

**Notes on the Oct 18th meeting of the Committee of the Whole
Paula Johanson with a note from Susan Belford.**

Susan Belford's note on the October 18 meeting of the Committee of the Whole:

Last night's COW ended around 11 pm. Anna's presentation right at the beginning was strong and clear, and I think gave council food for thought. Unfortunately Planning Director Pawlow reassured council that if the policies in the OCP are followed, it will be possible to grow and still attain new zero—so more work is needed to help illuminate that view.

The rest of the meeting was mostly taken up with the Strategic Plan and Budget 2022 Service Levels. Commitments were made to Sooke Region Communities Health Network and Sooke Family Resource Society for support.

Climate action items are included in the strategic plan with committed funding, and the most interesting news is that, an \$ 87K position for Climate Action Coordinator is included in the draft Budget. However- Council will decide Nov. 8th or at a Special Meeting around the same time on what remains in the budget. There is at least one councillor who will be lobbying to cut the position, so we may have some to do there as well.

6. Carbon emissions for New Development -presentation by Anna Russell, on behalf of the Climate Action Committee

AR spoke on greenhouse gases from new development presented slides on Challenges of new development (three different scenarios: 7% solution no population growth, 1200 new residences + 7%, 1800 new residences +7%). Can't grow without limits. Desirable development = affordable housing (non-market, age-in-place), Commercial (local and Green, NFP. LCR industrial/manufacturing), Built to minimize emissions. Give teeth to the OCP, make sure it's implemented. Go beyond smart growth measures to address the climate emergency.

Jeff Bateman observed the report's perspective that Sooke's 50% reduction goal by 2030 is rooted in GPC+ framework. Carbon sinks, greenfields, undeveloped land store carbon. What does the Climate Action committee recommend on greenfield development?

AR replied we can't have unlimited growth; the growth we need should be done as recommended for minimum carbon use, and no greenfield devel.

JB notes if we double housing, we can't meet our carbon target.

Russell spoke, suggesting if we work together we can reach these goals after development.

Tony StPierre asked how many houses are zoned to be built.

Russell says 1200 approved. TSP asked for a legal way to reduce that number. Russell said if downzoned but not likely. TSP said if we reduce that number, what happens? Russell said huge impact on budgets, new growth = new revenue, supports. It's a challenge.

TSP said how do we do zero growth when climate refugees come?

AR replied that's a good moral question, but this report is on planned growth, not refugees. Sooke is a safe place to be for now but nowhere is safe.

Ebony Logins said we do want economic development. Consequence of no development is job loss. We need to ensure development happens in best way. Asked for elaboration on heat pumps and other things to implement in new buildings.

AR said Step 5 says 'ready for heat pump' but not installed. Builders have asked for stricter guidelines for builders to follow so every builder lives up to them.

Al Beddoes has been listening to Climate Action Committee. If we stop building, supply & demand will drive house prices up. We'll be a community of old people with \$2million houses. Step goals will make houses expensive but it's a step in the right direction. Concerned about balancing act of residents working in this community. What can we do at municipal level with resources we have? Would love to subsidize heat pumps. If we stop building, we collapse on ourselves.

JB notes it's not zero growth but managed growth based on CRD's projections to 2030 and beyond. Russell says growth is projected, planning is good.

7.1 Reports: Memorandum of Understanding – Sooke Region Health Network

TSP Discussed need for space for activities for seniors&elders.

JB asked McInnis will this MOU help with Sooke's application for Housing with the province? Yes, says McInnis, Sooke was turned down at first because of great volume of applications.

TSP asked if 18 months is enough time for our new application for Housing grant, McInnes said yes.

AB asked if this MOU will help confirm our grant application, McInnes said yes.

MT read out, COW recommends that Council extend for 18 months, the MOU with Sooke Health Network.

JB pointed out that since 2002 Sooke has been working for senior housing.

AB asked what Sooke's need is for senior housing.

TSP asked about why is an elder drop-in centre being proposed instead of the multi-use centre proposed in 2016. Mayor Tait said it will meet targeted needs of seniors instead of being a multi-use place like Seaparc.

Tait and JB disappointed not to have provincial funding for housing this year for this project but there was \$75million last year for others and maybe there will be funding next year.

7.2 Reports: Sooke Family Resource Society Proposal

Ebony Logins recused herself as her mother is part of the society's delegation, so might be a conflict of interest.

Miss Gray introduced delegation. Phoebe Logins (director of the society) and Louise Parkinson. PL read recommendations from staff. Spoke on advocacy for mental health supports, said we need to live up to our moniker as a compassion community. When people call for mental health support, we have to put them on hold, sometimes for months. That's a cruel delay. If 1200 more homes are built, where will the services come from? Currently we have a wait list of 72 people waiting for 23 hours of fully-funded supports. We gave the waitlist back to Island Health a month ago. More acute since Covid. Asking council to support a sliding scale for some services in addition to fully-funded services. The usual wait for our clients is 4 months.

Tait acknowledged that 4 to 6 months delay can seem a lifetime for a young person.

AB asked about drug rehab spaces, none in Greater Victoria.

7.3 Reports: Strategic Priorities Update

Norm McInnes offered a presentation or to receive questions. Presented engagement plan for 2022 five year financial plan, complete for 2022 and to be built on for future years.

Quarterly reports, Culture Committee challenged about meeting in person, may not meet end of year timeline.

Non-market growth (new taxation revenue) is expected to be about \$289K for 2022

Climate Action Committee Social Mobilization project has funding approved, to be implemented in 2022.

Costing for 7% solution included in 2022 budget.

Draft of OCP is out for review.

Parking & wastewater criteria for secondary suites should be in 2022 plan.

Complete AAP for JPMP lease to Lions Club, moving this project to design & public engagement as per council request. If Lions do design work but lease isn't approved, request that Sooke reimburse them for it. He can get someone to do pro bono work. Discussion.

JB asked Mayor Tait to read a letter she sent today on the Lions issue. Tait read the paragraph about JPMP mentioning how the Lions proposal will have study and public involvement.

Then: District is looking into working with owners of Evergreen Centre for district to sell about one-half acre to facilitate a modest expansion of Evergreen shopping centre along with a residential component integrated with Lot A development.

Complete Asset Management Investment Plan will provide strategies to fund depreciation of our capital assets.

Develop Annual Planning and Budget Plan. 2022 budget is our second cycle using the current framework. Hope to see projects through entire five year plan.

Once Climate Action Plan is adopted policy alignment will be needed putting action into all aspects of district work.

Zoning and Bylaws recommended in new OCP, subdivision development standards bylaw & others.

Operational strategies: admin, operations, planning & development, finance, corporate services, community safety.

Advocacy – wastewater & transportation grant opportunities, enhanced transit service, Little River crossing funding, Regional health centre, Pesticide & rodenticide ban, VIIMCU inclusion, First Nations relations, Sooke Homeless Coalition – Mental health & addiction resources, Gas tax funding, Municipal & Regional District Tax, Community gateway revitalization, Local Enhanced Roadside Assessment testing, 911 (provincial cost download), Moratorium Van Isle wolf hunting.

Tait offered opportunity for public input

William Wallace spoke on JPMPark – proposed location of Lions building is on a spot identified in 2006 as potential flood zone.

Susan Belford spoke about “Consider climate action” and 7% solution, concerned there's no funding for climate adaptation. Wondering about language use, “consider” as a weasel word. Tait replied that council has already committed for funding on climate adaptation; and council has to use that kind of language.

JB asked about plans for Evergreen Centre. Town Centre plan is to update through access to Lot A from Evergreen Centre.

Tait discussed trying for provincial funding on Small River bridge, needed due to steep slopes.

Tait moved acceptance, all in favour.

7.4 July-Sept 2021 Quarterly Update

Miss Grey summed up quickly.

Observed a lot of expenses occur in the last quarter of a year. Have received over 9 million dollars in grant funding, huge projects able to go ahead like work on Otter Point Road.

Tait invited public comments

Asked if powerpoints are on the website, Tait explained Miss Grey's documents will be on the portal in 24 hrs

Tait called the question, all in favour.

5 minute break

7.5 Budget 2022 – Service Level Review

Miss Grey presented. Sound off for 7 minutes more when returned from break.

Summary: Engagement activities

-informal Pop-Ups, Let's Talk Sooke, Directed Kiosks (department specific), Council Coffee Chats in various locations, Citizen Budget (online and print surveys), info@sooke.ca and Calls for service requests, Committee and Third-Party requests.

Grey commented that \$100,000 = about a 1% property tax increase. If all requests filled, there will be a double digit increase.

Council

-Services: Foster economic, social and environmental wellbeing of community, Corporate Planning & Sustainability, Committees, Boards & Other Authorities, Legal & Legislative Services, Governance.
-Feedback, appreciation for increased communication and opportunities for public feedback, awareness that projects need funding to implement.

-2022 Budget asks: \$40K SFRS Service Agreement, \$5K Healthy Schools Initiative, \$5.4K SRHistoricalSociety increase funding, \$TBD\$ E-Comm 911 costs download to district.

Discussion.

Tait observed we have a long-term RCMP agreement covering the expenses of services, but someone in the RCMP decided to download some costs to districts in the middle of the agreement. About \$300,000 for this local government, not all communities on south Island.

Tait wanted to move, more discussion. Some mikes not on. Called the question. All in favour.

Administration:

-Services: CAO, HR, Communications, Community Economic Development, Climate Action. District operations, implements Council directives.

-Feedback: 41% keep budget same, admin building needs to be energy efficient, appreciation for increased communications, concerns about staff workload, need dedicated climate change staff.

-2022 Budget Asks: \$233K Climate Action Initiatives, \$35K Employment Lands Strategy, \$30K enhanced signage for parks & trails.

AB doesn't like how big the \$233K request is. JB gave context, noted council needs more time to discuss full documentation. Advises that the CAC recommendation be integrated into the draft that will be included and voted on in November 8 agenda

Discussion once again with some mikes off. Called the vote on \$233K ask, AB opposed.

Discussion of \$35K and \$30K asks, called the vote, motion passed.

More discussion, EL said when they have precise numbers they'll use them.