

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE REVIEW CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at the Cedar Hill Golf Course, Banquet Room

Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Chair: John Schmuck

Present: Julian Anderson, Art Beck; Joe Calenda; Matt Gauk; Caleb Horn; Phil Lancaster, Andrew Medd; Mano Sandhu, Jim Schneider; Brian Wilkes

Regrets: Karin McTaggart; Zig Hancyk

Consultant: Linda Allen, Managing Partner, CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.

Staff: Penny Masse, Senior Committee Clerk, District of Saanich

1. REVIEW OF AGENDA

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed the Committee and guests.

MOVED by J. Calenda and Seconded by M. Sandhu that the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by J. Calenda and Seconded by B. Wilkes: "That the minutes of the Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee meeting held on May 11, 2016 be adopted as amended."

CARRIED

3. CORRESPONDENCE

- It was noted that the Chair sent a letter of invitation dated May 12, 2016 to Ms. Tara Faganello, Assistant Deputy Minister, Local Government Division, Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (copy of letter circulated to GRCAC members).

4. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) – REVIEW OF STATUS

Review of Scoring Procedures

Ms. Allen provided an update on the RFP process and a review of the evaluation and scoring criteria for proponents, the following was noted:

- Saanich has hired a consultant who will be working with the Human Resources Department and the Director of Finance to expedite and manage the RFP process. Ms. Allen will meet with Saanich management and the new consultant this week to update them on GRCAC progress to date. The RFP will not be posted for several weeks; however, updates to the Committee will be provided.

- All Committee members will receive copies of proponent submissions and will utilize the evaluation and scoring spreadsheet (circulated to GRCAC members) to assess each submission. It is recommended to use a pencil for this exercise as the scoring system will fluctuate as each submission is evaluated. Each Committee member will then submit their completed spreadsheets to the Vice Chair who will create a master spreadsheet which will average scores in order to determine which proponents will be granted an interview. The master spreadsheet will be forwarded to all GRCAC members for information only. Only the Interview Sub-Committee will participate in the interview process.
- The evaluation and scoring criteria will ensure the fair and equal assessment of each proponent, including how well they understand the project, their understanding of the role of the GRCAC, and required expectations. Scoring will become relative and will likely need to be reassessed several times.
- It was suggested that scoring ranges be utilized (i.e.: 7-10 = Good / 4-6 = Average / 2-5 = Poor) and that key words or concepts be used in the evaluation process to ensure objective comparison.
- Saanich will follow-up on references submitted by proponents.
- Proponents will need to be clear about their approach and method. Monitoring and reporting processes should also be identified.
- The proponent should identify innovative ways to attract members of the public who normally do not actively participate in their city's governance; this should be a key evaluation point and could perhaps be built into the scoring and evaluation spreadsheet.
- The quality, accuracy and aesthetics of the submission should also be considered.
- The budget should be assessed on the basis of best value for the money.
- Reporting, justifying and invoicing by the successful proponent should be emphasized. Collective expectations of the Committee should be reviewed once all submissions have been received.

Interview Sub-Committee Members

The GRCAC discussed membership of the Interview Sub-Committee and the following was noted:

- Mr. Anderson expressed interest in being included in the Interview Sub-Committee; it was noted by the Chair of the sub-committee that while four members is sufficient for evaluation and interviewing, it would be appreciated to have an alternate available to the sub-committee.

MOVED by J. Calenda and Seconded by P. Lancaster to approve Mr. Julian Anderson as the alternate member to the Interview Sub-Committee of the GRCAC.

CARRIED

5. NEXT MEETING DATES

- The GRCAC meeting tentatively scheduled for June 15, 2016 has been **cancelled**.
- The following GRCAC meeting dates have been confirmed and will be held in the Fire and Police Building (Kirby Room):
 - Wednesday, June 29, 2016;
 - Wednesday, July 27, 2016; and
 - Wednesday, August 24, 2016.

6. SEARCH SESSION #2 – DISCUSSION ARISING FROM THE “3 STREAMS” OF SEARCH SESSION #1

- Ms. Allen asked the Committee to create three sub-groups in order to foster further discussion regarding the results of Search Session 1 and to ascertain if there are any outstanding or unidentified questions that need to be answered by the District prior to moving forward in the process.
- The sub-groups discussed the three topics of the Search Sessions and provided comments on the identified issues (attached); these macro issues will serve as a starting point to the consultation process and will help to identify questions the consultant will pose to members of the public.

7. INVITATION TO FUTURE GUEST PRESENTERS

MOVED by M. Gauk and Seconded by J. Calenda that the Chair formally invite representatives of ‘Amalgamation Yes’, Professor Robert Bish and other special interest groups to future GRCAC meetings.

CARRIED

8. OTHER BUSINESS

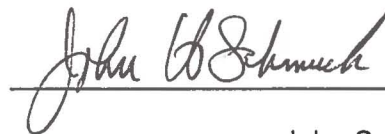
- It was requested that Dropbox be reorganized on a meeting-by-meeting basis that includes the related agenda, minutes and supporting documents. Ms. Masse will administer this request.

9. ADJOURNMENT


MOVED by J. Calenda and Seconded by P. Lancaster that the meeting be adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

CARRIED

The next scheduled meeting date is Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. and will be held in the Kirby Room, Fire and Police Building.



John Schmuck, CHAIR
Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee (GRCAC)



Penny Masse, Senior Committee Clerk
District of Saanich

Search Session #2

Topic: What is the District's relationship with its sister municipalities and the CRD? Should this be changed to achieve more cost savings and efficiencies?

- Is there a good way to deal with regional services?
 - In theory, the CRD should work as a regional entity, but ???
 - Saanich is involved in several areas and perhaps the CRD is working reasonably well
 - It is a continuum (locally provided services – shared services – amalgamation) How far do you go?
 - There is a continuum that applies to every level of services
 - Border areas of municipalities have different rules for same residents
 - How can you build consensus among different municipalities? What can the Regional District do?
 - Too much focus on particular issues – e.g., planning and bylaw enforcement
- Comments on amalgamation
 - Politicians tend to think about their own municipality as opposed to a regional focus; once you lose regional focus, then you lose effectiveness
 - Examples – sewage treatment plant location, transportation
 - However, if there is amalgamation, you lose connection with your local politicians
 - It is costly to amalgamate and much more study needs to be done
 - More municipalities mean more top-heavy bureaucracy
 - Amalgamation is just a tool. We need to focus on what amalgamation can do
 - Amalgamation should be an outcome of coordination and planning
 - I like the idea of a regional government
 - We can ask a series of questions, such as, amalgamation of services (e.g., police, etc.) and not everything
 - Name different services and ask the public's opinion whether that service should be regional or local
 - We should be asking people about their opinions vs. cost/benefit issues only. Such as ... Why amalgamate? What will be compromised? What are the short comings / benefits?
- Other comments
 - Making sure we are asking the right questions in the election. Ask people what they value. What matters most as part of living Saanich.

Session facilitated and comments compiled by: Mano Sandhu, Member GRCAC

Topic: How the District is governed internally?

- Need to get a handle on meeting length
 - Seems to be too many items on an agenda, meetings go until well after midnight
 - Decision-making by exhaustion?
 - Too many controversial items on one agenda
 - Topics get discussed, a staff report is requested, months later the same topic is re-hashed, with maybe no decisions. Put off decision-making by making it too complex
 - What is the typical “map” for decision-making? Is it possible to simplify the process? Consultant could explore that.
 - What is the basis of controversy? Is it poor communications on an issue? What else causes controversy?
- The way the budget is put together is back to front; the public consultation comes after the budget is done, not before.
 - Does the public understand the budget process?
 - How is spending connected to the stated vision and goals of Saanich?
 - How does the public want to be engaged in the budget process?
 - There needs to be a better review of the budget surpluses – these seem to be treated as discretionary pots of cash
- Public Input
 - How does citizen input influence decisions?
 - Are there a set of issues over which citizens want more direct involvement?
 - The consultant should explore what people know about how Saanich functions and how it uses public input
- Concern expressed that some elected officials have been there too long – are past their “best before” date. Is there an option for limiting the term of municipal politicians?
- One way of simplifying or keeping on track is to use records of decisions instead of minutes – cut out the dialogue, and focus on decisions and action items only, and keep track of progress on those.
- A strong concern was expressed that approvals in Saanich are much too slow; there is a sense that officials in Saanich hinder the approvals process for the public rather than help, as is the case in other local governments.
- Concern expressed that hindering and delays may reflect the intentions of staff rather than the intentions of council
- Slowness and excessive complexity threatens to become the Saanich “brand”, causing business interests to go elsewhere to invest.
- Concern was expressed about the depth of understanding that councillor have on an issue before they vote on it.
- Concerns were expressed that councillors are only visible during elections and at other times are not visible or well known to members of the community.

Session facilitated and comments compiled by: Brian Wilkes, Member, GRCAC

May 25, 2016 – Search Session #2 @ GRCAC Meeting

Topic: How the District Interacts with Residents and Saanich-based stakeholders?

Citizen's interaction with local government – representative democracy

- need for a responsive mayor and council
 - 4-year terms, yet little to no accountability between elections
 - cynicism can lead to disengagement
- how much do citizens know about local governance processes (or want to know)?
- need timely access to information
 - there is not enough notice on issues that matter
 - a good website and social media could be part of the solution
 - but not all citizens are computer-literate, particularly the older demographic
 - a new website is needed
 - more interactive
 - auto-email function
 - users can select topics of interest (e.g. council agendas/minutes, developments by type or area, recreation events etc.)
 - updated FAQ section based on popular searches (e.g. garbage pickup schedules was cited as a popular search)
 - Community Associations are frequently used to disseminate information
 - is all information getting through to community?
 - not everyone is a member of CA
 - some CAs may be better than others at communications
 - is information passed on in a timely manner
 - could information be better provided directly to the citizen (see auto-email suggestion above)
- Saanich is thought to be slow with approvals and permits
 - a clearer website is needed
 - should there be guaranteed response times?
 - there should be a web-based tracking tool for development (as the City of Victoria has)
- do incoming councillors / mayors get an orientation package?
 - if so, is it publicly available
 - public should know what is required of elected officials in order to have realistic expectations of them
- would a Ward System help?
 - too few Councillors to be elected by Wards?
 - Councillors could be appointed to a neighbourhood / Community Association
 - may not be an area the Councillor is knowledgeable about
 - some Councillors are more effective than others – could create an imbalance

Public Consultation

- most things do not need consultation, but more important matters certainly do
 - what sort of things should be consulted on?

- o how should feedback be received?
 - o there are many pieces to the puzzle, particularly with development
 - what stages could or should require consultation?
- when consultation is needed, the feedback should be used to problem-solve
 - o needs to be useful to decision-makers

Session facilitated and comments compiled by: Julian Anderson, Member, GRCAC