



MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held at City Hall in Conference Room A,
141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, BC on September 18, 2024

The City of North Vancouver respectfully acknowledges that this meeting is held on the traditional and unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and sə́ilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Members Present

Anna Boltenko (Chair)
Farnoosh Fallah
Anahita Naeini
Charles Pan
Zeyus Spenta

Councillor Tony Valente

Absent

Liza Feris
Olga Kens
Kathy McGrenera
Tim Page

Staff Present

Heather Evans, Community Planner
Edytha Barker, Administrative Coordinator
Eleanor Parrott, Committee Clerk - Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

1.1 The Agenda for September 18, 2024 was adopted as circulated.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Minutes of the meeting held on June 26, 2024 were approved as circulated.

3. UPDATES

3.1 The Councillor update was provided under item 6.

3.2 Staff

- The North Shore Homelessness Task Force Connect Day is taking place on Thursday, October 10, 2024 at 9:00am-2:00pm at the Pipe Shop. The event will involve a variety of agencies that work to tackle the root causes of homelessness and those struggling with this issue. Free services such as foot care, hairdressing and food provisions will be available.

- The City of North Vancouver Library hosts an open door community hub event that provides a place for people to be during the daytime every Wednesday and Sunday.
- The City of North Vancouver Library will also be holding a sewing and mending program on Friday, October 11, 2024.

4. COMMUNITY GRANTS ROUND TWO UPDATE

4.1 The Community Planner provided the following update regarding the Community Grants Round Two:

- The deadline for the Community Grants Round Two has been extended from September 15 to September 30, 2024. The later deadline will avoid coinciding with the busy period in which schools reopen and many non-profit organization staff return from summer vacation.
- The budget for this round of grants is larger than usual.
- The grants have been advertised via the inter-agency network, paid social media promotions, newsletters and direct communication to previous grant applicants and recipients.
- The grant applications recommended for approval by the Committee will likely be submitted to Council in January 2025, rather than December 2024 due to administrative changes that have taken place in the department. This will result in organizations being informed of their application outcome later than usual. Therefore, the Community Grant Round One deadline has been extended from January 31 to February 28, 2025 to allow more time for unsuccessful Round One applicants to re-submit to Round Two if they wish. This deadline will be later than the equivalent grants provided by the District of North Vancouver but communications will be clear to reduce confusion.
- The Round Two grants will still be funded using the 2024 budget.

4.2 Members presented the following notable questions and comments:

- Have there been any changes to the application process? **A:** No changes have been made to the application process, only the application deadlines have changed.

5. SUPPORTIVE FUNDING REVIEW PROJECT DISCUSSION

6:26pm - Councillor Valente joined the meeting.

5.1 The Community Planner presented the following highlights regarding the Supportive Funding Review Project:

- The City provides a variety of grants and funding. The aim of this discussion is to gather members' feedback on changes that could be made to allow funding to reach new places that do not yet benefit from City grants.
- Members were provided with worksheets to help inspire their feedback and shape the discussion. Members were invited to write their feedback individually and collaboratively.

5.2 Members presented the following notable questions and comments:

What works well?

- The application forms provide detailed insight into the organization.

- The organizations reached by the grants represent a broad range of groups, from well-established organizations to new initiatives.
- The review and decision-making process that takes place at this Committee is thorough and provides beneficial consensus-based collaboration and accountability.

What is challenging?

- The application forms contain lots of information which can make the review process difficult.
- Members have previously had questions about applications that were only answered after the decision making process, when organizations were invited to present to the Committee.
- Successful applicants often submit requests for the same amount of funding the following year. How do members know how the previous year's grant was spent and the effect it had on the organization's work? Could organizations be asked to set Key Performance Indicators and report against these in their next application? **A:** Organizations are required to complete an accountability form before submitting another application. This evidences the outcomes of their previous funding and is included as part of their new application.
- Why is information about the amount of funding granted to the applicant last year, and the amount granted by other similar organizations provided to the Committee? **A:** This is to highlight if a precedent has been set. Some organizations rely on this grant funding and an unsuccessful application might impact their stability. In addition, first-time applications are likely to be granted a lower funding amount as they have not yet had the opportunity to evidence they can use the funding meaningfully and build trust with the City.
- Some organizations clearly articulate how many people their work supports, whilst others don't. Why? **A:** This information is particularly hard for organizations, especially those that are new, to quantify.
- Some organizations lack grant writing skills and the application forms they submit can be of a poor quality. The form may act as an obstacle to success. Applicants do not necessarily know how to raise queries about the application process and emails to staff can be time consuming for both parties.
- The application process can be confusing, especially for new organizations.

Areas of improvement and evolution

- Grouping information contained within the application forms into specific criteria could help to more easily highlight key points.
- Is it possible to facilitate presentations from applicants prior to decision making, so that members can gather further information and answers to their queries? **A:** There is a risk that organizations who are invited to and able to attend a meeting will be favored, which could lead to unfair decision making. It is not feasible to invite all applicants to present and some organizations may not have the time or resource to do so.
- Could staff reach out directly to organizations with application form queries raised by members? **A:** The City does not engage in this practice in order to avoid bias favoritism.
- Could staff hold a community event to help members learn more about organizations applying for grants, whilst also helping organizations to connect with members of the community and potential volunteers? The event could provide information booths for organizations and could be open for attendance by members of the community, the Committee and staff. **A:** Staff can consider facilitating this event as a way to enable in person information sharing.

- Could staff hold a question and answer session for potential applicants to help reduce this barrier? The session could be held virtually to increase accessibility and the recording could be posted to the website for viewing at a later date. **A:** This session could be facilitated. There are also Frequently Asked Questions available with answers on the grants website, and staff are available to answer queries from applicants.
- Could staff reach out directly to potential new applicants to encourage applications? **A:** Yes, there might be organizations that are unaware of the grants available.
- Could a more demonstrative format, such as video, be utilized to more clearly evidence the outcomes of previous grant funding? Other options might be to visit organizations to see their work in practice and viewing their social media posts **A:** There is a risk that some organizations will have better access to video and digital skills than others, and it would not be fair to judge applications on the basis of digital skill rather than their work, needs and impact. Technical issues with video submissions are likely and whilst a variety of submission methods such as YouTube links could be explored, consideration would need to be given to privacy and security concerns.
- Applicants' perspective on the process could be sought during the process via the inclusion of a space to provide feedback at the end of the application form.
- An online form may work to streamline and simplify the application process.
- Greater detail around the funding amount requested and a breakdown how it will be spent within the organization, including the amount that will be spent on salaries, would be helpful.
- The City provides support in multiple ways. Is it possible to adopt a more holistic approach to grants? For example, by offering applicants in need of housing the use of space rather than funding to pay rent? **A:** Agencies are currently able to access different forms of funding. The City does not own a significant amount of space so provision of physical space as an alternative would be limited.

5.3 In summary, the Chair noted that since a number of members were unable to attend this meeting it would be beneficial for members to share a brief update and any further thoughts at the next meeting.

6. ROUNDTABLE

6.1 The Councillor provided an update on recent activities:

- The Union of British Columbia Municipalities convention is taking place this week. The convention is attended by representatives from across the Province and includes a vote on Notices of Motion from the Municipalities to propose to the Province. The event also provides a networking opportunity and is well attended by Ministers.
- Council convened at its first meeting after the summer recess on September 9. Items discussed included the North Shore Neighbourhood House Agreement which supports affordable housing, BC Assessment which relates to tax and land use regulations, the Asset Management Approach and Strategy which funds maintenance in the City and the North Shore Streamkeepers Mosquito Creek Restoration Project Phase II which supports the City's salmon population.

6.2 The Chair provided an update on the KidsFest event which took place at The Shipyards on September 15. The event received positive feedback and was attended by approximately 10,000 people. Planning is underway for next year's event which is likely to follow a similar format and will take place on a similar date.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2024.

8. ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:14 pm.

“Certified Correct by the Chair”

Anna Boltenko, Chair