

Report on Anmore Council Meeting Tuesday, November 24, 2009

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Weinberg at 7:00 pm. Councillors Isaak, McEwen and Piamonte were present. Councillor Sedergreen was unable to attend due to his just having had back surgery on Friday, November 20th. Administrator, Howard Carley, Treasurer, Sharleen Karamanian and eleven residents were also in attendance.

Under Additions and Deletions to the Agenda, Councillor Piamonte made a motion to table issue 7 (B) under Council Committee Reports regarding the Daycare Working Groups and its Draft Terms of Reference until Councillor Sedergreen was able to attend the meeting. Since there was not a seconder to his motion, it was not carried.

The Adoption of the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on November 5, 2009, and the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on November 10, 2009 were adopted and passed unanimously.

The tabled items of Mayor Trasolini's Letter to extend services to the Village of Anmore and the East Road truck restrictions remained tabled.

Under Council Committee Reports, the resolutions to increase the garbage and recyclable materials agreement with K. Spence Trucking be amended by increasing the fee of \$1.50 to \$2.00 and that the tender of a 2010 Ford F550 low and sander truck be awarded to Metro Motors Ltd. for the purchase price of \$90,379.72 before taxes were passed unanimously.

The Draft Terms of Reference for the Daycare Working Group were then discussed. Councillor Piamonte read a letter that he had prepared for Mayor Weinberg and other Council members. In this letter, he stated that it was very unclear to him as to what the majority of Anmore's constituents wanted relative to this topic. Thus, he suggested that, during the March by-election for Mayor, an opportunity existed to piggyback a referendum question on this topic, which would allow voters a chance to clearly state their preferences. To read Councillor Piamonte's letter in its entirety, please click onto the AAN posting headed as such.

Six residents, then, spoke to this issue. Of these, five were educators who challenged whether a proper needs analysis had been done and whether Council really comprehended the costs and obligations in running such a daycare. Councillor Isaak commented "And, the icing on the cake is that I was President of the Friendly Forest Pre-School for two years and Secretary". Some of the concerns of residents follow:

- Peter Ablitt of Sunnyside Road stated that he was against the building of the daycare.
- Trudy Schneider of Wyndham Crescent worried that the Village had enough money to move forward with the daycare facility and what the financial liability would be to the Village. Thus, she felt that a business plan should be developed before proceeding with the Terms of Reference and stated that, as an educator, she knew that it cost a minimum of \$20,000.00 to set up and furnish a kindergarten and that the needs of a daycare was much more.
- Elaine Willis of Sunnyside Road stated that Council needed to take "an inventory of needs" before moving forward.
- Dr. Lynn Burton stated that it was "not honourable" to be discussing this issue with Councillor Sedergreen's absence due to his being ill and recovering from back surgery performed four days earlier. She was also concerned about the need for "due diligence", sending out formal requests for proposals, the need for the tendering process and trusting the "solvency of the charitable organization".
- Robert Tribe of Strong Road suggested that the concept of a yearly lease put forward by Councillor Isaak is untenable as an estimated cost of \$250,000.00 in site services would probably be unrecoverable. With this in mind, it would not be wise to try to turn the land into a playing field, etc. He also was concerned that any Working Group reflect the views of all residents in Anmore and not just a select few that favoured the building of the Daycare Facility. He also stated that those people on the Working Group should possess the skills to create a comprehensive, credible business case.

Residents also expressed concern that the exact amount of monies that Council had in grants equalled that of what a preliminary and probably incomplete estimated cost of building the daycare centre would be. What about cost over-runs? Further, no formal analysis, contractual documentation nor formulation of the technical specifications and requirements exist. As well, no bids had gone out to tender and none have been confirmed in writing for the cost of the Britco building, sewage system, fencing, all site services, classroom facilities, etc. This is not sufficient in an open public tendering process.

Councillor Isaak replied that "those who had a clear understanding of the funding, land and model of the Friendly Forest Pre-School" supported the Daycare facility. She also stated, "I would like to make the point that when I was running for election, I feel that I was very, very

clear about some of the items that I supported - the Daycare and Middle School and a number of other initiatives and I feel that the public by electing me to represent them and move forward with these projects was showing support for these projects and I think that Councillor McEwen also took a fairly good stand on these projects and between the two of us we received a fairly healthy percentage of the electoral vote. I think that the public has spoken about this issue and I feel very confident about moving forward using grant funds to build the project."

Mayor Weinberg suggested that a friendly amendment be made to the Daycare Draft Terms of Reference Working Group to ensure that all spectrums of public opinion are properly represented. The resolution "to advise and assist council by developing a business plan and building plan for the proposed Anmore Non-profit Daycare Faculty" was passed. Councillor Piamonte abstained from voting on this issue.

Under the Mayor's Report, he stated that the new members of the APC had been chosen.

Councillor Isaak spoke to congratulate the "Anmore Youth in Action" for their successful food drive on Sunday, November 22nd. She said that she did not know exactly how much food the Youth had collected, but knew it was a lot. Camille Tribe of Strong Road informed Councillor Isaak that she had been told by one of the mother volunteers, Candice Davidson, that the Youth had collected 50-boxes. Well done!

Under Correspondence, a letter dated November 18, 2009 from Clive Evans, coordinator of Operation Red Nose, Tri Cities Area 2009 campaign was received. The programme coordinates a free ride home campaign during the Christmas Season. Councillor Isaak said that it was a wonderful programme, that she had used its service before and that she would like to see it posted on all the Village's websites. Camille Tribe, Editor of the AAN told her that she had already posted it almost a month ago. For anyone wanting further information on this programme, please check under either Current News or the Community Messages Heading section of the AAN website.

Six bylaw amendments were read and passed unanimously. They dealt with the purchase of the 2009 Ford Ranger Pickup Truck, the Anmore Capital Reserve Fund Expenditure, the Anmore Roads Development Cost Charges Reserve, the Anmore Drainage Development Cost Charges Reserve, the Anmore Water Utility Reserve Fund Expenditure, and the Anmore Water Development Cost Charges Reserve. The Anmore Highway Regulation Amendment was deferred as Councillor Piamonte asked that Translink be approached for an exemption in regard to truck prohibition on East Road. Trucks cause too much damage to the roads.

Under New Business, Councillor Piamonte asked Mayor Weinberg and Councillors Isaak and McEwen where the Village of Anmore stood relative to the Anmore Renewable Energy Foundation, its potential liability and the need for full disclosure. Mayor Weinberg said that he would present a full report of expenditures at next Tuesday's (December 1st) Regular Council Meeting. He also stated that he thought about inviting Western Economic Diversification Canada to meet with Council at this meeting or in-camera. Furthermore, he commented that he would be providing a copy of this report to the Anmore Times for publication. Camille Tribe, Editor of the AAN, asked Mayor Weinberg to send her a copy of his report as well to publish on the Anmore Alternative News website. He agreed to do so.

Under Public Question Period, Peter Ablitt of Sunnyside Road asked about the completion of East Road construction. He wondered why a third phase was now being contemplated and said that the City of Coquitlam had applied for and received a low interest rate loan for road completion. Mr Ablitt was informed that the third phase was necessary due to the unplanned necessity to now put in a bridge on East Road (rather than the existing culvert) and the damages caused by Pinnacle Ridge. Councillor Piamonte also explained that a referendum is required for all loans over \$30,000.00. Robert Tribe also stressed the need to see the "big picture" on expenditures and since part of East Road is in such disrepair, it could cause the cut off of the bus route. Mayor Weinberg responded that Council and the Finance Committee were now looking at a Ten Year Plan and "financial sustainability".

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:00 pm.

Written By: Camille Tribe, Editor
November 25, 2009

OPEN LETTER TO MAYOR WEINBERG AND OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM COUNCILLOR MARIO PIAMONTE – NOVEMBER, 24, 2009

Reference: Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Community Daycare in Anmore

Dear Colleagues,

It is very clear to me that each and every member of this Council recognizes the need for quality daycare for the children in this community. It is also very clear to me that with a population of fewer than 2,000 people, and a very limited tax base, we must be sure that the majority of the people in the community we serve are in agreement with our actions and that those actions do not put our community at financial risk.

What is very unclear to me is what the majority of our constituents want relative to this topic. The community feedback has been at best befuddling. The voters overwhelmingly turned down, by a two to one margin, the referendum request to approve financing for a community centre/daycare. Immediately following the November 2008 election/referendum, at a meeting with the new Council, the Daycare Committee and the Community Center Building Committee, it was generally agreed that the wording of the referendum question was poor and the results did not indicate whether or not Anmore residents, in fact, wanted a Daycare, Community Center, both or neither.

There have also been many thoughtful letters to Mayor and Council from Anmore voters both for and against immediately proceeding with the building of a daycare centre

To add to my confusion about where the voters stand on this issue, at the first Public Hearing on the re-zoning of lots 15 and 16 on Ravenswood, a large majority seemed to oppose the rezoning for a daycare, so much so that all of Council voted to reject the re-zoning and to hold a Town Hall meeting to get more public input. Due to a technicality, this vote was overturned and the process was restarted. This time, at both the Town Hall Meeting and the Public Hearing about the re-zoning of lots 15 and 16, there seemed to be very strong and emotional support in favour of rezoning the land to build a daycare centre.

I worry about the potential financial repercussions if Council fails in its fiduciary responsibility for due diligence, especially with the recent demise of the Anmore Renewable Energy Foundation and the prompt resignation of the three Anmore Council trustees. From my perspective, setting up terms of reference for a Daycare Working Group as shown in the Agenda for the November 24, 2009 *“to advise and assist Council by developing a business plan and building plan for a proposed Anmore Non-profit Daycare facility”* is at best premature.

With Mayor Weinberg's regrettable resignation, effective December 31, 2009, I think that with the Village being cash-strapped, the Council has the perfect opportunity to get a valid assessment of where the community stands on this issue. Since the Village will likely have a by-election sometime in late March, a properly designed referendum question on this topic could be piggybacked on the existing costs of holding this by-election. This approach would allow all voters a chance to clearly state their preferences and also give the new Mayor and Council the freedom to proceed as they see appropriate.

I hope this proposed solution is helpful and look forward to our further discussion.

Sincerely,
Councillor Mario Piamonte