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Langford behind call for cash boost

By Rick Stiebel - Goldstream News Gazette - December 07, 2007

Senior governments seeing surpluses as municipalities deal with growing poverty and crumbling infrastructure

With the federal and provincial governments boasting bulging surpluses, it's time to ante up more money for municipal governments, says Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan, and Langford council agrees.

Sullivan is asking members of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to form a united front in supporting a Metro Vancouver resolution calling for more revenue sharing at the municipal level by both the federal and provincial governments.

Langford Coun. Denise Blackwell, who met with Sullivan when he was in Victoria recently, said providing services requires a stable base of funding.

"The way it is right now, we're not getting that," Blackwell said. "We want the fiscal imbalance addressed through revenue sharing."

Speaking as chair of the Capital Regional District board, Blackwell said municipalities have been bearing the cost of building hospitals and dealing with the homeless at a time when the federal and provincial governments are enjoying huge surpluses.

Payments from the federal and provincial governments now comprise a smaller portion of the overall revenues of many municipalities, the resolution states.

It points out that the provincial government eliminated a share of provincial sales tax, corporate income tax and resource revenues in 1997 that were previously shared with municipal governments.

As well, the provincial government has benefitted from billions of dollars in increases in federal transfer payments since 2001.

"Revenue sources available to municipalities cannot fill the gap between growing costs to service our citizens and a sustainable level of property taxation," the resolution states.

As a result, "to meet increased service demand, municipalities have been left with little choice but to increase property and business taxes" at a time when senior levels of government have been able to reduce taxes.

The federal budget recorded a surplus in 2003 through 2006, with a total of \$8 billion in 2006. The provincial government's surplus has ranged between \$1 and \$2 billion for the last two years.

Blackwell plans to bring Sullivan's resolution — supported unanimously by Langford council at Monday's

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Goldstream+News+Gazette+-...> 12/11/2007

meeting — forward to the CRD's finance committee to begin discussion on supporting the resolution.

editor@goldstreamgazette.com

Find this article at:

http://www.bclocalnews.com/vancouver_island_south/goldstreamgazette/news/12242691.html

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

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**GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Board of Directors held at 9:13 a.m. on Friday, November 2, 2007 in the 2nd Floor Boardroom, 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, British Columbia.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair, Director Lois Jackson, Delta
Vice Chair, Director Peter Ladner, Vancouver
Alternate Director Mary-Wade Anderson,
White Rock, for Judy Forster
Director Elizabeth Ball, Vancouver
(arrived at 9:14 a.m.)
Director Malcolm Brodie, Richmond
Director Kim Capri, Vancouver
Alternate Director George Chow, Vancouver,
for Suzanne Anton
Director Derek Corrigan, Burnaby
(arrived at 9:24 a.m.)
Director George Ferguson, Abbotsford*
Director Gary Gibson, Electoral Area A
Director Moe Gill, Abbotsford*
Director Pamela Goldsmith-Jones,
West Vancouver
Director Linda Hepner, Surrey
Director David Hocking, Bowen Island
Director Marvin Hunt, Surrey
Director Colleen Jordan, Burnaby

Alternate Director Craig Keating, North
Vancouver City, for Darrell Mussatto
Alternate Director Mel Kositsky, Langley
Township, for Kurt Alberts
Director B.C. Lee, Vancouver
(arrived at 9:20 a.m.)
Director Don MacLean, Pitt Meadows
Director Gayle Martin, Langley City
Alternate Director Mae Reid, Coquitlam
for Maxine Wilson
Director Barbara Steele, Surrey
Director Tim Stevenson, Vancouver
Director Harold Steves, Richmond
Director Joe Trasolini, Port Moody
Director Richard Walton,
North Vancouver District
Director Dianne Watts, Surrey
Director Hal Weinberg, Anmore
Director Michael Wright, Port Coquitlam
Director Wayne Wright, New Westminster

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Director Ralph Drew, Belcarra
Director Judy Dueck, Maple Ridge

Director Barrie Lynch, Coquitlam
Director Max Wyman, Lions Bay

STAFF PRESENT:

Johnny Carline, Commissioner/Chief
Administrative Officer
Paulette Vetleson, Corporate Secretary

Klara Kutakova, Assistant to Regional
Committees, Corporate Secretary's
Department

* For Parks purposes.

A. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. November 2, 2007 Regular Meeting Agenda

9:14 a.m.

Director Ball arrived at the meeting.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Board:

- a) amend the agenda for its regular meeting scheduled for November 2, 2007 by adding item I.1 Reinstatement of the Revenue Sharing Program with Local Government; and
- b) adopt the agenda as amended.

CARRIED

B. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

No items presented.

C. DELEGATIONS

No items presented.

D. INVITED PRESENTATIONS

No items presented.

E. CONSENT AGENDA

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Board adopt the recommendation contained in the following item presented in the November 2, 2007 Consent Agenda:

- 1.1 Delegations' Executive Summaries Presented at Committee – October

CARRIED

The items and recommendations referred to above are as follows:

- 1.1 **Delegations' Executive Summaries Presented at Committee – October**
Report dated October 22, 2007 from Kelly Weilbacher, Assistant to Corporate Secretary, Corporate Secretary's Department, compiling delegations' executive summaries presented at committees in October 2007.

Recommendation:

That the Board receive for information the report dated October 22, 2007, titled "Delegations' Executive Summaries Presented at Committee - October".

Adopted on Consent

F. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

No items presented.

G. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE OR STAFF NOT INCLUDED IN CONSENT AGENDA

1. **GVRD Temporary Borrowing Authority – Bylaw No. 1071, 2007**
Report dated October 3, 2007 from Phil Trotzuk, Financial Planning and Operations Manager, Finance and Administration Department, seeking renewal of the authority for 2008 which permits temporary borrowing in anticipation of revenues during the year if needed.

9:20 a.m.

Director Lee arrived at the meeting.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Board introduce and read a first, second, and third time the "Greater Vancouver Regional District Temporary Loan Bylaw 1071, 2007" which authorizes the borrowing from the District's Banker or others in the course of the calendar year 2008 in anticipation of the collection of its revenue, of a sum or sums of money, the outstanding total of which shall not exceed \$12 million at any one time, by the issue of promissory notes or by such other means as are appropriate.

CARRIED

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Board reconsider, pass and finally adopt the "Greater Vancouver Regional District Temporary Loan Bylaw 1071, 2007".

CARRIED

H. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN
No items presented.

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Reinstatement of the Revenue Sharing Program with Local Government**
The Board was circulated a copy of the City of Vancouver's resolution, forwarded to the Minister of Finance as part of the 2008 budget input process, requesting the Province to address the municipal fiscal imbalance by reinstating a revenue sharing program with municipalities. Members spoke in support of the motion and recommended that a copy be forwarded to UBCM and FCM.

9:24 a.m.

Director Corrigan arrived at the meeting.

Concerns were expressed about the second paragraph of the recommendation. The statement may cause confusion as municipalities did not benefit specifically from those funds (PST, corporate income tax and resource revenues) in the past.

A copy of the proposed resolution was circulated at the meeting and is retained with the November 2, 2007 GVRD Board agenda package.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

- Whereas prior to 1997, the Revenue Sharing Act provided for a sharing of provincial revenues with municipal governments on an unconditional basis.
- And whereas a share of provincial sales tax, corporate income tax and resource revenues was indirectly transferred annually to municipalities.
- And whereas in 1997, the previous Provincial Government eliminated these transfers, forcing municipalities to increase their reliance on property taxes.
- And whereas with the federal and provincial fiscal position greatly improved, it would be appropriate to reconsider this approach.
- And whereas this program could make over \$300 million available annually to municipalities in the province.
- And whereas compared to growing provincial and federal surpluses, municipalities across Canada are struggling.
- And whereas where senior levels of governments are able to reduce taxes, the burden on municipal taxpayers is growing.
- And whereas to meet increased service demand, municipalities have been left with little choice but to increase property and business taxes.
- And whereas other revenue sources available to municipalities cannot fill the gap between growing costs to service our citizens and a sustainable level of property taxation.
- And whereas municipal revenues have not kept up with federal and provincial growth.
- And whereas at the same time, payments from the Provincial and Federal Governments now comprise a smaller portion of the overall revenues of many municipalities.
- And whereas this decline is in contrast to the rate of federal transfer payments to British Columbia.
- And whereas since 2001, our province has benefited from billions of dollars of increases in federal transfer payments (CHST and Equalization entitlements).
- And whereas in 2008-09, the federal payments to British Columbia are likely to increase even more.
- Be it resolved that the Board of Directors for Metro Vancouver request the Province of BC take steps in their upcoming budget to address the municipal fiscal imbalance by reinstating a revenue sharing program with municipalities – and that these revenues be stable over time.
- Be it resolved that a copy of the recommendation be forwarded to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

CARRIED

J. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE MEETING

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the regular meeting of the Board scheduled for November 2, 2007 be closed pursuant to the *Community Charter* provisions, Section 90 (1) (a) as follows:

"90 (1) A part of a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following:

- (a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the regional district or another position appointed by the regional district."

CARRIED

K. ADJOURNMENT

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That this meeting now conclude.

CARRIED

(Time: 9:27 a.m.)

CERTIFIED CORRECT



Paulette A. Vetleson, Corporate Secretary

Lois E. Jackson, Chair

To: Jan Johnston

Subject: FW: Please forward to Mayor and Council - UBCM Members

-----Original Message-----

From: Sullivan, Sam [mailto:sam.sullivan@vancouver.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, December 11, 2007 2:59 PM

To: undisclosed-recipients

Subject: Please forward to Mayor and Council - UBCM Members

I wanted to ensure that you received the attached minutes from the November 2, 2007 Metro Vancouver (GVRD Board of Directors) Meeting, where a unanimous motion was passed regarding municipal fiscal imbalance (see page 4 of the minutes).

I am also attaching a recent article, by Rick Stiebel, Goldstream News Gazette (Langford) (Dec 7, 2007). Councillor Denise Blackwell, City of Langford, will be bringing this issue forward to the Capital Regional District's Finance Committee for consideration.

http://www.gvrd.bc.ca/board/agendas/gvrd/november30/RD_B1.pdf (pdf attached)

http://www.bclocalnews.com/vancouver_island_south/goldstreamgazette/news/12242691.html (pdf attached)

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and if you have any questions, I would encourage you to contact me.

Sam Sullivan
Mayor
City of Vancouver

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12/12/2007