

Regular Council Meeting, April 11, 2022  
Reported by Jack Gegenberg

All Councilors and the Mayor present at Council Chambers.

Summary: Meeting was 2.5 hours. Format changed so that there is no view of Council on the screen. Instead a power point of the Agenda plus other items are displayed on the screen. There were three issues that I think are of interest to those of us in TS. 1. How much, and when, will public input on OCP take place? 2. Sooke financial support of SRCHN Elders Project on Lot A. 3. Discussion around First Reading of OCP.

1. The Mayor commented on public input into Council's determination of the content of the OCP at the start of the meeting. She said that there should NOT have been public comment at Council Meetings. That this occurred at a past meeting was a procedural error, and the Mayor apologized for that. In Agenda Item 9 (Public Question and Comment Period), the Mayor cut off attempts by an intervenor to speak on the OCP. The public will have opportunities later. First at the upcoming May 7 Open House on the OCP, and later at Public Hearings tentatively scheduled for late June/early July, following which the Council will be asked to approve Second Reading of the OCP. In between those events, Council will seek outside input, e. g. from Provincial Land Use, Economic and Transportation departments. All this will be massaged by City Staff into an amended version of the OCP, which Council will be asked to approve at Second Reading.

2. Agenda Item 11.2. Council was asked to approve the following, recommended by Staff:

THAT Council approve an additional draw of \$100,000 from the Seniors/Youth Centre Reserve Fund established by Bylaw No. 717, as requested by the Sooke Region Communities Health Network (SRCHN).

This grant would provide funding for designing a combination of low-cost housing development with a Senior/Youth Drop-in Centre. Staff noted that so far the Provincial government has been lukewarm on funding this, citing province-wide competition for such projects. Staff maintains that Sooke Council financial support will make it easier for SRCHN to score funding from other sources. The support from Council would be explicitly for 'net zero design'. Beddows was initially worried about what exactly Council is supporting: the housing or the drop-in centre. Staff said that the drop-in centre was integral to the housing project.

The vote to approve the funding passed, with only Logins dissenting. Her concern was that the Youth part of the Senior/Youth Drop-in Centre was insufficiently developed, and she would have like more focus on that, though she supports the idea in general.

3. Agenda Item 12.1

**Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 800, 2022**

Revised Draft Official Community Plan - Pdf

THAT Council give first reading to the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 800, 2022;

THAT Council consider the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 800, 2022 in conjunction with the Budget and Five-Year Financial plan;

THAT consider the Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 800, 2022 in conjunction with the Waste Management Plans;

THAT Council refer the bylaw to all external agencies and partners for comment;

AND THAT Council direct staff to report back at a future Council meeting on the input and recommend any adjustments to the draft prior to council considering the second reading of Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 800, 2022.

The Mayor noted that this First Reading was simply to further the OCP along, and that public input of various sorts would be incorporated into an amended motion for Second Reading and Final Adoption.

The OCP has already been considerably amended by Staff, to include, among other things, focus on Town Centre development and statement of population growth projections.

Although the First Reading was approved unanimously, in the course of discussion it was revealed that there were considerable disagreements among the Councilors.

Bateman was the most critical. He is distressed at lack of wording in the OCP on Climate Emergency and on the fact that the demographic information from the last census was not incorporated. He was also concerned that Sooke was not referred to as 'compassionate community' and that there was mention of net-zero waste or green house gas emissions.

Beddows seemed content to see the OCP moved along.

The Mayor read a rather long historical statement putting the OCP in the context of lots of things, from the Climate Emergency to the Pandemic and event to an assumed influx of Ukrainian refugees.

TO BE CONTINUED...