



**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 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

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

**STAFF:** John Thomas, Chief Administrative Officer  
Jas Sandhu, Superintendent, Public Works and Engineering Services  
Dalton Smith, Manager, Cowichan Lake Education Centre  
Brigid Reynolds, Contract Planner  
Roni-Lee Roach, Executive Secretary

**PUBLIC:** 9

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

The Mayor conveyed his appreciated and thanks to members of Council and staff while he was away on his leave.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

- Francis Guyver, Mosaic, Delegation item 7(a) is not able to attend;
- Councillor Frisby declared a conflict on the parking program matter 10(h).

**3. AGENDA**

No. R.037/26  
Agenda

Moved: Councillor Frisby  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
That the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

**4. PUBLIC INPUT**

Stacey Blanchet, Owner of 88 Cowichan Lake Road spoke on her support for the Temporary Use Permit application that would be considered by Council.

**5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of February 24, 2026, Regular Council Meeting were not attached to the agenda packaged. Council directed that it is brought forward at the next meeting.

**6. BUSINESS ARISING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No. R.038/26  
2026-2030 Financial  
Plan – Public  
Engagement

- (a)** Moved: Councillor Frisby  
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
That Council direct staff to bring forward the required financial bylaws for Council’s consideration and adoption.

CARRIED.

**7. DELEGATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

- (b)** Kenzie Knight, Tourism Cowichan was on hand to make a presentation to Council on the matter of the Municipal and Regional District Tax Program – Cowichan Region (MRDT) which is a Visitor funded provincial tax program established in 1987 to support the growth and management of tourism in British Columbia.

Calum Mathews reviewed the Powerpoint presentation which outlined some key success factors as follows:

- Clearly defined MRDT boundaries and supportive industry
- A well-resourced organization to manage MRDT locally
- Strong local governance



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- Transparency
- Local oversight of MRDT spend and strategy with a diversity of stakeholders and partners from across the tourism sector

Mr. Mathews further expanded on the MRDT benefits, the regional value with the current and forecasted revenues projected, as well as, details on the workshops that were held in February and early March.

In closing, he provided the projected timeline for completion of the final documentation and submission of the 5-year business plan to the Ministry is set for July, 2026.

Mayor McGonigle requested that consideration of a resolution for Council’s support be brought forward to a future meeting.

- (c) Aivars Liepa-Spence, Grade 11 student at Lake Cowichan Secondary School presented the Town with the results of a survey that he ran for his Social Justice 12 class project. The data collected was on the following:
- Opinions on school;
  - Educational inequality;
  - Community collaboration;
  - Substances; and
  - Mental health.

Mr. Liepa-Spence advised that he would like to forward these findings to the School District Board.

- (d) Cindy Lise and Denise Williams, Our Cowichan Communities Health Network were on hand to present the results of the Our Health Communities Health and Wellness Survey.

Cara McLean expanded on the survey results and reviewed the data from the Our Cowichan website on local health data about initiatives and programs, planning and development policies and the collection of the survey of 175 contributions.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence Items – Received and Filed

The correspondence items pulled for discussion were as follows:

- (e) LGLA 2026 Leadership forum;
- (g) 2026 AVICC AGM and convention; and
- (i) gift basket program for 2026 AVICC.

No. R.039/26  
Correspondence Items – Received and Filed

Moved: Councillor Frisby  
 Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
 that Council receive and file the correspondence items as follows:

- (a) Mosaic - Harvesting Activities in BLK 817, Cowichan Lake District
- (b) Mosaic - What We Heard Report
- (c) Crime Stoppers - 2025 Summary Report for Central Vancouver Island
- (d) City of Prince George – Request for Support - Public Safety Petition
- (f) BC Council of Forest Industries – Request for Official Endorsement of “Forestry is a Solution”
- (h) City of Abbotsford – Request for Support re: 2026 Proposed UBCM Resolutions.

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**TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN**

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- (e) The LGLA 2026 leadership conference was held March 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 in Richmond, BC.
  - (g) The 2026 AVICC AGM and convention was taking place April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 in Victoria. BC and registration was undertaken by staff.
- No. R.040/26  
AVICC – Gift Basket Program
- (a) Moved: Councillor Austin  
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
That Council direct staff to create a gift basket to share with Council’s peers at the upcoming Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities Conference (AVICC) to showcase the Lake Cowichan community.
- CARRIED.
- 9. COUNCIL AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- Committee of the Whole
- (a) No Committee of the Whole meeting was held on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
- Cowichan Lake Recreation Commission
- (b) Councillor Frisby reported on the Recreation Commission meeting that was held on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2026.  
  
The next meeting will be held on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026 or May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 in Youbou.
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- (c) Councillor Vomacka reported that the VIRL auditors will be presenting their 2025 audit strategy results to the Regional Board on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
- Advisory Planning Commission
- (d) Councillor Sandhu advised that the Advisory Planning Commission would be meeting on Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 3:00 pm.
- Community Forest Co-operative
- (e) No report for the Forest Co-operative.
- Cowichan Valley Regional District
- (f) Mayor McGonigle reported that today, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026 was the official signing of the protocol agreement between the Ts-uu-baa-asatx Nation and the Cowichan Valley Regional District.
- Community Outreach Team
- (g) Councillor Austin provided a report on her attendance at the recent Community Outreach meeting.
- Our Cowichan
- (h) Councillor Austin reported that the Health and Health Care as an Economic Drive event was held on March 12<sup>th</sup> and stated that the presentation by Our Cowichan was done earlier in the meeting.
- Cowichan Watershed Board
- (i) Councillor Sandhu reported that the next Watershed Board meeting will be held on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
- Ohtaki Twinning
- (j) Councillor Austin provided a report on the plans underway for 2027 travel to Ohtaki, Japan with 10 students and 8 adults.  
  
She further stated that the plans for the 2026 delegates visiting Lake Cowichan from Ohtaki, Japan was well underway.
- 10. OTHER REPORTS**
- No. R.041/26  
Support – Emergency Management Cowichan grant
- (a) Moved: Councillor Vomacka  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
That Council supports the Cowichan Valley Regional District to apply for, receive, and manage the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Emergency Support Services 2026 grant funding up to \$150,000 on behalf of the Town of Lake Cowichan.

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The Chief Administrative Officer advised Council that the Town’s independent application for the EOC generator through UBCM for \$30,000 has been withdrawn.

- (b) The Building Permit Summary for January 2026 was treated as information.
- (c) The Building Permit Summary for February 2026 was treated as information.

No. R.042/26  
Fire Department  
Incident Report

- (d) Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Frisby  
That Council approve the Lake Cowichan Fire Department’s incident report in the amount of \$8,558.54 for January 2026.

CARRIED.

No. R.043/26  
Fire Department  
Incident Report

- (e) Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
That Council approve the Lake Cowichan Fire Department’s incident report in the amount of \$5,813.38 for February 2026.

CARRIED.

No. R.044/26  
Fire Department 2026  
CRI Fire Smart  
Community Fund and  
Supports

- (f) Moved: Councillor Frisby  
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu  
That the staff report on the 2026 CRI Fire Smart Community funding and supports be accepted; and  
  
That Council approve the Town of Lake Cowichan making application under the Union of BC Municipalities to continue Wildfire Resiliency with the Town of Lake Cowichan’s fire protection area.

CARRIED.

- (g) The Cowichan Valley Regional District referral on Bylaw 4705: Official Community Plan and Schedule “B” on local areas plans was received and filed.

- (h) Councillor Frisby declared a conflict of interest on the matter and left the meeting at 6:15 pm.

No. R.045/26  
Uptown Parking  
Program – Summer of  
2026

Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
That Council approve the purchase of two parking meter machines for installation at the locations identified in Saywell Park and on Point Ideal Drive; and

That the enforcement plan and the increase to allowable parking time at Saywell Park be sent back to staff for consideration.

CARRIED.

Councillor Frisby returned to the meeting at 6:23 pm.

**11. STAFF REPORTS**

No. R.046/26  
Temporary Use Permit  
TUP2026-02  
88 Cowichan Lake Road

- (a) Moved: Councillor Sandhu  
Seconded: Councillor Frisby  
that Council approve the Temporary Use Permit (TUP2026-02) for the property located in Unit A at 88 Cowichan Lake Road, legally described as Lot A, Section 6, Renfrew District, Plan EPP113702 (PID: 031-505-261) for a three-year period to allow for the non-medical cannabis retail store, Trees Cannabis Superstore.

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**TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN**

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No. R.047/26  
Development Permit with  
Variance DPwV2026-05  
460 Winter Drive

- (b)** Moved: Councillor Frisby  
Seconded: Councillor Austin  
That Council approve DPwV2026-05 to reduce the front yard setback from 7.5 m to 5.5 m [Zoning Bylaw section 5.1.6. e)i)] and to approve the development permit for the property located at 460 Winter Rd, legally described as Lot 3, Section 6, Renfrew District, Cowichan Lake District, Plan EPP138345 (PID 032-429-576) in conformance with the following conditions:
  - 1. All development shall be in accordance with
    - a. Attached site plan
    - b. Riparian Areas Protection Regulation: Assessment Report, prepared by Brittany Brooks, dated October 22, 2025
  - 2. Prior to any land alteration and building permit issuance
    - a. Delineate the SPEA boundary with high visibility fencing.
    - b. Implement sediment and erosion control measures in consultation with the QEP consistent with the RAPR Assessment Report.
  - 3. Prior to occupancy permit issuance:
    - a. Install some form of permanent demarcation of the SPEA line.
    - b. Install two stormtec chambers with clean out.

CARRIED.

**12. BYLAWS**

None.

**13. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**14. MAYOR’S REPORT**

None.

**15. NOTICES OF MOTION**

None.

**16. QUESTION PERIOD**

None.

**17. IN CAMERA**

No. R.048/26  
Retire to In-Camera

- Moved: Mayor McGonigle  
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka  
That the Council close the meeting to the public to deal with matters which falls under s. 90(1) (c) and (i) and s.90(2) (b) of the Community Charter. (6:35 pm).

CARRIED.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

No. R.049/26  
Adjournment

- Moved: Councillor Austin  
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka  
That Council arise without report and adjourn the meeting (7:51 pm).

CARRIED.

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

Confirmed on the 28th day of April, 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor