

Report on Village of Anmore Regular Council Meeting  
Tuesday, February 8, 2011

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:05. Councillors Sedergreen, Piamonte, Palmer-Isaak, and McEwen; and Howard Carley, Anmore Chief Administrative Officer, and Karen-Ann Cobb, Manager of Corporate Services, and approximately 20 residents were in attendance. The Agenda was approved.

The Minutes of January 25, 2011 and February 1, 2011 were approved. The Minutes of the Jan. 6, 2001 Finance Committee and the November 25, 2010 Public Works and Transportation Committee were received.

Under Issues Arising from the Finance Committee<sup>1</sup> Minutes, Council approved a \$500 grant to School District 43 to develop an Early Development Survey Instrument. Councillor Piamonte asked, since Anmore Elementary is such a small part of SD-43, what the total costs were for the project and how much other schools were contributing. Mayor Anderson did not seem to know but she said that the \$500 contribution from Anmore was coming from money set aside for community grants.

Under Issues Arising from the Public Works and Transportation Committee<sup>2</sup> Minutes, Councillor Sedergreen wanted staff to explore the possibility of residents paying for their garbage on line. Mayor Anderson indicated that the Village Manager of Financial Services, Sharleen Karamanian, had said that paying taxes on line would be too expensive and that there was an up-coming in-camera meeting planned about the garbage contract. CAO Howard Carley indicated that he would look into other possibilities for on-line bill payments.

There was also discussion of what Tim Harris, Manager of Public Works, indicated was a minor, if any, cost shift in moving the accessible bus stop around the corner at East and Sunnyside Roads. This would allow the Sasamat Volunteer Fire Department easy access and parking during Emergency callouts. Councillor McEwen expressed the opinion that the few extra minutes it would take for SVFD Emergency Responders to park in the parking lot across the road shouldn't be a problem. Councillor Palmer-Isaak raised the spectre of losing the Translink accessibility grant. Mayor Anderson said that she couldn't imagine that there would be anymore than 1-2 callouts a week and suggested that the SVFD send a letter explaining the rationale for the bus stop move around the corner. The item was tabled pending further input from the SVFD.

Under the Mayor's Report, Mayor Anderson said that she had been at the Finance Committee, the Anmore Green meeting with Council, the Metro Vancouver Board, and the Translink Mayors group meetings. When reminded of

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<sup>1</sup> The Finance Committee is comprised of all Council members and two Anmore residents.

<sup>2</sup> The Public Works and Transportation Standing Committee is Co-Chaired by Councillors Piamonte and Sedergreen.

the name of the Lower Mainland Treaty Advisory Committee by Mayor Anderson, Councillor McEwen reported that he had attended. He also talked about postponing the Parks Committee meeting until March. Councillor Palmer-Isaak reported on some of the work of the Anmore Elementary Parent Advisory Committee and the children at the school.<sup>3</sup> There weren't any further Councillors Reports nor was there an Administrator's Report.

The Correspondence attached to the Agenda for the February 8, 2011 Agenda was all received. Council declared February 21-27 Heritage Week.

Under Item 12 – Bylaws (a) - Anmore Council Procedure Amendment Bylaw No.507-2011, the resolution to "amend Anmore Procedure Bylaw No. 363-2004 by adding a new subsection to Section 12 - to deal with taping and distribution at In-camera Council meetings", was adopted by Mayor Anderson and Councillors Palmer-Isaak and McEwen. This was without regard to Councillor Sedergreen's following concerns.

Staff responded in the negative to Councillor Sedergreen's inquiry as to whether or not there had been further correspondence on this matter. Councillor Sedergreen also expressed the opinion that because of recent actions the Mayor would be in conflict of interest if she remained for the vote on the new in-camera policies.

Councillor McEwen made the motion to approve the by-law change to not allow Councillors to read in-camera meeting materials in advance of meetings and to restrict tape recordings of proceedings. The resolution was seconded by Councillor Palmer-Isaak. Mayor Anderson voted in favour of the changes and the resolution was passed 3-2. After this there were concerns from members of the Public that they were not allowed to speak.

Under Item 12 (b) Anmore Revenue anticipation Borrowing By-law 508-2011, it was stated that not all money for the Village budget was available from taxes and the Finance Officer was seeking authorization to borrow the necessary money. Anmore Water rates are increasing from \$1.27 to \$1.36 per cubic meter. Mayor Anderson was uncertain of how much of this was going to the Village of Port Moody and how much was going to Metro Vancouver.

Editor's Note: I don't fully understand the intricacies of Village Finances, but this sounded to me like using your Master Card to pay your Visa card. I believe that

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<sup>3</sup> Since the beginning of the 2008 Council there has been a three member Mayor-appointed Environment Standing Committee. Just before Christmas 2010, Mayor Anderson sent out a mail drop requesting a further member. Councillors McEwen, Palmer-Isaak, and resident Tracy Green have made up the Environment Standing Committee for the past 2 ½ years. Recently a 4<sup>th</sup> person was added to this group. There are no Environment working groups with a formal structure and minutes, however Anmore Elementary has a Green Club on which Councillor Palmer-Isaak regularly reports.

Mayoral candidate Robert Tribe said that the Village was spending \$130 for every \$100 received in taxes.

There was no identified Unfinished Business, however under New Business, there was an item to appoint a Chief Elections Officer for the November 2011 municipal election. A resolution was made to appoint Karen Ann Cobb, Anmore Director of Corporate Services, as the Chief Elections Officer and CAO Howard Carley as the Deputy Chief Elections Officer. She would also be authorized to hire elections staff as necessary.

Councillor Piamonte began the discussion of this topic with a statement which he asked to have included in the RCM minutes for February 8, 2011. The statement is as follows.

*It is becoming more and more prevalent in smaller communities in BC that they are asking for independent oversight of municipal elections because of the perception that long standing association between council members and administrative staff can lead to favouritism and bias.*

Mayor Anderson did not see the need for independent oversight and Councillor Palmer-Isaak praised Ms. Cobb for all of her efforts in the past. Mayor Anderson talked about how it was so much cheaper to hire Village staff to do this job. Councillor Piamonte challenged this statement and stated that in the recent financial statements of the Village, the costs were exactly the same as before. He also said that because of the foregone Mayor's stipend between the time Mayor Weinberg resigned one year into the new mandate and the by-election, the Village had actually saved money. This claim was met with loud, unchecked guffaws from some people in the audience, and Mayor Anderson, and Councillors McEwen and Palmer-Isaak. Mayor Anderson chose to ignore Councillor Piamonte when he called a point of order.

Members of the public were also concerned about the lack of an independent Chief Elections Officer for several reasons:

- Ms Cobb was the Chief Elections Officer when Councillor Juvik was disqualified 15 minutes before the close of nominations from running for Mayor for the November 2008 Elections. She said that he was disqualified because he was a forester working for Metro Vancouver. Mr. Juvik had served three terms on Council with Ms. Cobb as the Chief Elections Officer and she had never before challenged him.
- Many small communities are now using an independent Chief Elections Officer to manage elections because of the perceived need for a clear arms-length relationship between the candidates for Mayor and Council and the Chief Elections Officer. The examples of Bowen Island, Harrison Hot Springs, and our sister Village of Belcarra were raised. Indeed, Sarah Morden, the Chief Elections Officer in the May 2010 Village of Anmore by-

election for Mayor, has been engaged by the Village of Belcarra for their November 2011 Municipal Election.

- There is still 9 months 'til the next municipal election and Larry Barron questioned the need to rush this through.
- A recommendation was made to table this item for a month while staff and Council members could gather comparative financial data and check into the rationale for other small BC communities having an independent Chief Elections Officer.

Mayor Anderson claimed that it was Councillor Juvik's own fault that he was disqualified and she said the bottom line was it would cost more money if someone independent ran the elections.

A new resident in the Village, Mr. Mel Mercier, of Sunnyside Road talked about the importance of voters believing in an impartial Chief Elections Officer. Councillor McEwen explained that because of a deadlock on Council for the by-election in 2010, he (as Acting Mayor) had approached the Minister Bill Bennett to appoint a Chief Elections Officer. Mayor Anderson was almost a broken record in claiming that the costs were much higher with an independent Chief Elections Officer and that it had cost \$5,000 extra (unsubstantiated) to have Ms. Sarah Morden as the Chief Elections Officer last May. Mr. Mercier asked what the harm would be in postponing this appointment for one month while the comparative data was obtained.

Councillor Piamonte called a point of order as some people in the audience and other Council members guffawed. Again Mayor Anderson ignored Councillor Piamonte's point-of-order, and the Mayor and Councillors Palmer-Isaak and McEwen voted in favour of the resolution to appoint Ms Cobb as the Chief Elections Officer and Howard Carley as her Deputy.

In the Public Question Period, Mayor Anderson continued to justify the move to not allow Council members access to in-camera documents prior to meetings and also to disallow taping of the proceedings. She said that anything pertaining to land, legal and personnel issues needed to be discussed in secret. She said that this was to protect Village interests and protect against more law suits. Ms Tracy Green confirmed that Council could vote to release in-camera documents or information about those documents if they chose to do so.

Mr. Mercier talked about his work and he said that he represents 2600 companies that regularly do their business and bill paying on-line.

Andrew Robertson asked about the legality of mail addressed to mayor and Council not being delivered to Council members in a timely fashion. Mayor Anderson said that she receives packages for in-camera meetings at the same time as the rest of Council and she explained that any correspondence of a legal nature gets sent directly to legal counsel.

Mayor Anderson was asked for an update on the Childcare Centre and the \$499,500 grant from the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Mayor Anderson had sent a letter to Council in December stating that there was insufficient money to build a stand alone Childcare Centre and that she wanted staff to explore the possibility of placing a Childcare Centre in the planned Heritage Woods Middle School. Mayor Anderson did not have anything in writing, but she said that the Ministry was loose on the January 31, 2011 deadline for Council to decide whether or not it wants to proceed with building the Childcare Centre. She said that Planning Consultant, Michael Rosen was handling the discussions with SD-43 about including the Childcare Centre in the planned Middle School.

The meeting was then adjourned.