

North Vancouver Community Associations Network (NVCAN)

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: Wednesday February 16, 2022

Location: Zoom

Time: 7:00 – 8:35 pm

Present:

John Miller (Chair)	Lower Capilano
Eric Andersen	Blueridge
Katherine Fagerlund	Deep Cove
Val Wilkins	Deep Cove
Corrie Kost	Edgemont Upper Capilano
Irene Davidson	Norgate Park
Herman Mah	Pemberton Heights
Karen Barnett	Seymour
Peter Teevan	Seymour
Babs Perowne	Woodcroft

Guests:

Rick Danyluk	Deputy General Manager, Finance
Betty Forbes	DNV Councillor

Regrets:

Erik Skowronek	Edgemont Upper Capilano
Barb McKinley	Norwood/Queens
Val Moller	Woodcroft

1. **Welcome.** John welcomed members and guests to the Zoom meeting. He then introduced DNV's Deputy General Manager, Finance, Rick Danyluk, who will lead the discussion on the 2022-2026 Draft Budget. Rick suggested that NVCAN members present their concerns on the Draft Budget first in a Question and Answer format, then if requested he would add a review of the document.

2. **Budget Q&A**

John began by raising the following topics:

- Page 5, under Enhance Livability and Mobility; first bullet - the \$26.6 million figure should be broken down into how much for sidewalks, how much for cycling routes and how much for urban trails. The reason is that this part of the financial report is more likely to be read by members of the public where most of them will not go through the detailed balance sheets and spreadsheets if they aren't familiar with how to read and understand them.

[Rick responded that the five-year capital detail section provides additional information on Active Transportation projects.](#)

- Page 23, under Financial Model; bullet six - the wording "reserves are adjusted to reflect" seems odd. Why not say 'reserves are increased to reflect'? I asked for an explanation as "adjusted" indicates ongoing changes (at least that is the way that I read it).

[Written response: you are correct, this is an ongoing change. Transfers to the Transportation and Mobility Reserve increase each year to help fund Active Transportation.](#)

- Page 38, under Transportation; bullet six - the final words "(including Deep Cove)". Why would Deep Cove not be included or why are they specifically pointed out? Answer was that this reference should have been deleted - i.e. error.
- He later raised the point that in the past, there were requests that the totals of DCC's and CAC's that are waived by Council should be noted somewhere in the report; maybe under accomplishments. Rick indicated there's an annual "Pace of Development Report" released to provide a summary of the benefits realized through the development process ([May 2021 report](#)).

Babs commented on difficulties in understanding the presentation of the Reserves Summary (p 12) and reconciling differences to prior budgets. She also commented on the difficulty of creating current budgets when other jurisdictions issued mandated changes (eg MetroVan's Air Quality strategies, and MOTI's changes to local area highway areas – twinning Capilano Bridge, adding active transportation to highway shoulders). Those long-term development costs will impact today's five-year and ten-year budgets. Rick indicated the reserves summary reflects the total anticipated changes in the reserve fund balances over the next five years and the plan integrates the latest assumptions and information.

Peter asked the following questions:

- Can you please comment on the anticipated impact of the exit of the Wastewater Treatment Plant principal contractor on our 2022-2026 Budget?
Rick responded that utility rates reflect the latest information from Metro Vancouver and are increasing at 5.1% for single family homes in 2022. Metro Vancouver has been encouraged to develop a long-term financial plan to improve the accuracy of their rate setting and have recently started this initiative.
- What do you expect to be the impact of recent-record inflation rates on our budget from the A) Collective Agreement point-of-view? And B) purchases/supplies point-of-view?
Rick responded that inflation levels are anticipated to return to normal within two years and impacts on the budget are still being assessed; heaviest impacts are expected on the capital plan.
- The Council direction that you cited that "new tax revenues from the neighbourhoods" goes to active transportation improvements:
 - When was that decided as I don't recall it being on the agenda?
 - Does "from the neighbourhoods" ostensibly mean "from single family home rebuilding"?
 Rick responded that the decision to allocate this tax revenue started with previous Council and has been continued with this Council.
 - I also asked about his comment that the Ron Andrews RecCentre, when rebuilt, may be moved closer to Maplewood Town Centre?
Rick responded that the Ron Andrews replacement is included in the outer years of the ten-year plan and location options will need to be developed. Maplewood Village is one option under consideration.

Herman raised the following concerns:

- Regarding major infrastructure projects by senior level of government that overlap with areas of municipal jurisdiction, does the District have to contribute to some of the costs? If so, from where does the funding come? Rick mentioned the Lower Lynn interchange as a recent example where the District made a contribution.

- It seems like the budget is focussed on increases every year. [Rick responded that departments are tasked to look for efficiencies \(i.e. cost savings\)](#). Where does that show up in the budget? [Written response: all services are reviewed to ensure alignment with financial strategies and policies. Service adjustments are made based on changing needs and obligations. Requests for additional resources are usually not supported until resource realignment is explored. This happens with any request for additional resources, replacement of vacant positions or reorganization.](#)

Katherine raised the following issues

- Although affordable housing is mentioned throughout the draft budget document, actual funds for such housing are mentioned only in the table on page 10 and the notes under that table (“Affordable housing costs reflected in the table above (\$12.2 million) support site servicing costs for these partnerships”). Further to recommendations of the Rental Social and Affordable Housing Task Force, DNV is investigating possibilities for using DNV lands to support further development of affordable housing. How does the budget account for expenditures related to that initiative (and other affordable housing goals)? [Written response: the budget includes other provisions for affordable housing over the next five years. The note on page 10 states that these provisions, including the allocation of District-owned lands and affordable housing amenities, are valued at an estimated \\$62 million.](#)
Regarding expenditures related to the North Vancouver Recreation Commission, there have been suggestions that Ron Andrews Recreation Centre will require replacement in the not too distant future, but the draft budget does not mention that possibility. How are expenditures towards that initiative accounted for in the draft budget? [Written response: the replacement of Ron Andrews is included in the outer years of the 10-year plan. The North Vancouver Recreation Commission and the District’s Community Planning Department are leading further planning for recreation facility enhancements and replacements.](#)

Eric I said he was just a bit surprised to see the DNV going from the near-highest tax increases for a number of years, to being among the lowest increases now (third from the bottom). [Written Response: The District’s tax policy has been 2% for inflation plus 1% to asset management since 2004 resulting in one of the lowest tax increases over the last ten years.](#)

Corrie commented as follows:

- For 2012, pages 100-110 showed Financial Information which is now lacking in the 2022 report. Eg. Page 108 of 2012 Draft Financial Plan –shows Asset Condition (physical) for 8 categories which were to be show annually. This has not been done – although “asset management plans” are mentioned on pages 14&22 of 2022 plan and “maintain assets in a state of good repair” (or something like it) are mentioned on pages 22,24,37,45,47,54,66,72. There appears to be reports not available to the public that could shed more light on the whole issue of asset management and their current state.
[Written response: asset sustainability best practice indicators are currently included on pages 108-109 of the 2020 Annual Report. These indicators may be included in future versions of the annual budget.](#)
- To include redevelopment of single family homes as a “growth-related property tax revenue” (page 23) seems dubious at best.
- The readability of the report could be significantly improved by a wiser choice of print colour over background color. For example pages 9,10,52-55,60-65 are not easily read. Many of those pages could be improved by slightly increasing font size together with slight reduction in line spacing.

- The district vision as one of the “most sustainable community in the world” by 2020 expressed in the 2008 & 2007 annual reports appears to remain somewhat illusive.
- Can we have a break-down of how much public money (from all levels of government) has been spent by the DNV for “active transportation” in area of sidewalks and cycling facilities?
Written response: the five year capital detail section provides additional information on these projects. A historical record, including all levels of government, will be difficult to produce as active transportation components are often embedded into larger projects.
- A question was put to determine the degree of “zero-based” budgeting has been undertaken over the last decade. This was to be done one division at a time.
Written response: a program inventory and priority driven budget model provides a scalable framework for ongoing adjustments including monitoring efficiency and effectiveness.
- Could clarification be provided on the meaning of “contribution to reserves” of \$413,227,000 shown on page 12?
Written response: this is the total planned contributions to the reserves funds over the next five years (2022 – 2026).
- Finally, I suggest that a summary (say 5 pages?) be provided at the beginning of the plan which illuminates the salient information that most members of the public are interested in.
Rick responded that this is a good idea and is something Finance will be introducing in the future.

(a) https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/local-governments/finance/local-government-statistics/schedule707_2021.xlsx

(b) CPI Canada monthly from 2000 to present: <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/price-indexes/cpi/>

(c) CPI BC from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/economy/consumer-price-index>

(d) Municipal Tax Rates and Tax Burden – BC

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/local-governments/facts-framework/statistics/tax-rates-tax-burden>

Betty expressed concern that the District’s contribution via partnership agreements is not reflected in the budget, especially as it relates to the District’s contribution to affordable housing.
Written response: this additional value is mentioned in the note at the bottom of page 10; Finance will explore a better presentation for the value of these partnerships in the future.

At the end of the meeting Rick thanked the members for their input and interest in the budget process and encouraged them to go to the website to learn more and provide additional input. Virtual public input remains open through February 28 at 5pm.

[After the meeting, **Irene** sent an email noting: I read the Financial plan but it is difficult to understand at times how the funds are allotted. I am interested in Active Transportation, especially walking, so I’m glad there are planned expenditures to build connections between town centres.]

3. **Carried Forward:** Approval of Minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting
4. **Next Meeting:** **March 16, 2022 – Regular Meeting**
5. **Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm**