

Minutes of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the **DISTRICT OF MISSION COUNCIL** held in the Conference Room of the Municipal Hall, 8645 Stave Lake Street, Mission, British Columbia, on February 11, 2009 commencing at 3:30 p.m.

Council Members Present: Mayor James Atebe  
Councillor Terry Gidda  
Councillor Paul Horn  
Councillor Danny Plecas  
Councillor Mike Scudder  
Councillor Jenny Stevens  
Councillor Heather Stewart

Staff Members Present: Glen Robertson, chief administrative officer  
Dennis Clark, director of corporate administration  
Rick Bomhof, director of engineering and public works  
Ken Bjorgaard, director of finance  
Carmelle Jullion, executive assistant

The Mayor welcomed Ms. Patricia Ross, Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) chair, and stated that the purpose of today's meeting was to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern between the District of Mission and the FVRD.

## **1. REGIONAL TRANSIT**

Council expressed concerns about the lack of opportunities for municipal input into the FVRD Strategic Review of Transit in the Fraser Valley and asked if the regional district was planning to schedule a forum (council of councils) to discuss the plan, the cost of implementing the plan on municipal government, and the ramifications of the cost of the plan on other municipal projects. It was noted that the District is currently advertising for two members of the public to sit on the Public Advisory Committee, however, there have been no responses to the advertisement. Council stated that although a public advisory committee has its benefits, members of the public generally do not have the background to differentiate between what would be nice to have and what municipalities can afford to pay.

Council asked Chair Ross to intervene in the process to include municipal input on the transportation plan to ensure that the needs and the financial ability to pay of municipalities are considered.

## **2. MUNICIPAL FEES AND CHARGES**

Council raised the issue of the varying fees that municipalities in the region charge for services such as landfill tipping fees, recycling fees, development cost charges, and community amenity contributions. Council discussed whether the FVRD could conduct a survey of municipalities to ensure that regional trends can be established and municipalities given the information required to align their fees and charges

within these regional trends and boundaries. It was noted that when information is shared between municipalities, the opportunity to learn from each other is created.

### **3. WATER & SEWER**

The mayor raised the issue of the increasing financial burden placed on Mission as a result of Mission and Abbotsford taking over the water and sewer operations previously operated by the FVRD. He stated that since Mission and Abbotsford assumed the systems, they do not have the status that a regional district has to apply for grants and asked Chair Ross to advocate on behalf of Mission and Abbotsford for sub-regional status.

The mayor stated that some of the factors that have created the financial crisis are the acceleration of projects such as the Bevan Wells project, the twinning of the Norrish Creek water main, and the development of Stave Lake as a second water source. He stated that proceeding with these projects has not only placed a critical financial burden on Mission but is also interfering with Mission's ability to apply for funding for other critical infrastructure projects.

The mayor asked Chair Ross for any assistance she could provide to raise the status of the joint water and sewer operation from a municipal function to a sub-regional function.

### **4. OTHER BUSINESS**

The following challenges and successes as viewed by council and staff were provided:

#### **Successes:**

- The strong connections between groups, especially in the area of volunteerism;
- Mission's tree farm licence;
- Mission's Heritage Park;
- Mission's Environmental Charter;
- The opportunity to develop south west Mission in an environmentally sound, economically viable, and sustainable manner;
- The culturally distinct characteristics of Mission; and
- The potential of Mission's waterfront.

#### **Challenges:**

- Increasing policing costs;
- Water and sewer issues and Mission's ability to pay;
- The size and topography of Mission;
- The challenge of small town thinking vs. big city growth;
- The lack of resources (staffing) to implement planning objectives;
- Aboriginal land claims;
- Fraser River dredging;
- The challenges of the Fraser River potentially becoming a transportation corridor;
- The challenge of revenue sources (i.e. 90% of Mission's revenues are collected through residential taxation) and the lack of assistance (recognition) from senior levels of government to implement strategies and funding streams to assist;
- Transit funding and the need to explore new revenue sources such as a gas tax;
- Lack of funding from the FVRD to deal with regional issues such as water, sewer, and air quality;
- The challenge of funding capital projects needed to pay for accelerated growth (i.e. the development of south west Mission);
- The lack of partnerships with other municipalities in the region to ensure that a long term framework is developed in a sustainable and responsible manner.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The mayor thanked Chair Ross for meeting with the District of Mission, and stated that Mission continues to be very thankful for the \$20 million dollar commitment from the FVRD for health services. He also stated that although there are many challenges that need to be addressed in the regional district, there are many worthy commonalities that can be built upon.

Chair Ross also expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to meet and stated that concerns expressed today will be brought forward to the FVRD Board of Directors. She also stated that it is her intention to schedule a team building workshop for the board members to encourage cohesiveness, collaboration, and regional identity.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.



MAYOR



DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION