

**MINUTES**  
**ARTS, CULTURE, & COMMUNITY WELLBEING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Committee Room 2 and via Microsoft Teams  
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue  
**September 27, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.**

Present: Councillor Karen Harper, Clare Atwell, Jim Hesser, Ian Kopp (via Teams), Kimberly Van Nieuvenhuyse (via Teams), Robert Randall, Chris Poirier-Skelton, Mark Leiren-Young (via Teams).

Staff: Mitchell Edgar, Economic Development Manager; Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services; Amber Walker, Senior Planner (Current Planning) (via Teams); Evelyn Wolfe, Archives Supervisor (via Teams); Jason Jones, Community Programmer II, Equity, Diversity & Parks; Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Arianna Marie Scott

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by R. Randall and Seconded by C. Poirier-Skelton: “That the Minutes of the Arts, Culture and Community Wellbeing Advisory Committee meeting dated, May 24, 2023, be adopted.”**

**CARRIED**

- It was noted that the minutes are a high-level summary, not a verbatim transcription.

**CHAIR’S REMARKS**

The Chair welcomed the committee members, and the following was noted:

- The Committee Recognition Event is on October 19, 2023, and all members are invited to attend.

**INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND SUMMER EVENTS UPDATE**

The Community Programmer provided an update, and the following was noted:

- Saanich is actively working on building relationships with the First Nations and Urban Indigenous Métis.
- The District of Saanich has interdepartmental working groups that consist of Directors and Managers. These groups discuss the future plans for building relationships and training opportunities.
- The Community of Practice is a group within the District of Saanich that collects information for training purposes.

- Workshops with the Parks Department and the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC) give opportunities to learn about the land use of the W̱SÁNEĆ members.
- Providing transportation to these workshops has encouraged participation and attendance.
- Saanich supports community lunches at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC). This participation allows for open conversations around the National Indigenous Peoples Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Saanich assisted the VNFC in transporting a tipi. This is one way that Saanich and other municipalities are building connections.
- Work is being done to increase and support the Territorial welcomes and acknowledgement. Some ideas include incorporating drumming and dance groups and inviting an Elder to partake.
- An Indigenous Relations Specialist is a possible role for the future.
- This past summer, 22 musical performances, eight cultural events, and a community picnic were held in Saanich.
- Pride in the Park was successful and well-attended. Police were on site but not needed.
- Music in the Park, Music in the Bay, and Music on the Gorge were very successful.
- The Saanich Community Concert series was held in the courtyard at Dawson Heights to allow for accessibility.
- The Uptown Multicultural Festival included multiple vendors, performances, and food. There is an opportunity to expand in 2024.
- The Indigenous Music Festival involved participation from a variety of Indigenous communities. The turnout was larger than in 2022.
- Community Mela is a Punjabi celebration that takes place in Beckwith Park. Many performances and food vendors participated, with over 1,000 people in attendance. Other cultures are encouraged to join in on the festival.
- Parking for events can be challenging, so advertising is limited.
- Navratri is a large Hindu festival that was held at Beckwith Park.
- The Autumn Lantern Festival was enjoyed by more the 3,000 people. Latin dancing and food trucks were a highlight of the evening.
- Saanich has a Muslim Community program which offers private swim nights after hours and private fitness classes for women to comfortably remove their hijabs. There are separate swim times for men and the LGBTQ2 community. Budgeting is allotted for extra staff.

The members made the following comments:

- The variety and types of programs are diverse and impressive. There are opportunities for more cultural events in the future.
- Multicultural communities are mostly interested in rental facilities and programs.
- There is a potential in the community to build relationships using art and culture.
- Saanich Parks and Recreation is on the Community Wellness advisory board with the Greater Victoria Local Immigrant Partnership (GVLIP).
- Different modes of transportation, like bike valets, would assist with parking challenges at events.
- Working with other municipalities to host these events allows for relationship-building.

\*\*\*The Community Programmer exited the meeting at 5:47 p.m.\*\*\*

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Economic Development Manager provided an update, and the following was noted:

- The strategy is in the draft stages and will go to Council by the end of the year.
- Arts and culture are a foundation for economic development. They are important factors to consider as people look to move and work here.
- The vision is for a green, innovative, and knowledge-based economy that is also creative. This will encourage people who work in the art industry to find a home here and enjoy a high quality of life.
- The 15-minute city outlined in the Official Community Plan (OCP) will create access to the entertainment community.
- Affordable housing will attract the labour force.
- Working with developers will showcase areas that are best for the amenity contributions, such as theatres and art galleries.
- The Uptown development offers large areas for art.
- A consultant would be helpful to assist in the developing stages for art amenities.
- One of the target sectors in the strategy is tourism.
- Integrating all plans is essential to success.

The committee members made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- Artscape would be a helpful model to use in developing creative spaces.
- Small concerts in courtyards are an achievable solution for bringing people together.
- The University Heights development has integrated art into the plaza.
- The Ian Stewart Complex development would be beneficial to partner with in the early design stages for flexible space and could generate income for the University of Victoria.
- Arts and culture considerations could be part of new development applications. The Planning Department will provide direction.
- Affordable living space is challenging for artists and musicians.
- Integrating arts and culture into the economic development strategy is an excellent addition.
- The Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) is providing input.
- A sense of belonging in the community can improve health and wellbeing.
- The Victoria Foundation has tracked wellness in the community through surveys. This data would be beneficial to the plan.
- A way to measure outcomes as it pertains to wellbeing would be useful.

\*\*\*The Economic Development Manager exited the meeting at 6:17 p.m.\*\*\*

**ARCHIVES UPDATE**

The Archives Supervisor provided an update, and the following was noted:

- Visitors increase in the fall.
- The Archives staff have expanded the online content.
- The Royal Oak Community Timeline has received good feedback.
- Six online neighbourhood exhibits have been completed.
- There is a new online photo gallery showcasing 23 Saanich Mayors from 1906-2006.
- The Archives newsletter is available on the Saanich website.
- A Remembrance Day exhibit will be displayed at the Municipal Hall in October.
- Some recent acquisitions to the Archives collections include:
  - Memorial Avenue Committee records
  - Gordon Head Fruit Growers Association records from 1940 – 1960
  - Donations of Oldfield family items including photographs, plaques, scrapbooks, and ledgers
  - The Nicholson family photos with postcards from the Royal North-West Mounted Police in Saskatchewan.

**STRATEGIC OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE**

The Senior Community Planner provided an update, and the following was noted:

- Phase two of the engagement process was presented to Council in August 2023.
- Excellent feedback was gathered, and the participation from the community was good.
- A revised draft will be brought forward for Council's consideration in November 2023.
- The arts, culture and wellbeing aspect of the plan could use clarification.
- The 2008 Official Community Plan (OCP) is being reviewed to ensure the strong framework is carried over to the updated plan.
- Enjoying a sense of wellbeing in the community is vital and could be reflected in the update.

The Chair made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- The OCP continues in the same direction as the 2008 version and is a rich and vibrant document.
- The OCP contains the updated Housing Strategy and neighbourhood plans; this is a living document.
- The OCP combines all areas of policies and strategies into one document.
- The public engagement process was meaningful, allowing all Saanich residents ample time to provide feedback.
- Emphasis on specific areas of the OCP allows for a streamlined approach.
- The Minister of Housing is in a better position because of the policy documents that are in place.

\*\*\*The Senior Community Planner exited the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

**INSTALLATION OF PRIDE PAINTED CURBS AT SAANICH OPERATION CENTRE**

The Senior Manager of Community Services provided information, and the following was noted:

- The public yard will be redeveloped in the near future.
- A welcome sign and painted roadblocks would be visible from the drop-off bay.
- Hearing from the committee would be helpful.
- This project will encourage conversation with a variety of people.
- Vandalism will be repaired as soon as possible.

The committee made the following comments:

- This plan is good and should move forward.
- Information on the website would be helpful.
- Decisions are made with an inclusive lens.
- Normalizing sidewalks and paintings will build acceptance.
- The report was appreciated, clear and well laid out.

**FINAL REMARKS**

The Chair made the following comments, and the following was noted:

- Applications to apply for the 2024 Advisory Committees are due in November. The Terms of Reference will be updated.
- An arts and culture award could be considered in the future.
- A clear vision is needed for how the arts is integrated into all the Departments.
- The committee's new name has broadened the mandate.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

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Councillor Harper, Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

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Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

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