



THE CORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE OF ASHCROFT

TOWN HALL

MINUTES

**HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE VILLAGE OFFICE
AT 4:30 PM ON MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023**

PRESENT: Mayor, Barbara Roden
Councillor, Jonah Anstett (Zoom)
Councillor, Jessica Clement
Councillor, Nadine Davenport
Councillor, Doreen Lambert

CAO, Daniela Dyck
CFO, Yogi Bhalla
DPW, Brian Bennewith

Media –
Public – 6

EXCUSED:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Roden called the Town Hall Meeting for Monday May 8, 2023, to order at 4:30 pm.

“Mayor and Council wish to acknowledge that the meeting today is held within the traditional territory of the Nlaka’pamux people.”

2. WELCOME TO THE TOWN HALL MEETING

Mayor Roden welcomed all those in the gallery and those attending via Facebook noting this meeting is a statutory requirement to present Ashcroft’s financials to the public.

Power went out partially into the meeting, as such recording and live streaming was not possible.

3. 2022 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND 2023-2027 FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

CFO, Yogi Bhalla guided Council and members from the public through a power point presentation discussing the following:

Local Governments are required to have a balanced budget as per the Community Charter and that the budget be presented annually to the public.

Separate accounts must be established for:

General Operating Fund – Public works, roads, administration, recreation, protective services and solid waste.

Water Operating Fund – Delivery, pipes, treatment, pump houses, infrastructure, treatment plant and reserves.



Sewer Operating Fund – Collection, pipes, treatment, lift stations, infrastructure, treatment plant, reserves

Restricted Assets & Reserves:

- Capital Works Reserve Fund
- Sewer Fund
- Water Fund
- Machinery & Equipment Reserve Fund
- Perpetual Care Reserve Fund
- Fire Department Reserve
- Transit Reserve
- Growing Communities Fund

Restricted Assets approximate value is 3.4 million.

Unrestricted Assets approximate value is 1.4 million.

CFO Bhalla provided a breakdown of the restricted asset reserve values.

CFO Bhalla move to presenting the Audited Financial Statements commenting on assets and liabilities. Noting:

- Ashcroft increased assets and decreased liabilities in 2022.
- Tangible capital assets increased in values in 2022 by \$547,000.

2022 Revenue and Expenses

Revenues - \$5,149,783 (includes some grant funding received for projects started or completed in 2021) Revenues are collected through – taxation, sales of services, government grants, licenses, permits and penalties. CFO Bhalla presented a breakdown of revenues by category.

Expenses - \$3,900,278 Revenues are collected through – Government, protective services, transportation, environmental and public health, recreation, culture, water and sewer. CFO Bhalla presented a breakdown of expenses by category.

Prior to moving on to CFO Bhalla open the floor for questions.

- Clarification requested regarding environmental and public health noted under expenses in the presentation.

Presentation of the Five-Year Financial Plan 2023 – 2027

CFO Bhalla noted:

- Assessed Value for Property Taxation is determined by BC Assessment
- Ashcroft has applied a 2.5% increase to property taxes for 2023.
- Average single-family assessment is \$399,671 – an increase of \$58,549.
- Average single-family property tax increase is \$27.76.
- CFO Bhalla clarified how property taxes are determined (assessment/1000 x tax rate = taxes)
- CFO Bhalla noted we can only control Ashcroft's portion of the taxes which approximately 54% of the total taxes collected. We are required to collect and remit taxes for other levels of government. We can not control what we are required to collect for other levels of government.
- CFO Bhalla provided a brief explanation of the tax notice and noted all tax classifications.

4. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Grants clarification requested regarding the recent provincial grant for \$1,076,000.

- Mayor Roden clarified that this grant funding has not been allocated or discussed by council and will be discussed at strategic planning.
- Provincial guidelines for the grant are received – request to be shared with the public. Mayor Roden noted that these were on the agenda of a previous council meeting in the form of a letter from the province and could be posted to the website.
- Grant structure comment regarding what the village anticipates each year in the form of grant funding. CFO Bhalla commented that he forecasts conservatively.
- CFO Bhalla clarified the village process for grant funding application noting that we do not chase grants, we apply for funding for projects that are pre-planned.

Strategic Plan Session – suggestions for consideration:

- Increased street lighting for a safer community.
 - Comment to provide costs regarding installation more street lighting.
 - Mayor Roden noted providing a list for where additional lighting may be required for safety purposes.
 - Solar LED lighting comment – consider purchasing and installing solar streetlights on existing poles. Lights would be owned by the Village and not have any electrical costs associated.
- More trees in the downtown core
- Encourage council to consider pathway in strategic planning – include the requirement of a walking pathway at any new road construction.
- Mayor Roden noted active pathways in the downtown core would be a good beginning.

Rising river levels – are we proactively mitigating risk?

- It was noted Ashcroft's first concern is asset protection primarily the WTP.
- Fire risk is another threat – have applied for funding but we did not meet grant criteria.
- Working on North Ashcroft to reduce flood risk from rain run off.

Erosion query at the HUB site, whose responsibility is the bank erosion the property owner or village.

Housing land availability discussion regarding the recent request from UBCM request for Local Government owned property for development

- Mayor Roden noted the MESA land but cautioned the geo technical.
- Wanted to keep focus on TVMS project not focus on our own lands and a new project.

CP Crossing – connectivity in the village – has there been further discussion to move the development of an over or underpass forward. Is Council willing to entertain this idea in the future?

- Village is interested but there have been no conversations currently.
- Trains are longer and more frequent – grade separation - no progress at this point.
- Cost is in excess of 50 million dollars.

Revenue streams:

- Cannabis retail – does TNRD allow cannabis retail throughout the region – No
- Does the proposed cannabis bylaw include cannabis cultivation like a neighbouring community? Mayor Roden – commented that if Council moves forward with the development of a Cannabis Bylaw there would be public consultation.

Government Street Subdivision – is this moving forward or is this on a stand still? Report forwarded to property owners regarding runoff and culvert requirements.

Tax Revenues regarding growth at Ashcroft Terminal – Does the village receive revenues from the fuel farm or transloading?



- CFO Bhalla clarified that we can only collect revenue as permitted through taxation – we can't charge for transloading only tax the value of the building.
- Mayor Roden noted that Council has had conversations at UBCM relating to the Terminal growth and assessments being up to date.

Question regarding recent Tanker tucks labelled bulk water in Ashcroft. Ashcroft's bylaw does not permit the sale of bulk water.

- Ashcroft supplied water to AIB – this was an emergency to help our neighbour.

Boundary extension – wondering if Council is considering extending boundary to take in IG Fiber, Coppers and other areas?

- Council has not had any discussion regarding a boundary expansion.

Mayor Roden thanked everyone for coming and participating at the Town Hall Meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Roden adjourned the Town Hall Meeting for Monday May 8, 2023, at 5:48 pm.

Certified to be a true and copy of the
Minutes for the Town Hall Meeting held
Monday May 8, 2023.

Daniela Dyck,
Chief Administrative Officer

Barbara Roden,
Mayor