



City of Kelowna

Statutory Inaugural Council Meeting

Minutes

Date: Monday, November 5, 2018
 Location: Mary Irwin Theatre Rotary Centre for the Arts
 421 Cawston Avenue, Kelowna, BC

Council Members Present Mayor-Elect Colin Basran, Councillors-Elect Maxine DeHart, Ryan Donn, Gail Given, Tracy Gray, Charlie Hodge, Brad Sieben, Mohini Singh, Luke Stack and Loyal Wooldridge

Staff Present City Clerk, Stephen Fleming

Guests The Honourable Judge Lisa Wyatt; Former Councillor Tracy Gray; Master of Ceremonies, Tony Parsons; KFD Bagpiper, Paul Johnson; KFD Honour Guard Shawn O'Reilly, Jason Stoodley and Adam Benson; RCMP Corporal Carrie Seale; RCMP Constable Reg Sahay; Jordan Coble, Westbank First Nation; Krystal Lezard, Westbank First Nation; Ruth Cipes; The Kelowna City Band

Musical entertainment provided by the Kelowna City Band, Ruth Cipes and Bagpiper Paul Johnson.

1. Commencement of Inaugural Ceremony

The Inaugural Ceremony commenced at 7:22 p.m.

2. Welcome to Guests

Master of Ceremonies (MC) Tony Parsons welcomed those in attendance.

3. National Anthem

Ruth Cipes led in the singing of the National Anthem.

4. First Nations Prayer

MC Tony Parsons called upon Jordon Coble to offer a First Nations Prayer.

5. Okanagan Song

MC Tony Parsons called upon Krystal Lezard to perform the Okanagan Song.

6. Introduction of Newly Elected Council

MC Tony Parsons introduced the in-coming Council.

7. Administration of Oath of Office to Mayor-Elect Colin G. Basran

The Honourable Judge Lisa Wyatt administered the Oath of Office to Mayor-Elect Colin Basran and presented him with the Chain of Office.

8. Administration of Oath of Office to Councillors-Elect

The Honourable Judge Lisa Wyatt administered the Oath of Office to Councillors-Elect Maxine DeHart, Ryan Donn, Gail Given, Charlie Hodge, Brad Sieben, Mohini Singh, Luke Stack, Loyal Wooldridge.

9. CALL TO ORDER

His Worship Mayor Colin Basran called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m.

10. Mayor Basran's Inaugural Address

Good evening everyone and thank you for joining us on this very special evening. This is an exciting night for the nine of us and it's nice to see that so many people want to share in this moment with us.

I will now call to order this City of Kelowna, Inaugural Council Meeting.

Thank you to everyone who has joined us tonight to help us begin this new chapter for Kelowna, the City we are all so proud to call home!

Just a few things before I get started...

Tony Parsons – grew up watching on TV as a kid and was one of the inspirations for me to get into journalism.

Ruth Cipes – you have an incredibly bright future ahead of you!

Kelowna City Band – thank you so much for your years of service and entertainment in our community.

Jordan Coble and Krystal Lezard – thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and your rich culture and traditions with us.

Judge Wyatt – thank you for taking part in this great community tradition.

City Staff – thank you for organizing this very special night for us.

It is an honour for the nine of us to lead our community for the next four years. I appreciate this incredible opportunity to continue working alongside incumbents Maxine DeHart, Gail Given, Luke Stack, Brad Sieben, Mohini Singh, Charlie Hodge and Ryan Donn.

The eight of us have accomplished so much together. And when you add the knowledge, and passion of first time Councillor, Loyal Wooldridge, it highlights the tremendous opportunity we have before us to continue bringing about positive change for the residents of Kelowna.

The election of these caring and community minded individuals to City Council is indicative of the City we are becoming... progressive, diverse, and inclusive.

In the past four years, I've had the opportunity to speak with Mayors right across the country. It's not lost on me that what we have here is unique and is the envy of other municipalities. I am privileged to

lead a team that is aligned in its overall vision for the community. Maybe not on every individual step, which makes for healthy debate, but we all want to see our city prosper economically, socially and culturally.

I will be talking tonight about how we expect to follow through on plans from previous Councils and some personal aspirations for the future... but I also want to note that we have a process in place to review and establish Council Priorities for the next four years and beyond. We will be going through that process early in our term and reporting out to you on that in the new year.

So while some other municipal councils are busy fighting amongst each other and perhaps not accomplishing as much as they'd like, we are just the opposite. Our Council will use the next four years to move our City along even further and make sure Kelowna is a place where every resident has the opportunity to contribute and feel like they belong.

Tonight we are filled with excitement and optimism. But leadership is not always easy. There are some challenging issues that need to be addressed. Future decisions we need to make will require political courage.

As our Oath of Office states, we must do what is best for the community as a whole, even in the face of adversity.... that's what leadership is. I am confident that this Council will lead by making pragmatic, evidence-based decisions that will serve our community well, long after we're gone.

One such initiative I am confident will have a lasting, positive impact on our community is the Journey Home plan to address homelessness in Kelowna. A huge thank you to everyone who helped put this strategy together and to those who have stayed on to help implement it. It took an unprecedented community effort to build it and it's going to take that same support to see it followed through.

Recognized by both the Federal and Provincial governments as a model for other municipalities to follow, this plan is also the first of its kind to include a youth homelessness strategy we call 'A Way Home'.

Together, they will ensure that everyone in our community has a place to call home. Statistics show that housing with supports not only leads to better outcomes for our community's most vulnerable residents, it is far more cost effective than the status quo.

City Council is proud to stand with you and will do all that we can to support this initiative to ensure it is funded and resourced appropriately. We will also continue to lobby and build relationships with higher levels of government and with the partners whose help is required in order to see measurable progress made on this top community priority.

We must also use this opportunity to help eliminate the stigma and negative perceptions attached to those living on our streets. Only with open minds and hearts will we truly make a lasting impact.

We are committed to helping the most vulnerable residents in our community, and at the same time ensuring our entire community feels safe. Criminals and criminal activity have no place in Kelowna and we will take the steps necessary to ensure all residents have a safe and secure place to do business and call home.

In the coming weeks, Council will receive a highly anticipated report from former Superintendent Bill McKinnon on further ways we can work collaboratively to get help for those in our community who need it while keeping everyone safe. Traditional policing methods will only get us so far, and we applaud and support Kelowna RCMP Superintendent Brent Mundle and his officers as they incorporate new approaches, partnerships and technologies to modernize and use best practices to address our needs in an ever changing society.

We look forward to the report's recommendations and will continue to invest in the resources needed to uphold our standing as one of the best places in the world to live, work or visit.

I want to take a moment to thank our first responders... the RCMP, Fire Fighters, Paramedics, Bylaw Enforcement Officers and all those tasked with the difficult job of serving our community and dealing with situations that most of us can't even imagine. We are very grateful for all that you do, particularly when resources have been spread thin, as they have been during the last two years dealing with flooding and fires on a level we've never seen before.

Which leads me to the next issue I want to discuss tonight... Climate Change. It is real and it is having a devastating impact on our community in a number of ways. Public and private property and infrastructure is being threatened or destroyed by flooding and fires. We are being forced to stay indoors for weeks at a time because the air outside is not safe to breathe.

We have days when the water coming out of our taps isn't safe to drink due to increased turbidity levels. We're seeing high groundwater levels flooding basements and yards in neighbourhoods where it has never before been a problem.

The most recent report released a few weeks ago by the world's leading climate scientists says we only have 12 years to make the necessary corrections needed to change course or the world our kids will inherit will be drastically different... and not for the better. I don't know about you but that really scares me.

This is not someone else's problem to fix. We all play a part in doing what we can to care for this planet and stop taking what we have for granted. Our residents told us through the Imagine Kelowna process that they want action to preserve this beautiful place we call home, and fortunately we can say we have a vision and plans to do our part.

So the good news is that we will not only do our part to look after the earth, we'll have a better City as a result.

It's more important than ever that we continue to make sure our community grows in a sustainable way, guided by progressive planning principles. From an environmental standpoint, directing growth to our town centres reduces the amount of natural open space and sensitive wildlife habitat from being lost to further sprawl development.

We know we need to direct much of the development needed to accommodate the 40 to 50-thousand people moving here in the next 20 years into our five designated town centres:

- Downtown
- South Pandosy
- Capri/Landmark
- Midtown (Orchard Park)
- Rutland

If we continue to spread out as a community, the more expensive it is to run our municipality for you as taxpayers. Suburban development costs 8-times more than urban development when it comes to infrastructure costs, maintenance and service costs over time... so it makes good financial sense.

The vision for our City is to see our town centres better connected by further investment in frequent transit service and active transportation pathways. Next year will see the launch of technology where transit riders can track their buses in real time. Construction will soon begin on the Sutherland Avenue active transportation corridor and we will continue to implement our Pedestrian and Cycling Masterplan which will not only help residents live a healthier lifestyle, it will also help lessen our community's carbon footprint.

If we can get those living in our town centres to use different modes of transportation other than a single-occupant vehicle, which has been proven that they will, it will mean less traffic for all of us to

fight with when you come into town. Alternate modes of transportation are important for our City's future but there are also some key road connections that are required as well.

Our top road priority will continue to be the Highway 33 extension, previously referred to as the North End Connector. This will help alleviate congestion along Highway 97 and Enterprise Way. This multi-million-dollar project requires the relocation of our Regional Transit Yard and both projects will require significant funding from higher levels of government which we will continue to advocate for to move these priorities forward.

Another key road project expected to break ground this coming spring is South Perimeter Road which will provide Upper Mission residents with another way in and out of their neighbourhood and will hopefully result in the construction of the much talked about retail centre in the Ponds development which will help lessen the need for area residents to drive all the way into the city for shopping and other errands.

Work is also underway on two major planning initiatives that will be completed this term to help set the course for how we get around not only our City but the region in the future. Please watch for opportunities to provide your input into 'Kelowna On the Move' our City's Transportation Masterplan as well as the Regional Transportation Plan.

In the meantime, I look forward to meeting with the new Mayors of West Kelowna, Vernon and Penticton to discuss the possibility of establishing a rapid bus connection between our four Okanagan municipalities. This will hopefully be a precursor to a more permanent, high speed transit service between the cities in the decades ahead.

Following through on these plans will mean a thriving City and a better planet for our kids and grandkids to inherit.

As we continue to direct new residents into our town centres and urban core, we address the challenge of housing affordability. We need to make sure that we use land that is available for housing as efficiently as possible. With all this in mind, we completed a Housing Needs Assessment to determine the housing requirements of our residents moving forward.

From that came the Healthy Housing Strategy, which is our plan to help ensure all residents have access to a wide variety of housing types, from single family homes to condos and everything in between. We must continue to implement the recommendations in this plan to help ensure that everyone, regardless of income, can find a home.

Almost 65% of the new houses being built in Kelowna are in multi-family projects, a trend we'd like to see continue to increase. One of the key focus areas of the Healthy Housing Strategy is promoting and protecting rental housing. We will also continue to utilize incentives and tax breaks to encourage developers to build even more rental housing, even with the vacancy rate in our City expected to rise to over 2% next year. A healthy vacancy rate is considered somewhere between 3 to 5%, so we are making huge strides.

A policy governing short term rentals will be coming forward early in 2019 and it is our intention to create a solution that helps increase long-term housing for residents while still providing an experience that visitors to our community want without hurting our tourism industry.

We will also keep fighting the provincial government's proposed Speculation Tax. We know that housing affordability is a challenge that has many negative impacts, but we believe there are better ways that would be far more effective without having negative unintended consequences.

There is no doubt that after the three best development years in our City's history, construction is a big part of our local economy. It is not realistic to think that we can sustain these levels year after year. However, we need to make sure Kelowna continues to be a great place for people to invest.

We also need to continue working to be open and adaptable to ensure our entrepreneurs and small business owners are able to thrive.

The legalization of cannabis in Canada has introduced a whole new business sector that brings a lot of economic opportunity, along with some societal challenges that we as a City will be navigating through over the next few months and years. It's a big challenge to do it right, but we've proven in the past that we are adept at managing change that serves the local economy in an orderly way.

We are mindful that our City has been recognized over the past few years as one of the best and most affordable places to do business in the country. So many jobs these days are mobile and can be done from anywhere in the world. And we want to make sure we continue to attract and retain them here in Kelowna!

Our knowledge-based economy continues to grow, anchored by Interior Health, UBC Okanagan, and Okanagan College. But we also need our traditional industries like Tourism and Agriculture to flourish along with them. Vital to it all is our very own, municipally owned International Airport. Over two million passengers will pass through YLW before this year is up, making it the 10th busiest airport in the country. I look forward to seeing the airport and surrounding lands continuing to develop along with new links connecting more of the world to our great City.

Just a few more things before I wrap up... As one of the fastest growing cities in the country, the demand for increased services grows and so too do the pressures on our well maintained but aging infrastructure. The reality is, we are starting to fall behind in some key areas and our expanding infrastructure deficit is a huge concern to Council and should be for all our residents too.

We will face the challenges of our community head-on and do so in a fiscally responsible manner, making sure that tax dollars are spent on projects of value that meet multiple objectives. It is not acceptable to hide from today's realities to further burden the generations of the future, just so we can say we kept your taxes artificially low.

What is often forgotten is that when you compare the taxes paid by Kelowna residents, to other large municipalities in BC, the rate here is one of the lowest and below the average. Not only will we continue to make sure every dollar is spent responsibly, we will also expand on the ways we continue to generate revenue to offset taxes. That includes the full implementation of our new sponsorship and advertising program. Strong financial management and new ways of thinking are a must if we are going to complete the build-out of some highly anticipated parks and begin the design work and potentially break ground on desperately needed recreation facilities.

Kelowna will continue to shine on stage, in galleries and on screen as we help our local, world class artists showcase their talents to an even greater audience. An update to our Cultural Plan is underway as we speak and we look forward to working with the community on ways to incorporate more art and culture into our community. Big and bold ideas are certainly welcomed as we look for ways to empower our creative class and increase the vibrancy of our City.

Over the course of the term we will also be playing host to some major sporting events that include the Memorial Cup, Skate Canada and the 55+ BC Games. I have no doubt our local commerce and sporting organizations, corporate sponsors and volunteers will rally around these opportunities to take them to another level, making us proud and leaving a lasting impression on the athletes and fans. Implementing our recently endorsed Community Sport Plan will help guide us over the next four years, as we work towards becoming the healthiest community in Canada.

Four years seems like a really long time... like it feels sitting through this speech for some of you. For Council, it's going to fly by way too quickly. We need to be motivated and focused if we are going to make the positive impact we believe we can. But we're also going to need a lot of help. The decisions we make will not be made in isolation. Community engagement will continue to be a priority and a regular part of the governance process.

We will build upon our strong relationships with the Westbank First Nation and Okanagan Indian Band and champion their cultural and economic endeavours whenever possible. We will engage the hard working community organizations and world class institutional partners we have in the City, collaborating to seek innovative, progressive solutions to challenges that will be held up and used as positive examples by our peers.

Partnerships with our Provincial and Federal government representatives will also be important as many of the issues we face are also shared priorities. We look forward to meeting with MLAs Thomson, Stewart and Letnick and MPs Fuhr and Albas to make sure our collective voice is heard in Victoria and Ottawa.

I want to take a moment to thank the Kelowna City Councils that have served this community before us. There are members of previous Councils here tonight:

You have created a strong foundation for us to continue building upon and for that we are truly grateful.

To City of Kelowna Staff... You are the best in the business! We set the vision but you are the ones who spend your evenings and weekends making sure Council's priorities become reality. This will be City Manager, Doug Gilchrist's first new term and his fresh perspectives and energy are welcomed by Council and will have a positive impact throughout the organization.

And finally, none of us would be here on this stage... and we would not be able to accomplish anything, without the incredible love, understanding and patience of our families. Leading this community is challenging at the best of times. There are no words to adequately describe the role you play in our lives and the sacrifices you make so we can do what we do. We love you all very much.

It's that love and support that grants us the strength to continue working to ensure that Kelowna is a City we can all be proud of. An accepting, accessible, diverse and inclusive community that truly is a place for everyone. Thank you.

11. Regional District Appointments 2018-2022

His Worship Mayor Colin Basran presented the Regional District Appointments for 2018 through 2022.

Moved by Councillor Sieben/Seconded by Councillor Singh

THAT the Regional District appointments for the City of Kelowna be as follows:

Appointees

Mayor Colin Basran
Councillor Maxine Dehart
Councillor Gail Given
Councillor Charlie Hodge
Councillor Brad Sieben
Councillor Luke Stack
Councillor Loyal Wooldridge

Alternate

Councillor Mohini Singh

Carried

12. Gift Presentation to Outgoing Council

His Worship Colin Basran presented a gift of appreciation to former Councillor Tracy Gray.

13. Invitation to Reception

His Worship Colin Basran invited the guests in attendance to join members of Council for light refreshments.

14. Termination

The meeting was declared terminated at 7:46 p.m.

Mayor
/cm

City Clerk