



**VILLAGE OF BELCARRA
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING and
PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSION MINUTES
2024 – 2028 FINANCIAL PLAN &
LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY
VILLAGE HALL
FEBRUARY 5, 2024**



This meeting was held in Council Chambers

Council in Attendance

Mayor Jamie Ross
Councillor Carolina Clark
Councillor Joe Elworthy
Councillor Janet Ruzycki
Councillor Liisa Wilder

Staff in Attendance

Paula Richardson, Chief Administrative Officer
Amanda Seibert, Corporate Officer/Recording Secretary
Stewart Novak, Public Works and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Jane Dreier, Clerk

Others in Attendance

Ken Bjorgaard, Financial Consultant
Edward Van den Berg, LandInfo Technologies

We wish to acknowledge that this meeting took place on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples. Tum-Tumay-Whueton, or Belcarra, is home to an ancestral village of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. We are thankful to conduct our work within their territory.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

2.1 Special Council Meeting and Public Consultation Session, February 5, 2024

Moved by: Councillor Wilder
Seconded by: Councillor Ruzycki

That the Agenda for the Special Council Meeting for the Public Consultation Session on the 2024 – 2028 Financial Plan & Long-Term Financial Sustainability of February 5, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

The Mayor outlined the procedure to be followed during for the meeting during the Public Input session.

3.1 Ken Bjorgaard, Financial Consultant, presentation of the draft 2024 – 2028 Financial Plan (including the 2024 budget) (plan) and other financial information

The Financial Consultant gave a detailed presentation providing information on the draft 2024 – 2028 Financial Plan which included the following:

- Background and definition
- Strategic Direction
- Economic Outlook and External Environment
- Financial Condition Overview including
 - Debt
 - Funding for Fire Halls
 - Debt Versus Reserve Funding
 - Reserves & Surplus Transfers
 - Property Taxes and Utility User Rates History
 - 2023 Taxes and the various taxing authorities
 - Asset Plan and Funding
 - Tax and Utility Rates
 - Proposed Tax Rate Increase Options

4. PUBLIC INPUT AND QUESTION PERIOD

Jim Chisholm, Belcarra resident, queried why Option C was dropped.

The Financial Consultation advised on the two options of 8% and 10% chosen by Council at a previous meeting.

Penny Moen, Belcarra resident, referred to information pertaining to Metro Vancouver and the financing of the fire halls. She asked whether there is any funding for the fire halls coming from any other agencies. She also asked about the amount of money currently in the Metro Vancouver reserve.

The Financial Consultant advised on Metro Vancouver funding for the fire halls.

Ms. Moen queried how much funding for the fire halls was in the Metro Vancouver reserve fund.

The Financial Consultant advised on the amount of money within the reserve fund and yearly contributions. He explained the difference between reserve funds for fire halls and for equipment.

Rob Begg, Belcarra resident, referred to the water system being valued at \$10.5 million on the asset list and asked whether this was a depreciated value. He also asked about the expected life of the water system.

The Financial Consultant provided clarification on the value listed for the water system.

The representative from LandInfo Technologies provided information on life expectancy of the water system.

Rob Begg, Belcarra resident, expressed concern with the assets and liabilities section in the financial report in that depreciated values are not shown. He also commented on the impact on funding for the water system of having all residents connected to the water system and paying the same base rate with a higher rate being charged as more water is used.

Brian Hirsch, Belcarra resident, requested clarification pertaining to the infrastructure funding gap.

The Financial Consultation provided clarification on the funding gap, advising that the gap was based on an average amount that had been consumed to date and was a broad estimate.

Joe Webber, Belcarra resident, commented on the distinction between Belcarra and Metro Vancouver in terms of the fire halls and asked what the expected increase to taxes will be in addition to an increase in property taxes. He advised that he had calculated an increase of approximately \$1400 per year.

The Financial Consultant indicated that a cost estimate will be more definitive once a final number was reached at Metro Vancouver, including how much funding could be set aside through reserves to reduce the debt amount.

Joe Webber, Belcarra resident, asked whether additional revenue from other sources could mitigate the impact of the cost of a fire hall on tax rates paid by residents.

The Financial Consultant provided information on the possibility of using reserves to lessen the amount of borrowing for the Village of Belcarra.

Gwen Hughes, Belcarra resident, expressed concern with the estimated cost of building a fire hall.

Brian Hirsch, Belcarra resident, requested clarification on the roles of the GVRD and the Village of Belcarra pertaining to fire hall charges.

The Financial Consultant advised that although Metro Vancouver will be the agency borrowing to fund the fire halls. He noted that there may be an opportunity to reduce overall borrowing by providing funds from other sources.

Jim Chisholm, Belcarra resident, stated that the assessment for the \$500,000 project relating to fire halls came from Metro Vancouver and asked whether the Village had signed off on that project.

The Financial Consultant confirmed that the intent of the \$500,000 would be to ascertain an exact number on how much the proposed fire halls will cost.

Rob Begg, Belcarra resident, expressed the importance of advising Belcarra residents that they will be responsible for the debt on borrowing funding for fire halls, whether money is borrowed by Metro Vancouver or another agency. He also expressed concern that currently Belcarra residents will spend three times the amount of Anmore residents on proposed fire halls under the current agreement.

Deborah Struk, Belcarra resident, expressed concern with the Village of Belcarra being under the thumb of Metro Vancouver as a result of debt incurred to pay for a fire hall.

Steve Marchese, Belcarra resident, questioned whether the funding gap was going to be financed through tax increases and if consideration had been given to selling additional assets to reduce tax burdens on residents.

The Financial Consultant provided clarification on how increases in rates will be funded. He asked if the resident was referring to road ends as additional assets.

The Chief Administrative Officer provided an explanation of the Village's ability to road ends to offset tax increases as follows:

In relation to the portion of closed or unopened municipal road allowances that provide access to a body of water the Village is restricted to selling such land and the use of the proceeds to augment general funds and offset property taxes. Section 188(2)(c) of the Community Charter provides that money received under section 41(1)(d) must be placed to the credit of a reserve fund in accordance with that section, so for the road allowances that have access to water, the funds have to be put into a reserve fund in order to purchase other properties that have access to the same body of water, therefore they would not become part of the general fund.

Klaus Bever, Belcarra resident, indicated that he is in support of a 10% increase. He thanked the Village for the opportunity to provide public input.

Sherry Chisholm, Belcarra resident, commented on the sale of surplus lands leading to the waterfront, expressing that those lots which are 66 feet wide could be sold as 50 foot lots with retention of the remainder to allow access to the waterfront. She queried whether out of 31 road ends, 5 or 6 could be sold that would not impact anyone and would mitigate the debt to Metro Vancouver for the proposed fire hall.

The Chief Administrative Officer clarified that road allowances being used for trails and for infrastructure also cannot be sold to offset debt.

Irene VanderSpek, Belcarra resident, expressed that the Revenue Generation Committee had identified 12 road ends suitable for sale. She felt that the Village could use the funds from the sale of these properties to pay for a new fire hall.

The Chief Administrative Officer indicated that further information on remaining road allowances will have to be provided.

Debra Struk, Belcarra resident, referred to a letter she provided as part of public input and expressed that she agreed that a 10% tax increased will help with reserves. She also expressed that the Village needs to find other means of making money and provided examples such as subdivision fees and property transfer taxes as other means of raising funds.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Councillor Wilder
Seconded by: Councillor Elworthy

That the February 5, 2024 Special Council Meeting and Public Consultation Session be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm

Certified Correct:



Jamie Ross
Mayor



Amanda Seibert
Corporate Officer