



**Town of Sidney – COVID-19 Recovery Task Force Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, July 14, 2020 – 2:00PM – 3:30PM**  
**Zoom Meeting**

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**Present:** Mayor C. McNeil-Smith, Councillor Barbara Fallot, David Calveley, Glenys Cavers, Steve Duck, Kirsten Norris, Morgan Shaw, Denny Warner

**Regrets:** Kelly Bull-Tomer, Brett Mikkelsen, Fire Chief

**Staff:** Randy Humble, CAO, Alison Verhagen, Senior Manager of Current Planning / Recovery Director, Donna Barner, Recording Clerk

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Meeting called to order by the Chair at 2:00.

1. Adoption of Agenda

*Moved by B. Fallot, seconded S. Duck that the Agenda be adopted.*

**CARRIED**

2. Territorial Acknowledgement

3. Adoption of Minutes

*Moved by G. Cavers, seconded by B. Fallot that the minutes from the June 30, 2020 be adopted with the amendment of Item 1: Introductions, G. Cavers' title to be corrected to Director of Volunteer and Seniors' Services.*

**CARRIED**

4. Background info – receive for information:

a) Destination Victoria and Greater Victoria Harbour Authority recovery planning overview

- Chair acknowledged that due to the information being presented only recently to the committee, it would be best to move to the next meeting's agenda. Chair offered to entertain any discussions today if the committee wished to do so.
- D. Calveley noted of interest that the Destination Victoria recovery overview is optimistic with a recovery timeline of 18 months, where Tourism BC is planning for 30 months.
- **Action: Chair will distribute BC Transit July 15<sup>th</sup> presentation to the CRD Planning, Transportation and Protective Services Committee at the next meeting.**

b) Victoria Airport Authority recovery planning – link to YouTube video of AGM, including presentations on recovery planning

- Chair acknowledged that this information was also only made available to the committee with minimal opportunity to review.
- Chair provided overview that the reports and presentations from background items a and b are all in support of health professionals making decisions on border re-openings, and will not be advocating for earlier openings.

- c) Additional pedestrian counter data provided by D. Calveley
- Chair opened floor for questions on D. Calveley pedestrian counters. No comments from committee.

*Moved by D. Warner, seconded by M. Shaw, that the committee receive the background information items a, b, and c for information.*

**CARRIED**

5. Overview of Resident Survey Summary Report

A. Verhagen provided an overview of the EOC Resident Survey on pandemic experiences.

Highlights:

- Appendices are lengthy, but provide a realistic overview in the variety of responses captured
- 618 responses in total from June 18 – July 5; staff were really pleased with this number and the different community organizations that distributed the survey throughout their circles.
- Mental health and community health were a re-occurring theme of concern
- Significant interest in growing food and community gardens
- 42% of respondents volunteer currently
- When asked what initiatives the Town should consider, responses ranged from closing off sections of Beacon Avenue; more pedestrian space; community gardens; supporting local businesses; physical distancing; concern about the pace at which re-open.
- Report and appendices will go to Council on Monday July 20, 2020

S. Duck and B. Fallot thanked A. Verhagen for the comprehensive report; provides an incredible amount information and outlines guidance on what the community would like to see prioritized. S. Duck to make suggestions under future agenda items.

*Moved by S. Duck, seconded by M. Shaw that the committee receive the overview of the Resident Survey Summary Report for information.*

**CARRIED**

6. Discussion: Recovery Vision and Measurables of Success

*Discussion became a roundtable discussion that included agenda items;*

*6 Discussion: Recovery Vision and Measurables of Success,*

*7 Discussion: Recovery and the OCP*

*8 Discussion: Member Ideas of Four Key Elements from Terms of Reference*

*9 Roundtable*

- Discussion:
  - **D. Caveley:** “feet on the street” will be valuable at measuring the success of economic recovery. Hotel vacancy rate should be considered for economic recovery; could compare hotel data with pedestrian counters. Shaw Centre is compiling visitor data for the EAC, committee could consider asking Sidney Museum to also provide data. Overall vision is we need to attract people to Sidney as Sidney.
  - **B. Fallot:** Emphasis on reassuring visitors that safety measures are in place is crucial. Town needs to demonstrate that visitors can come be a tourist while also observing the needs for COVID-19 safety.

- **S. Duck:** Would like direction from committee and Council on what level we are recovering to, and what does this look like. When we speak of “measurable of success”, what are we measuring the success of? Comparing to past years is unrealistic; we need a vision on what Sidney will look like in 12 and 18 months to then define success. The vision needs to be not specifically a recovery vision, but a vision for Sidney going forward that we can work towards.
- **G. Cavers:** Would like to see Sidney specific signage that outlines protocols businesses are following to keep visitors safe. A balance needs to be met that focuses on businesses as well as visitors. Businesses need to feel supported. Agrees with S. Duck that a goal needs to be set for what Sidney is recovering to.
- **D. Warner:** Information Centre is seeing visitors from all across Canada and Sidney is viewed as a safe place to visit. Results from the business survey showed that businesses feel supported from locals and are doing fairly well. People seem optimistic for recovery and the Chamber has accumulated new members. Challenge will be managing resident concerns that visitors need to travel here responsibly; does not see attracting visitors here as a concern.
- **M. Shaw:** Sidney has an advantage as we have been perceived as a safe community because due to size. There is a need for better communication of expectations placed on visitors. Visitors are not usual travelers, these are in large volumes and are multi family. Businesses have been encouraging in conversation. Sectors have all been hit differently accommodation industry is a major concern. Metrics from a hyper localized campaign that the BIA recently put out have shown it’s been successful so far.
- **Chair:** In terms of the vision, what do we want Sidney to look like economically and culturally for community resiliency? Challenging to determine 6, 12, and 18 months from now because of the restrictions imposed on us from higher levels of government such as travel and gatherings. These restrictions are still very significant restrictions that come with significant impacts. Economic impacts need to be considered sector by sector. The mandate within committee is to bring measures or recommendations forward to Council that can go through the Chamber and BIA and the representative associations that support the local community to reduce the impacts that COVID is creating. Sidney is not going back to what we were before; likely to be 1.5-2 years from now.
- **G. Cavers:** in relation to the vision, are we considering the catchy phrase “Safe Sidney”
- **R. Humble:** Would like to see a broader vision for our community. Results of the Resident Survey emphasized that mental and physical health are concerns within our community, and should be addressed in the Recovery vision. The mandate of this committee is also on community resiliency and cultural resiliency in addition to economic resiliency.
- **A. Verhagen:** Would like to explore measures that cover community and cultural health. There was a lot of concern on mental health from Resident Survey. Metrics such as increase in volunteer organizations, number of customers at the food bank, etc. “Feet on the Street” may not be applicable during a pandemic. Possibly consider a metric for stores that have pivoted sales to online.

*2:45 D. Warner left the meeting.*

- **D. Caveley:** Vision needs to reassure residents that Sidney is going to come back, Sidney is going to be better. Sidney is going to be a great place to live, and that we are doing everything possible to make sure our businesses recover, that we are economically stable, that we are safe. Message needs to be delivered directly to residents, perhaps through a booth on a street corner. Vision needs to address that OCP is being reviewed.
- **Chair:** there is an opportunity for a future survey to gather from residents how they feel with Sidney’s efforts and to review current state of mental health.

- **B. Fallot:** Resident Survey reflected that mental health has taken a hit personally and on the community. Focus needs to remain on all of Sidney and not just the corridor and waterfront. Mental health is not a today issue, people's well-being is an ongoing issue. Businesses cannot be thought of in solidarity for recovery, we need to think of our residents.
- **S. Duck:** agrees with Councillor B. Fallot. Would like to see a face-to-face approach to address mental health. Residents need to hear that businesses are reporting that they are doing well, this will assist with the mental health component as we are "all in this together."
- **Action: Chair will bring a follow-up regarding Vision to the next meeting.**
- **Chair:** Council intentionally brought forward the four elements as to address concerns such as mental health and community connectedness. Recognized discussion has turned into a roundtable; committee will not have time to address the four terms today.
- **S. Duck:** advocated for a follow up tourism document for accommodation and tourism industry on appropriately handling tourists.
- **G. Cavers:** Developed a script for the thrift shops for volunteers and staff whom will greet visitors at the front door and ask them to use sanitizer. Staff are feeling anxious, providing them with information would deescalate.
- **Chair:** The Business Liaison Officer program through the EOC visited approximately 175 businesses. Would like to see a push to any premises that is engaging with the public to reconsider WorkSafe BC plans now with feedback from patrons and staff.
- **A. Verhagen:** Town staff are still offering the Business Liaison Officer program. Spoke to preparing for the second wave; Town is prepared to active EOC again as required. A report will be coming forward to Council on EOC After Action Report.
- **R. Humble:** A number of response plans and initiatives were taken on by the EOC and reflecting on how these could be altered for a second wave is key.
- **Chair:** Regional Chair and Mayor meetings have transitioned to be meeting with communities of similar size as opposed to geographic location. The message being delivered is that businesses and individuals need to be preparing for a second wave.
- **D. Calveley:** Proposed taking an empty storefront and make it not only an information centre; but also an information receiving centre where residents and visitors can communicate to the Town. Will align with engaging face-to-face.
- **Chair:** Could see staffing being a concern; but willing to work with this challenge.
- **G. Cavers:** Mental health has been a gap in Sidney for a substantial time. Is there an opportunity for the Town to provide a network that is accessible to Sidney residents, physically and financially?

7. Next Meeting:

**Action: Chair will work with staff to formalize a schedule for committee meetings.**

8. Adjournment

*Moved by S. Duck, seconded by B. Fallot, that the meeting adjourn at 03:17.*

**CARRIED**

**Meeting adjourned at 03:17.**

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Chair

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Date