



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
OF THE VILLAGE OF LIONS BAY
MINUTES**

**March 4, 2025, 8:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, 400 Centre Road, Lions Bay
And Via Zoom Video Conference**

In Attendance: Mayor Ken Berry
Councillor Neville Abbott
Councillor Michael Broughton
Councillor Jaime Cunliffe

Staff In Attendance: Chief Administrative Officer, Ross Blackwell
Deputy Corporate Officer, Kristal Kenna
Fire Chief, Barrett Germscheid
Director of Operations, Karl Buhr

1. Call to Order

Mayor Berry called the meeting to order at 8:01 PM

Discussion of the sequence of Agenda: Councillor Abbott suggested that Closed Committee of the Whole be moved to the end of the Open Committee of the Whole.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by: Mayor Berry

Seconded by: Councillor Broughton

THAT the Agenda of March 4, 2025, Committee of the Whole be adopted with the following amendments:

- The closed portion of the meeting be moved to the end of the meeting.
- An update on the Lions Bay Beach Park Revitalization Project be provided under section 14, New Business.

CARRIED

3. Public Participation

- A. Norma Rodgers: Expressed concerns regarding the proposed Garbage and Recycling Bylaw amendments in the context of risk to wildlife.

4. Delegations

- none

5. Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

5.1 Committee of the Whole Meeting- October 15, 2024

Moved by: Councillor Abbott

Seconded by: Councillor Cunliffe

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of October 15, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

5.2 Committee of the Whole Meeting- November 6, 2024

Item 5.A Staff Reports - Action Item: revision of language used, sharing of vehicle with "Bylaw and Fire", was updated to correctly reflect "Joe Chirkoff, Financial Officer, to determine the feasibility of designating one vehicle to Bylaw Enforcement and the Works Department."

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Councillor Abbott

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2024 be approved.

5.3 Committee of the Whole Meeting- December 3, 2024

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Councillor Abbott

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

5.4 Committee of the Whole Meeting- January 7, 2025

Moved by: Councillor Abbott

Seconded by: Councillor Broughton

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2025 be approved.

CARRIED

5.5 Committee of the Whole Meeting- February 4, 2025

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Councillor Abbott

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of February 4, 2025 be approved.

CARRIED

6. Business arising from the Minutes

- none

7. Unfinished Business

7.1 Action Items Log

Item 321: Rural grant applications for the Village - The MLA has expressed support for these applications.

Item 326: Ministry of Municipal Affairs has requested an update on the steps that the Village is taking regarding to the Provincial Advisor's Report. CAO R Blackwell offered to draft a response letter for Council approval, or suggested that Council appoint someone to draft a response. An update to the Ministry is pending a meeting with Don Lidstone who has prepared a review of the report and will walk Council through the steps. Once this is complete, Council may detail the steps, in response to the Ministry's request for an update. Councillor Cunliffe to follow up with Don Lidstone to arrange the meeting.

Item 331: Councillor Cunliffe, has there been an update on the cost on additional garbage trucks, to inform the proposed bylaw amendments? Yes, will be discussed during item 12.1

8. Reports

8.1 Staff

8.1.1 CAO Report - Resident Satisfaction Survey

Staff presented a report outlining the need to circulate a Resident Satisfaction Survey, with the intent of identifying the priorities of the community; staff is seeking endorsement from Council.

Discussion ensued regarding the timing of this survey (referencing the upcoming by-election) and the preference from Council is to hold off until the community can devote their focus to the survey.

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Councillor Cunliffe

THAT staff be directed to progress the survey concept and return to Council with more details for the launch of a Resident Satisfaction Survey for launch later in 2025.

CARRIED

8.1.2 CAO Report - Proposed Public Engagement Program

Staff presented a report regarding a community empowerment initiative (hosting subject matter experts) which would help facilitate an informed discussion in the community and ultimately the eventual update of the Official Community Plan.

Discussion ensued in support of the initiative; however, Council would like to roll out this kind of education plan once the by-election is complete and a full Council is at the table.

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Councillor Cunliffe

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with the development and implementation of a public engagement program as outlined in the January 29, 2025 staff report, including detailed scheduling and budget considerations for Council review.

CARRIED

9. Resolutions

- none

10. Bylaws

10.1 Garbage and Recycling Bylaw No.639, 2024 Amendment

Discussion ensued regarding the feasibility of augmenting the waste control services (additional trucks etc.), input from Conservation Officers, resident

feedback (for and against) and suggestion to keep the bylaw as-is, but remove the seasonal specifications.

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Mayor Berry

Recommendation THAT the Garbage and Recycling Bylaw No.639 be revised by removing the increased wildlife collection schedule.

Against (2): Councillor Abbott, and Councillor Cunliffe

DEFEATED (2 to 2)

11. Correspondence

- none

12. New Business

12.1 Update on the Lions Bay Beach Park Revitalization Project

Staff detailed the Beach Park contractors & Council working group. Nick Bray to present revised design including Council's priorities to EuroHouse and return to Council with a revised budget from EuroHouse for consideration. Timeline of revisions is dependent on Nick Bray and EuroHouse.

13. Closure of Council Meeting

THAT the meeting be closed to the public on the basis of matters to be considered under the following sections of the Community Charter and where required, the Council does consider that the matters could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public:

(a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the municipality or another position appointed by the municipality;

The Committee of the Whole moved to a Closed session at 9:04 PM

14. Reporting Out from Closed Portion of Meeting

Staff Report from Item 6.1 of the Closed meeting will be added to the minutes of the Open session of the meeting.

15. Public Questions and Comments

- none

16. Adjournment

Moved by: Councillor Broughton

Seconded by: Councillor Cunliffe

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM

CARRIED

Mayor

Corporate Officer

Date Adopted by Council: April 1, 2025

STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 26, 2025

FILE: XXX

TO: Council (Closed)

FROM: Ross Blackwell, MAP, MCIP, RPP, CAO

RE: FULL-TIME FIRE CHIEF

PURPOSE:

To present Council with an analysis regarding the potential transition from a part-time Fire Chief to a full-time Fire Chief for the Village of Lions Bay. This report provides a brief overview of trends in similar British Columbia municipalities, an assessment of advantages and disadvantages, projected financial implications, and recommended next steps.

BACKGROUND:

The Village of Lions Bay currently operates with a part-time Fire Chief, consistent with many smaller communities with volunteer fire departments. However, as emergency response requirements evolve and the administrative demands on fire services increase, municipalities are considering the transition to a full-time Fire Chief to enhance fire protection services and long-term emergency planning.

Many municipalities of similar size in British Columbia have already transitioned to a full-time Fire Chief to improve service delivery, compliance with regulatory requirements, and operational efficiency. The Village of Lions Bay faces growing challenges, including increasing emergency call volumes, expanded firefighter training requirements, and complex regulatory obligations that require dedicated leadership.

DISCUSSION:

Trends in British Columbia Municipalities

Several small and medium-sized municipalities in British Columbia have transitioned from part-time or volunteer Fire Chiefs to full-time roles. These transitions are driven by the increasing complexity of fire and emergency response services, heightened training and certification requirements, and growing administrative and regulatory demands.

Comparable municipalities that have adopted full-time Fire Chiefs include:

- **Bowen Island (Population ~4,500)** – Transitioned to a full-time Fire Chief to enhance operational oversight, training, and emergency preparedness.
- **Pemberton (Population ~3,400)** – Moved to a full-time Chief model due to increasing emergency call volumes and firefighter certification requirements.
- **Tofino (Population ~2,500)** – Appointed a full-time Fire Chief to improve response times and ensure regulatory compliance.

The trends indicate that small communities facing increasing emergency management challenges are recognizing the necessity of dedicated leadership in their fire services.

Benefits of Appointing a Full-Time Fire Chief

1. **Enhanced Leadership and Accountability** - A full-time Fire Chief provides consistent oversight, ensuring that policies and procedures are properly developed, implemented, and enforced.
2. **Improved Training and Certification** - A dedicated Chief can ensure firefighters meet evolving provincial training and certification requirements, reducing liability risks.
3. **Increased Community Safety and Emergency Preparedness** - A full-time Chief has the capacity to focus on proactive fire prevention programs, emergency planning, and inter-agency coordination.
4. **Administrative Efficiency** - A full-time role would allow for better tracking of equipment, budgeting, grant applications, and department logistics, reducing the administrative burden on the CAO and other municipal staff.
5. **Regulatory Compliance** - Fire service regulations in British Columbia are becoming more stringent. A full-time Chief would ensure the department meets WorkSafeBC, NFPA, and Office of the Fire Commissioner standards.
6. **Improved Volunteer Retention and Recruitment** - Volunteer firefighters benefit from consistent leadership, structured training, and a well-managed department. A full-time Chief would ensure continuity in recruitment and retention efforts.

Disbenefits of Appointing a Full-Time Fire Chief

1. **Financial Commitment** - Transitioning to a full-time position requires a significant budgetary increase for salary, benefits, and additional operational costs.

2. **Recruitment Challenges** - Finding a highly qualified candidate willing to work in a small community may be challenging and require competitive compensation.
3. **Potential Impact on Volunteer Model** - Some volunteer departments see a shift in culture when moving to a full-time Chief. Clear expectations would need to be set to maintain volunteer engagement.

Projected Costs

Salary and Benefits

Based on regional salary data, the estimated cost of a full-time Fire Chief in British Columbia is approximately:

- **Base Salary:** \$110,000 - \$130,000 per year
- **Benefits & Pension Contributions:** \$20,000 - \$25,000 per year
- **Training, Equipment, and Operational Support:** \$10,000 - \$15,000 per year

Estimated Total Annual Cost: \$140,000 - \$170,000

This estimate does not include one-time transition costs such as recruitment, onboarding, or additional office space/equipment.

Alternative Considerations

If a full-time Fire Chief is deemed financially infeasible at this time, the following options could be explored:

1. **Expanding the Current Part-Time Role** - Increasing the current Chief's hours or hiring an Assistant Chief to provide additional administrative support.
2. **Regional Partnerships** - Exploring shared services or regional cooperation with a neighboring fire department (e.g., Squamish or West Vancouver) for oversight or administrative support.
3. **Hiring a Fire Services Consultant** - Engaging a professional consultant on a retainer basis to assist with compliance, training, and policy development.

SUMMARY:

The Village of Lions Bay must ensure its fire services remain effective, compliant, and sustainable. A full-time Fire Chief would provide enhanced leadership, improve training and emergency preparedness, and support administrative efficiency. However, the transition requires careful financial planning and consideration of potential recruitment challenges.

Municipalities with similar demographics and emergency service needs have made this transition, citing increased complexity in fire service operations and higher regulatory

expectations. If Council wishes to move forward with this model, budget implications and alternative models should be explored to ensure a financially responsible decision.

OPTIONS:

- 1) a) Direct Staff to Conduct a Feasibility Study - assessing comparable, financial impacts, job scope, and potential recruitment strategies.
 - b) Engage with the Fire & Rescue and Community Stakeholders - seeking feedback from volunteer firefighters, emergency response partners, and residents.
 - c) Consider a Phased Approach - evaluating whether an initial increase in part-time hours could serve as a transitional step before committing to a full-time position.
- 2) Provide no decision or direction.
 - 3) Refer the matter to staff with specific direction.

RECOMMENDED OPTION:

For direction.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

As set out above.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Blackwell".

Ross Blackwell, CAO
Chief Administrative Officer