

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH

Minutes of the **SPECIAL ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** Meeting  
Tuesday, April 18, 2006 at 5:30 pm  
Central Saanich Municipal Council Chamber

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Chris Graham, Chair  
Mayor Jack Mar  
Councillors: Bryson, Garrison, King, Mason and Thompson  
Gary C. Nason, Administrator  
David J. Gawley, Consultant  
Trish Flanders, Municipal Clerk  
Hope V. Burns, Director of Planning & Building Services  
Nirmal Bhattacharya, Municipal Engineer

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**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

The Administrator, Mr. Gary C. Nason, noted the addition to the agenda of the following late items:

- Correspondence from Don Chambers Re: Extended Health Benefits for Elected Officials;
- Correspondence from Robyn Ross Re: Brentwood Bay Traffic Corridor Revitalization Project;
- Correspondence from Norbert Steinhausen Re: CRD Housing Trust Fund;

453.06 MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MASON  
NO SECONDER

*That the Agenda for the Special Administration & Finance Committee Meeting held on April 18, 2006 be approved as amended.*  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**1. Public Information Meeting – 2006 Annual Budget and 2006 – 2010 Financial Plan**

The Administrator, Mr. Gary C. Nason, advised that the purpose of this evening's Meeting is to overview the directions and decisions taken by Council to date in regards to the 2006 Annual Budget and 2006-2010 Financial Plan, and to give the public an opportunity to raise issues and ask questions of Council. Mr. Nason gave a brief overview of the agenda materials and referred to the following items of correspondence which have been received by the District subsequent to the April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006 Budget Meeting, and which are pertinent to the 2006 Annual Budget and Five Year Financial Plan:

- a) Jeri Covay, 6243 Tayler Court, April 12, 2006 Re: CRD Housing Trust Fund;
- b) Steen Rancher, 1029 Nakini Place, April 12, 2006 Re: Property Assessment/Taxation Increases;
- c) Don Chambers, 901 Verdier Avenue, April 18, 2006 Re: Extended Health Benefits for Elected Officials;
- d) Robyn Ross, 1191 Lucille Drive, April 17, 2006 Re: Brentwood Bay Traffic Corridor Revitalization Project;
- e) Norbert Steinhausen, 6243 Tayler Court, April 12, 2006 Re: CRD Housing Trust Fund.

Mr. David J. Gawley, Consultant, gave a comprehensive overview of the 2006 Annual Budget and the 2006 – 2010 Financial Plan processes, and described the major fiscal challenges and the decisions made by Council in this regard. Following his presentation, Mr. Gawley responded to several questions from members of the Committee.

The Chair opened the floor for comments from the gallery.

Mrs. Rasmussen, 8449 West Saanich Road

- stated that although she understands the municipality has no control over the assessment increases she is very concerned about any property tax increases that may result, and asked if Mr. Gawley could give an indication of the approximate tax increase per residential property

Ms. Heidi Schwartz, 2399 Styan Road

- questioned the current status of the petition for a local improvement project for the Brownlee Place/Styan Road area
- expressed concern that processing the local improvement petition has been delayed by the District's Finance Department

Ms. Jill Wake, 7046 Brentwood Drive

- advised of her concern that her taxes could potentially increase by 25% this year
- stated that there are a number of residents who will experience significant tax increases this year because of the substantial increase in property assessments

Ms. Allison Habkirk, 777 Harding Lane

- questioned the list of supplementary budget requests that are proposed to be funded from general reserves
- advised that the Integrated Stormwater Management Project could be funded from Gas Tax Revenue
- asked that Council reconsider the direction it has taken in this regard

Mr. Drew Westwood, 820 Sea Drive

- questioned why the District is allowing BC Hydro to charge for upgrading the infrastructure that is required for the Brentwood Bay Traffic Corridor Revitalization Project

Mr. Don Chambers, 901 Verdier Avenue

- commented on the extended health benefits package for Elected Officials and stated that this "benefit" represents a significant salary increase for those elected officials who opt to participate in these benefits
- advised that many local governments do not offer these types of benefits to their elected officials, and stated that members of Council are part time employees who assumed office knowing the salary and perks of the position
- stated that the District has a number of "volunteers" who work without compensation of any kind

Mr. Drew Westwood, 820 Sea Drive

- stated that Terasen Gas upgraded his street and charged nothing to the individual property owners, and questioned why the District would be paying Telus and Shaw Cable for the Brentwood Bay Traffic Corridor Revitalization Project

Ms. Elizabeth Chambers, 901 Verdier Avenue

- referred to the draw down on the District's Reserve Funds, and questioned the proposed spending on I.T. strategic planning
- expressed concern with the amount of reserves that are being spent on the Brentwood Bay Traffic Corridor Revitalization Project
- questioned Council's decision to spend funds on another water study for Senanus Drive, and stated that unless there are alternative options that will result from this study this is not a good decision to spend money on this issue
- expressed concern with Council's decision to only partially fund the CRD Housing Trust Fund and stated that Council's previous comments about "late submissions" for funding assistance is not an acceptable answer as Council had no qualms about the "late submission" of the extended health benefits for members of Council
- advised that she feels taken advantage of with some of the decisions that have been made by Council during this year's budget season

Ms. Heidi Schwartz, 2399 Styan Road

- asked Council if the District is planning to hire additional staff this year

Mr. Sue Stroud, #105 – 7088 Wallace Drive

- expressed concern that the District is not a member of the CRD Housing Trust Fund
- advised that most housing developments are now a mixture of varying levels of income, and that there are relatively few developments that are being built for low-income family housing
- encouraged Council to reconsider its decision in this regard

Ms. Allison Habkirk, 777 Harding Lane

- reminded Council of the South Vancouver Island Zone Housing Society's request for a 2006 Permissive Tax Exemption to financially assist the Legion Housing on East Saanich Road
- expressed concern that Council has approved funding for the CRD Housing Trust Fund, yet one of the District's assisted living housing developments was denied funding assistance last year based solely on the late submission of its application
- advised that another housing development application from Beacon Community Services may be forthcoming, and asked if the CRD Housing Trust Fund would preclude Council's ability or willingness to financially assist local residential development projects

Ms. Sue Stroud, #105 – 7088 Wallace Drive

- asked for further debate on housing needs and affordability
- reminded Council that the CRD Housing Trust Fund can provide 15:1 dollars for construction, and that several other local governments are currently participating the Trust Fund
- encouraged Council to fully participate in the CRD Housing Trust Fund and not draw down further on the District's Reserve Funds
- stated that many seniors are very concerned that they will be in need of subsidized housing, not assisted living housing
- stated that the tax increases that are anticipated this year could be extremely detrimental to many seniors and families in the District

Mr. Wayne Watkins, 7055 Wallace Drive

- questioned if grants should be approved for residential housing developments

Mr. Don Chambers, 901 Verdier Avenue

- questioned the significant portion of municipal taxes that are allocated to the Central Saanich Police Service
- stated that the Police Service is practically an independent agency, and questioned the Police Service's accountability to the Municipal Council
- further questioned how Council would know if increases are required, or not required, to the Police Service budget

Mr. Don Rasmussen, 7113 East Saanich Road

- asked Council if it would be more cost effective to contract police services through the RCMP rather than our own municipal police force

Mr. Frank Witthoeft, 2361 Tanner Ridge Place

- referred to the Ministry's statistics on municipal policing costs, and noted that Central Saanich has the second highest cost per capita for policing services yet it has the lowest case load of all municipalities in the area
- stated that the Municipal Council should be looking at more efficient ways of policing the municipality

Mr. Wayne Watkins, 7055 Wallace Drive

- stated that the annual budget for the Central Saanich Police Service is reviewed and endorsed by the Police Board prior to being forwarded to Council for consideration and discussion

Mr. Frank Witthoeft, 2361 Tanner Ridge Place

- expressed concern with funding the Brentwood Bay Traffic Corridor Revitalization Project from the District's Reserves

The Chair thanked those members of the public in attendance at the Meeting for their comments.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*On motion, the Special Administration & Finance Committee Meeting held on April 18, 2006 adjourned at 6:52 pm.*

Recorded by: Trish Flanders  
Municipal Clerk