mission Fire Rescue Service, for their prayers;
- Howie Price and Colin White of the Mission Fire Rescue Service Honour Guard and Sergeant Rob Wheeler and Constable Eric Noel of the Mission RCMP detachment; and
- Jack Ethier for the singing of O Canada.

On behalf of the entire community, thank you to everyone who put their names forward as candidates in the municipal election. It takes great courage to do so.

Congratulations to those who were successful at winning a seat on the School Board and on Council. I look forward to working with everyone!

At this time, I would like to say a special thank you to members of the outgoing council.

Randy Hawes, who served as Mayor, thank you for your leadership. You have served Mission in various capacities for many, many years. We are grateful for your dedication to the community.

Jim Hinds, who served on Council, thank you for your service to our community. We will miss your passion for Mission's history at the Council table.

Rhett Nicholson, who served on Council and did not seek re-election, thank you for always bringing a youthful perspective to the Council table. We wish you every success with the family business.

And, finally, Jenny Stevens, who served 19 years on Council, thank you for your outstanding commitment to this community. We will miss that impeccable memory of yours as well as your long term vision for Mission's future. Enjoy your retirement on the island with your family.

The past four years were very productive. The outgoing Council has much to be proud of.

Over the past term, Council oversaw the addition of an artificial turf field, a new skate park, major improvements to the downtown core, an investment in new infrastructure in our parks, the renewal of our Official Community Plan, a Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, and hired 6 new RCMP officers and several firemen as we moved to 24-seven staffing at Firehall number one.

There are numerous other initiatives underway. We are still working on a new homeless shelter and a seniors housing complex that will include a seniors centre. I look forward to advancing these with the new Council and our partners in the community. Stay tuned!

We have met informally as a new Council but, as yet, have not had a chance to formalize our strategic objectives. We have agreed, however, that the focus of the next four years will include the following:

- That we need to continue to improve how we connect with our community. We will start with new meeting times in 2019 so that more people can join us in the Council Chambers and will continue to enhance communications and engagement to be more inclusive.
- That we are open for business and recognize we need to improve our processes in many areas and, in order to achieve this, we will be looking for feedback from our clients.
- That people matter. We know that growth is inevitable; however, we will need to ensure that our sense of community is intact and that growth benefits the community and builds, not detracts, from our neighbourhoods. Through growth we must be especially mindful of our more vulnerable citizens and our youth.
- That a vision for the future is essential. In order to achieve this, we will form a Vision 150 team that will determine what we will need to set as goals for moving Mission into the future.
- And, finally, that all relationships matter and we look forward to working respectfully with all of our partner groups.

Mission is a caring, inclusive community. We have been leaders historically in being the first to elect an Indo Canadian Mayor in 1954. Mission's first female alderman was elected in 1957 for the newly-incorporated Town of Mission City, and in 1960 she was

elected Mayor. And Mission was the first community in BC to elect a Mayor from Kenya in 2005.

We do have important work ahead in delivering on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – and we are committed to that work.

It is fitting that the hən̓q̓əmiṇəm (Hen-ké-ménem) name provided for the Stave West Forest and Recreation Area by Elders and Council for the Kwantlen Nation means “Everyone shares here”.

The 2018 election produced another first for Mission. The Indo Canadian community is now represented by two Councillors. Welcome Councillor Jag Gill and Councillor Ken Herar whose leadership will ensure a strong voice at the table for their community.

You have also elected Councillor Cal Crawford, a long-time community volunteer. We look forward to his guidance.

Newcomer Councillor Mark Davies will bring a freshness to the table and a voice from the young family perspective.

Your new Council also includes Councillor Danny Plecas and Councillor Carol Hamilton who are seasoned elected representatives who bring continuity to the table to ensure that the good work underway will be seen to completion.

I am the third female (and first of Greek descent) Mayor to be elected. I am very proud to represent the women in the community and want to serve as a role model for women in the future who are seeking leadership positions in every sector. Along with Councillor Hamilton, we will introduce the Minerva Foundation to our community to provide programs that support balanced leadership.

It has taken extraordinary courage to get to where I am today and I need to recognize the strength of all the women in my life who have been role models, including my mother, my sisters, and my daughter, and Heather Stewart, and all the former female Councillors who came before me.

We are all passionate about the success of our community. I want to be visible in the community. I want to talk with you. And I want to walk with you. I had so much fun throughout the campaign walking Mission that I would like to begin a program called *Take a Walk with the Mayor*. We will be walking in different neighbourhoods which will complement the existing walking programs offered through Parks, Recreation and Culture.

It is now my pleasure to share with you the committee appointments. This is not likely the complete list as others will be added once we get started.

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