Northwest Nanoose Residents Association

NNRA

(Approved 07/09/24)
Mid-Year Meeting Minutes Of
June 17, 2024 @ 6:30 p.m.
Nanoose Place

1) Meeting Called To Order, 6:40 p.m.

President Rudi Widdershoven welcomed invited guests:
Area "E" RDN Director, Bob Rogers, Area "G" Director, Leeann Wallace, City of Parksville Councillor, Sean Wood.

See attachment # 1- Chairman's Report. Active and supportive participation to the Chairman's call of questions and answers from the floor set the stage for a productive and informative meeting. Rudi Widdershoven acknowledged the main interest of most attendees of this meeting was, Property Taxes. Therefore, he advised most Committee Reports would be brief thus allowing more time for the "Main Event", Property Taxes.

2) Committee Reports:

Community Notice Boards: (Neil Watson & Gina Marchi)

Reported these 9 aged notice boards located at our Canada Post mailboxes are overdue for replacement. A local supplier, Fenceline Products, has been instrumental at assisting the drafting and designing of replacement boards. Post & concrete specifications have been determined. The creation of a multi-purpose sign board prototype is underway for Board approval. Once approved, neighbourhood "work bees" will be organized and a call for volunteers to be expected. Neil Watson offered "Beer & Burgers" at his place, upon completion, for those who participated in the replacement process. Current estimated total cost, per board: $220 x 9= $1,980. Corporate advertising/sponsorship will be sought to help defray these NNRA costs.

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Public Beach Access Points: (Neil Watson & Diane Springford)

Reported considerable effort but limited progress working with and through the RDN and Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure ("MOTI"). Primary concerns are **safety** from: windfall/debris, potential of wildfire, invasive species, unauthorized use and, now, increased access suggested by the RDN. All adjacent property owners to these 14 beach accesses have been contacted to discuss their issues or concerns with these unkept properties. A "self help" document was prepared by the NNRA and delivered to each of these property owners, see Attachment #2- Beach Accesses. Neil Watson & Diane Springford met, as a NNRA delegation , with the RDN's Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee on June 12th in response to a RDN Staff Report "Nanoose Bay Water Access Study" dated March 14, 2024. It was this delegation's intention to take a more collaborative approach with the RDN and its dealings with MOTI. No further response to date and this NNRA effort will continue.

Water: (Neil Watson & Gina Marchi)

Reported a review of Neil Watson and Rudi Widdershoven's meeting with Area "E" Director, Bob Rogers and Manager of RDN Water Services, Murray Walters. This meeting was held April 3, 2024 and summary meeting Q & A's posted on NNRA website as "News Releases-A Continued Discussion on Water". In short, water supply is more than adequate. Peak summer usage does, however, require more water storage capacity. This increased storage capacity was reported as "needed now" and will also enable adequate water for near term future development. This lead to a presentation of the Nanoose Bay/Parksville Water Service Area Reservoir 2024 Improvement Project. See Attachment #3-NBPWSA Reservoir Improvement Project. This is a $1.2m borrowing referendum and a call for public input by Sept 16th. Go to: www.elmtreedm.com/rdn

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Property Taxes: (Wayne Stark & Rick Ehlers)

Reported and presented a Detailed Analysis-RDN Taxation Issues Power Point presentation. This was a summary of many meetings with the RDN. An active, lengthy and sometimes heated discussion ensued. Considerable interest expressed and questions evolved from the membership in attendance. A call for action was made, as per Attachment #4, RDN Taxation-Executive Summary. Both the "Detailed Analysis & Executive Summary: are now posted on NNRA website: "News Releases".

#3) Motion to adjourn: 9:40 p.m.

#4) Attendees: 82
New Members Derived: 11

End

#1a)

NNRA Mid-Term Membership Meeting
June 17, 2024
Chairman's Report

Good Evening Fellow Residents, and welcome to the RDN Board Members in attendance, Wayne will introduce them later in the meeting. I am Rudi Widdershoven and I am the Chair of NNRA Board.

Please note that segments of this meeting will be recorded in order to have some of the presentations available for the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to Thank and Introduce your current Board of Directors:
Secretary – Neil Watson, also spearing Water, Beach Accesses, Notice Boards
Treasurer – Bill Marsh
Wayne Stark – who has taken on the Property Tax Committee
Rick Ehlers – assisting Wayne
Gerry Theberge – membership
Diane Springford – Beach Access Committee
Gina Marchi – Water Committee and Notice Boards

Also I would like to thank Dave Jamieson for his many years on the Board, Dave decided to step down from the Board in March in order to have more personal time. His humor and knowledge have been missed

Your Board of Directors have been busy since the AGM held December 5th. As per the Agenda you will receive a report from the following committees:

1) Community Notice Boards

2) Public Beach Access Points

3) Water

4) Property Taxes – in particular the RDN's 5 year plan

#1b)

Since the AGM we have had, or participated, in the following meetings:

Directors' meeting **December 13th** when we determined the 3 priorities for 2024 – RDN Property Taxes, Watering Restrictions and Fire Mitigation of the public access points;

January 7th – several members of the Board appeared as a Delegation at the RDN Board meeting in regards to Property Taxes

Directors' meeting January 8th

February 5th I attended RDN Open House in regards to the Zoning Bylaw changes;

Directors' meeting February 6th

Directors' meeting March 7th

Directors' meeting April 2nd;

April 3rd Neil & I met with Regional Director Bob Rogers & Murray Walters of RDN Water Services and in the afternoon Wayne & I met with Bob Rogers and Joe Ringwald in regards to the RDN Financial Plan;

April 9th I attended with several other Directors a RDN Board meeting about the Financial Plan;

Directors' meeting May 23rd;

Directors' informal meeting June 6th in preparation of today;

These are just meeting that I attended with other Directors and does not included the additional Committee Meetings in regards to Property Taxes, Beach Access points and Water. Your Board has been Very busy on your behalf. If you are interested in participating on a committee please let us know at the end of the meeting.

As this is not the AGM we are not going to deal with some of the formal reports so we have more time to deal with the items outlined. You are going to get to hear about the work of the various committees. We will start with:

#1c)

1) Community Notice Boards I will be looking for sponsorship, any questions

2) Public Beach Access Points – any questions

3) Water – we are informing you about what we have learned, any questions

Before we get into the Big topic I would like to take a **quick survey**:

1. How many have received and paid, going to pay, their taxes without analyzing?
2. How many are okay with their RDN Property Taxes?
3. How many are Not happy with their RDN Property Taxes?

4) Property Taxes – in particular the RDN's 5 year plan

I am sure you can appreciate all of the work that Wayne has done. It is going to be a long process and we need all of you, and many more throughout the region to participate if we are to have a positive impact.

One more survey question before we open it to the floor:

4. How many of you would like to have significant change to the future forecasted RDN Financial Plan?

Questions or Comments?

04/02/2

#29)

Northwest Nanoose Residents Association

NNRA

TO: Member/Property Owners Adjacent to 14 Public Beach Accesses RDN Mapped as E-53 to E-66

SUBJECT: Many of these accesses are unkept, some now deemed unsafe and environmentally non-compliant.

HISTORY: Prior to the advent of the Regional District of Nanaimo ("RDN") in 1967, the provincial government mandated that oceanfront property sub-divided and developed must provide public access to the oceanfront. These accesses were and remain crown land governed by what is today known as, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure ("MOTI"). It is believed 150+ of such accesses exist today throughout the RDN.
In 1967, the RDN became the authority having jurisdiction over what is now called rural Area "E" or Nanoose Bay, as we know it. These public beach accesses remained the jurisdiction of the province or MOTI. For some time now MOTI has had an internal policy along the lines that: "if it is not paved with black top, it will not receive regular repairs and maintenance by MOTI or its maintenance sub-contractors".

The Issues: Public Beach Accesses E-53 to E-66, referred to above, date back to the early 1970's. During this 50 year period of virtually no management of these crown lands:

1. Some trees, their related windfall and debris have grown to become threats to or hardships for adjacent property owners to manage.
2. That 50 year accumulation of debris and under-burden, in the context of global warming, is now becoming a potential threat of wildfire only compounded by increased public use. We believe some of these crown lands now breach the province's own guidelines known as Fire Smart (residential).
3. Many of these crown lands within our residential neighborhoods are now infested with provincially designated Invasive Species, not limited to Himalayan Black Berry, Holly, English Ivy and Scotch Broom. Adjacent property owners have been left to manage spread of such invasive species to their own and ultimately other properties.
4. Of late and to a limited degree, these crown properties have become an invitation to live by the unhoused.

NNRA Actions to Date: The NNRA, since its inception in May, 2001 has been periodically called upon and acted for its member/adjacent property owners, to the best of our ability. We have strived to work with and through all local government agencies, with limited success. Over this 20+ year time period, those calls have become increasingly more urgent due to this neglect by MOTI.
The RDN has somewhat supported these concerns by posting: "No Smoking", "No Campfires" & "No Overnight Parking" signs at high use accesses. They will gratefully be encouraged to continue and expand this signage, outside their jurisdiction.

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#2b)

Adjacent Property Owner Action Required:
Should you have concern or have current issues as outlined above, especially threat of falling limbs or trees, the following are appropriate contacts and to best be addressed in writing:

#1) Mainroad Mid Island Contracting, LP
1435 Springhill Rd.,
Parksville, B.C. V9P 2T2
Cell: (604) 312-7329
Office: (250) 586-8884
E-Mail: ijary@mainroad.ca
www.mainroad.ca

In the event you have not satisfactorily resolved your concerns through #1) above, please escalate by contacting:
#2) James Miskulin, BBA, MCPM.
Sr. Development Services Officer,
Min. of Transportation & Infrastructure,
Vancouver Island District
(250) 734-4821
james.miskulin@gov.bc.ca

NNRA has also been advised that if property damage appears imminent, it would be prudent to contact your property insurer and encourage them to put MOTI on notice in the event of an actual claim and as motivation for their action.

Summary:
NNRA, as a volunteer organization, willingly tries to assist and advocate for our members. If you are not a "paid up" member and reading this notice, you simply need to be. Go to: www.nnra.ca
Membership fees are only $10 per annum of $25 for 3 years.

C/C: #1) Adam Walker, MLA
Province of B.C.
#2) James Miskulin,
MOTI
#3) Bob Rogers,
Area "E" Dir., RDN

NBPWSA Reservoir Improvement Project Loan 2024 Highlights

- Arbutus Reservoir Renewal
- Notch Hill New Reservoir Project
- Total cost to Nanoose Bay Peninsula 2,574 residents $1.197,795 loan
- Would mean $465 one payment or $34.22 over 25 years

#39

- RDN relay info by > Project page, 4 community info sessions, letters sent to homes
- IF less than 10% responses submitted "oppositional forms", project will GO AHEAD
- Deadline for receiving elector response forms Sept. 16, 4pm
- www.elmtreedm.com/rdn *for info and electoral response forms*

#3b)

#4a)

June 17, 2024

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANIAMO (RDN) TAXATION ISSUE – Executive Summary

The Issue: The rate and scale of the RDN's Tax increases are excessive and economically insensitive given:

1) The current economic climate of significant inflation reflecting high food, energy and borrowing costs and a possible recession.
2) This is putting pressure on everyone, young families and retirees included.
3) There is a lack of awareness that our region has a high proportion of taxpayers on fixed income and a limited number of high paying job opportunities.

Key Facts:

1) Total taxes are planned to increase 11.4% in 2024 and increase 64.7% over the next 5 years. That is an average of just over 11% per year or 6.22 times the forecasted inflation rate. (Area E's increase is 16.4% for 2024). Your taxes will double in just under 7 years vs 35 years if capped to inflation.
2) It is not just an area E problem. Without a Ravensong Capital Credit, total taxes are up 12.9% region wide.
3) Over 42.4% increase is within existing service levels, and a $722,523 increase in planning related costs. Another huge increase is within Parks and Rec., not a priority in difficult economic times.
4) Over the next 5 years Massive Capital Spending of $525.1 Million is planned. It burns all past surpluses of $10.6 Million, requires $299 Million in new borrowing, and $72 Million in planned operating surpluses funded by excessive taxation.
5) These Capital Spending projects need to be spread over more years and the scale and approach to each must be challenged and refined to reduce the tax burden.
6) Debt Servicing Charges are expected in increase from $7,246,644 to $23,524,158 or 325% over the next 5 years.
7) Note, RDN wages and benefits will increase 39.5% over 5 years or 8.1% per year. This is 3.24 times the expected inflation rate.

The Root of the Problem

1) Economically insensitive RDN board members who lack true awareness of the economic capacity of the taxpayers.
2) A budgeting process without spending limits and or effective built-in controls of the 'Total Spending Level'.
3) The RDN Board Lacks Visibility of the Cost Structure of each Services and lack a detailed review of key Planned Capital Projects so that they can be assessed, and pressure tested for scope, scale, urgency, and speed to set priorities and bring fiscal balance to the financial plan.
4) Excessive Capital Spending in the 5-year window that is too much and too fast for the size and capacity of the tax base to fund. It must be reduced significantly (in the order of -120 million) and spread over a longer timeframe.
5) Expanding Administration & Planning costs are mirroring the captial overspend.

Our Belief

The people who work on our behalf are hard-working and well-intended and we value them.
We believe they were largely unaware of the lack of capacity in the tax base from the citizen.
Now that they have been informed, we are demanding financial balance and accountability.
We believe the issue ties to:

1) A poor planning process to cap overall spending and set related financial targets for departmental planning.
2) Ineffective approaches to define efficient project approaches, financially pressure test, effectively prioritize and time major projects.

#4b)

What we Want!

1) Greater awareness, understanding and empathy for the true capacity of the tax paying citizens.
2) Total Tax Increased Capped to Inflation or growth of the tax base and income.
3) Total Spending Cap Related Planning Targets, by department (Service), driving the planning process each year.
4) Improved Governance for Delivery of true "Fiscal Balance"
    a. Board Audit & Finance Committee make sure spending items are essential vs nice to have and that the approach, cost and timing of major spending items are vetted and tied to overall financial capacity.
    b. CFO reporting to CAO
    c. CAO responsible for planning process and budget integrity along with the implementation and management of a total spending cap.
    d. Staff performance tied to service delivery and balanced fiscal budget delivery.
5) Recut Budgets Now
    a. Reduce the rate of capital spending and spread it over time beyond 2028 and cut Parks and Rec. Land Purchases & Ravensong Expansion.
    b. Dramatically reduce the planned Corporate Services Operating Costs and remove the 2027 major capital spending for a new Administration Building.

Our Approach

1) PATH A – Engage Directly with our RDN Leadership to confirm our analysis of the issue and validate, align to a set of solutions, and hold them to account.
2) PATH B – Engage our Fellow Citizens Directly on Mass across the RDN to create a 'Powerful Coalition of RDN Taxpayers' so that we are heard!
3) PATH C – A bold path - Under Development

How You Can Help

1) Join the Association & Ensure we have your email.
2) Share with your friends and neighbours within Nanoose and beyond.
    - Our presentations can be accessed on www.nnra.ca or use the briefing notes we are giving you tonight.
3) Give the RDN your input and demand "fiscal balance" and dramatically reduced capital spending.
    - Participate in the RDN's On-line Survey at getinvolved.rdn.ca/rdn-budget-talks (Note: The RDN's survey is open now until July 5th)
4) Write directly to the RDN Board Members and CAO
    - Let them hear your financial reality and how you feel about their rate of spending, lack of prioritization, and poor fiscal management. (All contact information is available on the RDN website under RDN Board)
5) Show up In-Person On-mass at two key RDN meetings. (Note: Get on our mailing list so we can provide reminders)
    - July 5th. – Public Invited to share their thoughts on priorities for 2025-2026
    - November 5th - Review of the Consolidated Budget for 2025-2029
    - December 10th. -Approval of the 2025-2029 Budget
6) Next Election - October 17th, 2026.