



Council Meeting Highlights March 19, 2018

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PUBLIC HEARINGS

Aquaculture industry considered for medium industry/manufacturing zone

A public hearing was held for feedback on an application to add aquaculture to the list of activities permitted in the Industrial Two (I-2) zone. The proposed zoning amendment would allow aquaculture only on I-2 zoned properties with at least half a hectare and/or with ocean or foreshore access. Other existing and permitted uses in this zone include shipyard, marine industries, industrial wharf and log storage.

The bylaw amendment was initiated by a proposal for land-based aquaculture pens for smolt production at 6501 Island Highway. Site development is anticipated to include a building measuring approximately 60 by 200 metres and a wharf. It is anticipated that groundwater would provide the primary source of water for this facility, and that sewage and wastewater would be treated on site.

The zoning amendment is the first step in multi-step approval process for this facility. Additional approvals would come from the City (servicing plans and building permits), the Province (environmental impacts) and the federal government (for the wharf).

The proposal is consistent with Campbell River's Sustainable Official Community Plan, which also encourages expansion of the fish farming industry and the expansion of industrial uses along Highway 19.

First and second reading of the proposed zoning amendment took place at the March 5 Council meeting.

Secondary suite considered in 500-block Birch Street

A public hearing was held for feedback on an application to rezone for a secondary suite at 599 Birch Street. The proposed zoning amendment is consistent with Campbell River's Sustainable Official Community Plan and would not likely have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties given the ample on-site parking available and that the unit is self-contained within the existing single-family dwelling.

First and second reading of the proposed amendment took place at the March 5 Council meeting.

Meadowbrook secondary suite approved

Council approved an application to rezone the property at 589 Meadowbrook Drive to permit construction of a secondary suite within the existing single-family dwelling.

Council approves 27-unit apartment building for affordable housing on 9th Avenue

Council approved a major development permit for the Campbell River Head Injury Society, to permit a four-storey apartment building at 531 9th Ave. The building would house 27 affordable housing units, with a minimum of 10 units reserved for head injury clients.

Council also approved variances, including a minor variance to reduce side yard setback and a front yard setback reduced by approximately two metres. Off-street parking would also be reduced in recognition of residents' anticipated parking needs, availability of on-street parking and central location adjacent to public transit routes.

Council will fund development cost charges associated with the proposed project at a cost of up to \$68,000. The 2018-2027 Financial Plan will be amended with the Council Contingency fund increased by \$75,000 from the Gaming Reserve.



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Council confirms Maritime Heritage Centre access redesign

Council directed staff to proceed with design in 2018 for a roundabout at the Maritime Heritage Centre and highway intersection. Construction is anticipated to take place in 2019.

Additional enforcement for Pier Street parking changes

In response to requests by local business owners and customers, Council directed staff to reduce on-street parking from two hours to one hour on the west (upland) side of Pier Street from the intersection with St. Ann's to the crosswalk at the Fisherman's Wharf. Signs will go up in the coming days, and Council has approved additional enforcement and greater frequency of patrols.

Policy confirmed for non-standard crosswalk markings

Council confirmed the City policy that prohibits non-standardized markings in all City crosswalks.

In response to past requests to install temporary artwork in cross walks, temporary rainbow-themed markings and a three-year marine-themed public art project were approved. For safety and to reduce maintenance of artistic installations, Council confirmed the current policy. Council encourages artists to consider other opportunities to create public canvases in areas that won't deteriorate due to vehicle traffic travelling over the art – such as on sidewalks, utility boxes, banners and as wall murals. Council also directed that a variety of opportunities for public expression be discussed and provided through the public art master plan process.

Tourism services update

Council received an update on the Visitor Info Centre, the tourism marketing plan, stakeholder engagement and hotel statistics. All funding for these projects are received from a combination of the hotel tax (MRDT), City budget and grants through Destination BC and local tourism programs. 2017 was Campbell River's first year with the MRDT tax, which was collected from March to December. The total revenues were \$403,816. Per Destination BC reporting up to October, average hotel occupancy for the year was 75.4 per cent, with the peak months July (93.5%), August (97.6%) and September (93.1%).

Support for Vancouver Island Economic Alliance investment attraction initiative

Council will provide a letter of support for a foreign direct investment initiative that will focus on identifying and developing business cases aimed at providing qualified investors with information about business development opportunities on Vancouver Island.

Gypsy moth spraying concerns

The City has sent a letter to the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development requesting clarification on the provincial gypsy moth management initiative. The City requested clarification on potential risks to human health, potential ecological impacts, and the community engagement plan. The City also asked for more details on the provincial gypsy moth management plan and how the Ministry determined that a ground spray program is warranted. The City hopes for a response from the Ministry by March 26. The City is forwarding correspondence from community members to the provincial ministry.

Continued advocacy for homes for the homeless in Campbell River

Council continues to advocate to agencies such as BC Housing to see additional services and resources come to Campbell River to alleviate homelessness. The City combines correspondence from community members in requests for support to the Province.

Changes to grants-in-aid and permissive tax exemption policies

Council endorsed several changes recommended by the Community Partnership Committee to the City's grants-in-aid and permissive tax exemption policies. These changes include:

- Grants awarded to arts and culture organizations operating out of City-owned facilities may now be awarded for a period up to five years (previously a three-year maximum).
- The four organizations operating out of City-owned facilities (Tidemark, Museum, Art Gallery, Arts Council) will have new operating agreements drafted to align with the new funding periods.
- These four organizations will be invited to make an annual presentation to Council outlining how City grant money was used and initiatives currently underway.
- Council will reduce the overall budget for grant monies from 1.7% of total general revenues to 1.6% to align the amount budgeted versus funds actually awarded on an annual basis.
- The City's Community Partnership reserve will be capped at \$25,000.
- Unimproved land will no longer qualify for a permissive tax exemption, ensuring that only properties that are actually functioning and delivering services to the City will receive the exemption. Previously, qualifying non-profit organizations were eligible for exemptions on bare land.
- The Community Partnership Committee will use wording in the current policy regarding permissive tax exemption to assess the need for partial exemptions where deemed appropriate.

Accounts Receivable Write Offs 2017

As part of the annual year-end process, an allowance for bad debt is made against the total amount of receivables. While the City takes all necessary steps to collect receivables, bad debt is an inevitable result of granting credit to customers and providing services to the community. Accounts are deemed to be uncollectible after numerous attempts at recovering monies owed have been taken by both the City's finance department and collection agent. Council directed \$18,171.20 of uncollectible accounts to be written off in order to ensure the City's financial records are updated and anticipated receivables are accurately reported for year-end purposes. Council also directed staff to make an application to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for provincial approval to write off outstanding property taxes, including accumulated interest to date that totals \$2,171.80 on properties at 940 Alder Street and 17-2705 Island Highway.

2017 year-end audit service plan

Council received the audit services plan provided by MNP LLP for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017. The plan details work to be completed the week of April 9. It is similar in all respects with recent years and confirms that an auditor's opinion on the City's financial statements will be presented to Council on May 7 so that the necessary filings with the Province of British Columbia can be made by the annual deadline of May 15.

Council considers Local Government Election Bylaw

Council gave Local Government Election Amendment Bylaw No. 3694, 2018 first, second and third reading to reflect the new October date of the general election, which is set for the third Saturday in October (Oct. 20 in 2018).

Council draws attention to UBCM recommendations for responsible conduct

Responsible conduct – broadly refers to how local government elected officials conduct themselves with their elected colleagues, with staff, and with the public – continues to be an important topic of interest in British Columbia. In fall 2016, a working group was formed to better understand issues related to responsible conduct and to explore how British Columbia's responsible conduct framework could be further strengthened. The working group is a staff-level committee with members from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, the Local Government Management Association and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. At the 2017 UBCM Convention, UBCM members endorsed a policy paper prepared by the working group that included several recommendations to strengthen British Columbia's responsible conduct framework.

As its first priority, the working group identified and defined four foundational principles – integrity, accountability, respect, and leadership and collaboration – that can be used as a resource to guide the conduct of both individual elected officials and the collective council/board. While the principles are already reflected in the actions of elected officials in communities across British Columbia, they will be of real value in enhancing everyone's shared understanding of expectations around responsible conduct.

Local governments are encouraged to use these principles by integrating them into everyday actions, as well as policies and practices. As a start, for instance, there may be value in including these principles in information materials for prospective candidates, and in orientation materials for when new councils and boards are elected after October 2018.

Working Group members have begun to integrate the foundational principles into resources, such as education materials for the 2018 general local elections, and will continue to incorporate them into other guidance materials as opportunities arise. The LGMA will also be working with its members to determine how the foundational principles could be further embedded into other local government documents, such as oaths of office, procedure bylaws, and existing codes of conduct, in advance of the 2018 elections.

Next steps for the working group include focusing on developing a code of conduct framework, with mechanisms for implementing such a code.