

## Report on October 26, 2020 Sooke council meeting

1. tax exemption bylaw passed
2. RCMP staff sergeant report: 2 constable vacancies and one admin staff vacancy but they are managing record number of calls. Homeless people being in one place makes it easier to offer them services. He is asking for Sooke to cover expenses for one more officer. In response to query from C. Bateman: 24 hour coverage would require 22 constables and they currently have 17.
3. CAO McGinnis report:
  - Sooke Lions will be doing a “reverse santa claus parade”– floats will be parked at the EMCS parking lot and the public will drive by and look.
  - New public health order that family gatherings will be capped at 6 plus family. Should masks be required in DOS building. He will look into it.
4. The Land Use and Development Committee will put out requests for members from: the land development community, the home builders community, a DOS council liaison, the environment/climate change community, the agriculture community, the fisheries and oceans community and the business community and 2 members at large. C. Logins asked if there will be anyone on it with expertise in affordable housing, possibly from the non-profit community. She was told by the CAO that it would be more appropriate for the Economic Development Committee to consider affordable housing concerns but she persisted and it was decided to turn one of the calls for “community at large” members into an affordable housing member, assuming someone even applies for that (volunteer) position.
5. Climate Action Committee (CAC) recommendations. Laura Hooper noted that these are from the Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> CAC mtg and that CAC members were very accepting of and happy with recommendations from staff. The first 2 recommendations are 2 that she apparently forgot to include in the original request to staff:
  - that there be a “climate first” approach in all municipal decision making and planning including the OCP and that there be climate expertise on consulting teams.
  - to develop a Sooke climate action plan which will include mitigation and adaptation strategies
  - funding for a full time Climate Action Coordinator
  - direct staff to seek grant funding and alternative borrowing for projects especially for TMP (Transportation Master Plan) and PTMP (Parks and Trails Master Plan).
  - direct Land Use Committee to investigate options for tiny homes in zoning bylaws.Lots of discussion:
  - C. Beddows: it’s not specific, he doesn’t like “climate first” in everything, rather “climate consideration”. “Climate First” does not belong in the OCP unless the community comes back and says that’s what they want. He doesn’t like the word “direct”. Staff already are working all the time on grant funding and they are all very conscious of the climate concern. He feels the wording is slanted.
  - C. Bateman: climate action coordinators do exist out there in the world
  - C. Logins: this work plan has already come before council 2 or 3 times so good to see it coming up again. In reply to C. Beddows remark that “climate first” would not belong in the OCP unless the public indicates it wants it there, C. Logins notes that the public has indicated that trees are a very important concern. As to staff already working on grant funding she said that grants are issued when there is a project ready to go. She would also like to see help for people to create spaces in their homes where they can work from home, thus lowering greenhouse gases (ghg) produced from commuting to work. She added that this IS a crisis. Decisions can seem uncomfortable but she is in favour of moving it along.
  - Mayor: it is up to council to set the budget; staff is too busy to do lots of grants. Will CAC be very disappointed if some of its recommendations are not adhered to?
  - C. St. Pierre: staff report is very clear - most CAC recommendations are already in the 2021 budget

C. Beddows: we need to prioritize

C. Logins: no we don't; we need to be ready for whatever comes up.

They began rewording the 5 recommendations.

CAO McGinnis suggested that instead of funding a CA Coordinator that they rework the already planned new "Community Economic Development Officer" position to include a "sustainability component". It would not necessarily be a "climate first" approach; rather a "balance of social, economic and environmental approach". This was agreed to be a good solution as apparently it would be too costly to fund 2 new positions.

The CAO also noted that in OCPs there are some things that are prohibited. These would be things that fall outside of the jurisdiction of local government (banning plastic bags is an example he gave). He alluded to the idea that including "climate first" in an OCP might fall in this category. He will make a report on the legal framework in this matter. He did acknowledge that, on the other hand, assuring ghg reduction is, in fact, something that is required in an OCP.

C. St. Pierre then suggested that the words "ensure a climate first" be changed to "ensure a green/climate lens for use in all..." This was approved.

Mayor noted: what is practical can't always be "climate first", giving as an example the council just approved funding for the "reverse santa claus parade" which is not climate first as it will send a lot of ghg into the atmosphere with cars idling and slowly driving by.

There was a discussion on tiny homes and how appropriate and/or effective they are. People in Sooke apparently are not favourably impressed with the idea according to C. Logins. Further discussion is to be left to the Land Use Committee to debate.

A grant has been secured for fixing The Bluffs staircase on Deerlepe off of Whiffen Spit Rd. with some funding for parking. C. Bateman: where will the parking be? Along Deerlepe.

Demolition of 2076 Otter Point Rd. is going ahead soon, finally, with all sorts of protections in place including from rats escaping into the neighborhood to passersby getting onto the property. It will not be bulldozed; rather dismantled and hopefully some of the siding and wood will be salvaged and resold by the company that is dismantling the place. If the owner does not pay the costs of the demolition, which will be added to his taxes, then after 3 years the District can take possession of the property.

Lots of councillor reports which i did not get because I was falling asleep except that the OCP committee had another meeting and the members felt better about what exactly their roles, purposes and plans are, which they apparently were confused about after the first meeting. Staff helped make everyone feel good about this according to C. Beddows

C. Bateman: they hope to have new building codes in place by January first. Not sure what is being proposed. Step 3??