



**TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN**

Minutes of a Regular meeting of Council held and transmitted electronically via Council Chambers located at 39 South Shore Road, Lake Cowichan, BC on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

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**PRESENT:** Tim McGonigle, Mayor  
Councillor Carolyne Austin  
Councillor Aaron Frisby  
Councillor Kristine Sandhu  
Councillor Lorna Vomacka

**STAFF:** Mark Brown, Chief Administrative Officer  
Ronnie Gill, Director of Finance  
Jas Sandhu, Superintendent, Public Works and Engineering Services  
Dalton Smith, Manager, Cowichan Lake Education Centre  
Roni-Lee Roach, Executive Secretary

**PUBLIC:** 1

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

None.

**3. AGENDA**

Moved: Councillor Austin  
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
that the agenda be approved as amended as follows:

**NEW BUSINESS**

Leave of Absence for Councillor Frisby;

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

Report on meeting with MLA Debra Toporowski to discuss proposal for local Disc Golf course.

CARRIED.

**4. PUBLIC INPUT**

None.

**5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**(a)** Moved: Councillor Vomacka  
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
that the minutes of the Regular meeting of the Council held on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, be adopted.

CARRIED.

**6. BUSINESS ARISING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**7. DELEGATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

None.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

**(a) Action Items:**

**(i)** The correspondence item from the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities on the matter of the request for feedback was treated as information. Mayor McGonigle encouraged each member of Council to provide their individual feedback on necessary changes to the *Local Government Act*.

No. R.0019/25  
Agenda

No. R.0020/25  
Regular Council  
Meeting Minutes



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No. R.0021/25  
Town Contribution  
Lake Days 2025 -

- (ii) Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
that the Town of Lake Cowichan Lake Days Barbecue tickets for June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 be sold for \$15 per person.

Not Approved.

No. R.0022/25  
Town Contribution  
Lake Days 2025 -

- (ii) Moved: Councillor Austin  
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka  
that the Town of Lake Cowichan Lake Days Barbecue tickets for June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 be sold for \$12 per person.

CARRIED.

Direction was given to advise Lake Days organizers to be advised of the price for advertising purposes and that tickets will be sold at the municipal office only, prior to the event.

**(b) Information or Consent Items**

**9. REPORTS**

**(a) Council and other Committee Reports**

No. R.0023/25  
Committee of  
the Whole

- (i) Moved: Mayor McGonigle  
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, be approved with the following:

**1— Digital Display Board**

that Council approve the purchase of a higher resolution digital display board at the municipal office at a cost of \$6,393.71 plus applicable shipping costs and taxes.

**2—2025 Budget – Consultant Fees**

that Council approve the consultant fees in the amount of \$30,000 for recruitment costs prior to the approval of the 2025 financial budget.

**3—Fire Department Incident Report**

that Council approve the Lake Cowichan Fire Department’s incident report in the amount of \$9,828.05 for February, 2025.

**4—Statement – Sunscreen Sales in Lake Cowichan**

that the Town of Lake Cowichan put out a statement advising residents and business of our stance on the sale of harmful sunscreens in our community and that the statement be released on International Water Day on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025; and

that staff be directed to research the legality of a bylaw that bans all sunscreens that are not non-nano mineral sunscreens being sold in the Town of Lake Cowichan and our capacity to enforce such a bylaw.

**5—Approval for Attendance at Conference**

that Council approve the attendance of Mark Brown, Chief Administrative Officer at the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Community conference to be held in Nanaimo, BC on April 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

CARRIED.

The statement on the matter of the Sunscreen Sales in Lake Cowichan will be provided during the Mayors Report portion of the meeting.

Cowichan Lake  
Recreation Commission

- (ii) Mayor McGonigle provided a verbal report on the meeting held on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 of the Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission.



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- Vancouver Island Regional Library (iii) Councillor Vomacka reported that no meetings have been held since the Vancouver Island Regional Library Board annual general meeting.
  
- Advisory Planning Commission (iv) Councillor Sandhu gave a verbal report on the Advisory Planning Commission meeting held on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and the minutes for the meeting were treated as information. The next meeting of the Commission will be held on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
  
- Community Forest Co-operative (v) Mayor McGonigle gave a verbal report on the recent Forest Co-operative meeting held and spoke on a public announcement to be made on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 with an invitation sent out to all Council members.
  
- (b) **Other Reports**
  - (i) Mayor McGonigle reported that Councillor Sandhu would be attending the upcoming Board meeting.  
  
He gave a verbal report of those meetings held by the Cowichan Valley Regional District Board and discussion on the three-stream system that will be implemented in the electoral areas this year. He further reported on the budget and 5-year financial plan has been adopted and the requisition increases for the Town of Lake Cowichan is largely contributed to regional recreation, commuter transit and solid waste.
  
- Community Outreach Team (ii) Councillor Austin provided a verbal report on the recent meeting of the Outreach team held on Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
  
- Our Cowichan (iii) No report for Our Cowichan.
  
- Cowichan Watershed Board (iv) Councillor Sandhu gave a verbal report on the World Water Day events that were recently held at Saywell Park on Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025 and extended appreciation to everyone involved with the planning and public tours of the weir.
  
- Ohtaki Twinning (v) Councillor Austin provided a verbal report on the group travelling to Ohtaki, Japan in July 2025 and Councillor Frisby’s introduction to the group.  
  
Planning for the 2026 will start with the group after Spring Break and fundraising to begin in late July with 8 students expressing interest.  
  
Mayor McGonigle congratulated Mr. Yoshinori “Yoshi” Kageyama , Superintendent, Date City School Board on his retirement on March 31, 2025 and sent a video message on behalf of the Town.
  
- (c) **Staff Reports**
  - (i) The report from the Contract Planner on the application for a Development Variance Permit and Development Permit on Lot 5, Plan 9979, described as 14 Beaver Road was postponed.
  
- 10. **BYLAWS**
  - (a) Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
that the “Town of Lake Cowichan Sanitary Sewer Parcel Tax Bylaw No. 1116-2025” may be reconsidered and adopted.

CARRIED.

No. R.0024/25  
Sanitary Sewer Parcel Tax  
No. 1116-2025



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No. R.0025/25  
Water Parcel Tax  
No. 1117-2025

- (b) Moved: Councillor Austin  
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka  
that the "Town of Lake Cowichan Water Parcel Tax Bylaw No. 1117-2025" may be reconsidered and adopted.

CARRIED.

### 11. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Notice of the Strategic Planning and Budget meeting for March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 was treated as information.

No. R.0026/25  
Leave of Absence

- (b) Moved: Councillor Austin  
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka  
that Council approve a leave of absence for Councillor Frisby on his absence from the meeting held this day.

CARRIED.

### 12. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor McGonigle provided his 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter report for 2025 as follows:

The first quarter of 2025 has brought many changes, local, federally and internationally. These outside pressures will impact many communities across BC and Canada as tensions between the USA and Canada change almost daily. As previously reported, our long time CAO, Mr. Fernandez has retired, and an Interim CAO, Mark Brown is guiding us during the transition period of searching a permanent replacement. The advertisement seeking a replacement went out on March 21 and after the closing date of April 18<sup>th</sup>, we will begin vetting the applicants for the best fit for the needs of Council and the community. I wish to thank staff for taking on additional responsibilities as we navigate this process.

Councillor Frisby has championed the background work on the possibility of banning harmful sunscreens from use in our community. He has reached out to local businesses with the aim to encourage sale of water safe sunscreens as the weather warms and we see an influx of visitors seeking to recreate in the West Cowichan area. A statement was scheduled to be made in conjunction with International Water Day but was not available. Staff is investigating the possibility of implementing a bylaw banning the sale of harmful sunscreens within the municipal boundaries, ensuring the legality of such a bylaw. This will help protect our heritage River and the aquatic environment.

Budget deliberations occurred on Friday the 28<sup>th</sup> of March in conjunction with a Strategic Plan update. Contrary to social media posts, no decision has been made on the Sewer Treatment Plant upgrades, although preliminary discussions have occurred on possible upgrades moving forward. We continue to work on the current system, with mitigation measures to eradicate some deficiencies identified by senior levels of government. Also, upcoming lobbying to the Provincial Health Ministry is scheduled to discuss the health need gaps in the West Cowichan area.

Finally, a huge shout out to all the volunteers in our community whose contributions contribute to a better community for all.

### 13. NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor Vomacka spoke on Sam Warning presentation to Council with respect to temporary use for disc golf at the former AB Greenwell School site and contact with MLA Debra Toporowski.

The matter for meeting request with the appropriate Ministries to discuss the Town's acquisition of the property and potential temporary use permit for disc golf course and future use of the AB Greenwell School property.



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**14. QUESTION PERIOD**

**15. IN CAMERA**

No. R.0027/25  
Retire to In-Camera

Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka  
that the Council close the meeting to the public to deal with issues dealing with labour relations or other employee relations and law enforcement which fall under s. 90(1) (c)and (f) of the Community Charter. (5:51 pm).  
CARRIED.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

No. R.0028/25  
Adjournment

Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
that the meeting arise without report and be adjourned (6:41 pm).  
CARRIED.

Certified correct \_\_\_\_\_.

Confirmed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor