

**DISTRICT OF SOOKE**  
Committee of the Whole Minutes  
Meeting held January 5, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, 2225 Otter Point Road

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**COUNCIL PRESENT**

Mayor Janet Evans  
Councillor Sheila Beech  
Councillor David Bennett  
Councillor Bev Burger  
Councillor Ron Dumont  
Councillor Herb Haldane

**STAFF PRESENT**

Evan Parliament, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dave Devana, Director of Finance  
Bob Kelsey, Fire Chief  
Gerald Christie, Acting Director of Planning  
Bonnie Sprinkling, Corporate Services  
Manager/Deputy Clerk  
Lisa Urlacher, Council Clerk  
Al Fontes, Acting Director of Engineering

**ABSENT:**

Councillor Maja Tait

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:58 p.m.

Mayor Evans wished everyone a Happy New Year.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED** by Councillor Beech to approve the agenda as circulated.  
**CARRIED**

3. **Draft 2009-2011 Strategic Plan**

Mr. Parliament explained that the Strategic Plan provides guidance to Staff and Council when preparing the five year financial plan and aligning the various work plans and objectives for decision making over the next three years. The strategic directions are as follows:

- Well Planned, Sustainable Community
- Responsible Stewardship of the Environment
- Proactive Improved Infrastructure
- Diverse and Vibrant Local Economy
- Sustainable Financial Management
- Support/Social/Community Initiatives
- Safe and Caring Community

A discussion as to how Sooke defines Smart Growth ensued and it was agreed that staff would bring forward Smart Growth for discussion to the Official Community Plan Review Committee.

Council asked that "community asset" be added to item number four on page five as to the proposed Sunriver School and Sports Fields.

Mr. Parliament stated that the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan would be posted on the District of Sooke website and also enlarged for display. Mr. Parliament also stated that the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan is a living document and may be amended as needed.

Council expressed concern as to the prioritization of the seven different strategic directions and asked staff to bring forward the top ten priorities that were identified at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Council Orientation session.

It was noted that staff would highlight the strategic priority when bringing forward items to Council for consideration.

Council asked for an update on the Fire Master Plan pertaining to item number four on page five as to considering the location of an additional Fire Hall. It was explained that the Fire Master Plan is ongoing and will be brought forward to Council to consider the level of service delivery for protective services.

Ms. Sprinkling stated that the committee member appointments for the Protective Services Committee would be brought forward at the January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Regular Council meeting.

Clive Kitchener, Maple Avenue South, expressed concern as to the prioritization of the seven strategic directions and stated that item E – Sustainable Financial Management, should be of highest priority. Mr. Kitchener asked Council to consider using a “coffee house” approach for public consultation when discussing the five year financial plan. Mr. Kitchener expressed concern as to the economic downturn and stated that tax dollars should be used to sustain infrastructure and new infrastructure, if necessary, should be practical and pragmatic.

Gail Hall, Sooke River Road, stated that Sustainable Financial Management should be of highest priority during decision making and stated that the goals and actions should be more detailed and specific. Ms. Hall commented on the Council Values identified within the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan. Ms. Hall quoted from the Ministry of Transportation letter as to the grant application and questioned the municipal funding portion. Mr. Devana clarified the capital funding for the investment in infrastructure and explained the 10-15% for capital expenditures.

Barry Whiting, Grant Road West, expressed concerns with the proposed tax increase and quoted several comments as to the economic downturn that communities are facing. Mr. Whiting expressed the importance of the local environment and alternative energy.

Council reiterated their concerns as to the top ten priorities and asked that a subsequent list be brought forward.

Council asked if the strategic directions are tracked and staff explained the resolution database. Staff also explained that staff utilizes the Strategic Plan as a guide when developing work plans over the next three years.

Council asked that the word “threat” when discussing Strengths, Weaknesses and opportunities be changed to “Challenges”.

Mary Brooke, Mapleline Magazine, asked Council if the main priorities are Wastewater Management and Transportation. Mayor Evans responded that the expansion of sewers, the connector route and the Galloping goose connectors are a priority.

Ms. Brooke asked if there were any alternative energy initiatives underway. Staff and Council identifies that discussions are forthwith as to solar/Wind/Tidal energy systems with Epcor Services. Also Geothermal energy is being investigated for the Municipal Hall.

Ms. Brooke asked if any tourist attractions would be in the works for Sooke. Mayor Evans responded that the environment is the attraction for Sooke.

Ms. Brooke asked as to the status of the downtown area. Mayor Evans responded that the consultant would be presenting the final report sometime this month.

**MOVED** by Councillor Beech to receive the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan.  
**CARRIED**

#### 4. **Council & Public Input - 2009-2013 Financial Plan**

Mr. Devana asked for Council input for the development of the 2009-2013 Financial Plan. Mr. Devana stated that the 2009-2013 Financial Plan would be reviewed by the Finance Committee in March 2009 and brought forward with recommendations to Council in April 2009.

Mr. Devana stated that the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan has been incorporated into the five year financial plan and asked Council to identify specific initiatives.

Council discussed sidewalks from Shields Road to the Post Office. Staff explained that a 30 m right of way is required by Highways and that the Spirit Square will provide sidewalks on the south side from Murray Road to Macgregor Park and that a pedestrian crossing with solar lights is an option to consider.

Council asked what steps have been taken towards Climate Action. Staff identified the alternative connector, storm management, bike lanes, parks and trails, adapted lighting and heat generation through solid waste.

Council asked as to the Development Cost Charges for the identified roads. Staff explained that primarily road widening and new roads are constructed and that sidewalks are not included in the estimates. Sidewalks are typically achieved through the subdivision process.

Council discussed sidewalks and lighting for Grant Road West.

Mr. Parliament assured the public tax dollars are spent wisely and explained the current staffing levels. Mr Devana stated that last year, Sooke taxes were the second lowest in

the Capital Regional District. Mr. Devana stated that ideally growth and commercial revenue result in new services.

Mr. Devana explained how staff manages the Sidewalk Improvement Program and the Park Improvement Program for capital projects.

Council and staff discussed the option of sidewalks continuing from the current development on Sheilds Road, in behind the Community Hall and then continuing onto Eustace.

Mr. Devana explained that roads running east/west are primarily funded through grants and development cost charges, excluding the connector route to Highway 14. Roads running north/south are primarily funded from the Sidewalk Improvement Program. And that roads from Highway 14 down to the water are funded through frontage improvements and or development cost charges.

Council discussed sidewalks from Church Road to Sooke Road. Staff informed Council that construction of the portion of sidewalk on Church Road from Rhodonite Drive to Felderhoff Road has been approved. Mr. Devana acknowledged that sidewalks from the RCMP station to the connector route are a high priority.

A discussion ensued as to the economic downturn and it was noted that the connector and highway improvement will create 220 FTE years of employment in Sooke.

Barry Whiting, Grant Road West, expressed concern as to the tax base and asked Council to proceed with caution when spending and decision making regarding the goals set out.

Clive Kitchener, Maple Avenue South, concurred that sidewalks to the post Office are a priority but questioned if the Storm Water Management Plan has been completed. Staff assured that stormwater is addressed prior to the construction of sidewalks.

David Mallett, Westview Terrace, thanked staff for the explanation of commercial verses residential tax and stated that the T'Sou-ke Nation will be the pioneer for alternative energy.

Gail Hall, Sooke River Road, asked Council as to the status of the following Development Permits on Charters Road and Eustace Road.

Mary Brooke, Mapleline Magazine, questioned stormwater and sidewalks, Staff explained that an engineer is commissioned by the developer prior to construction. Ms. Brooke asked if Council would consider sending a questionnaire to Sooke residents regarding sidewalks. Mayor Evans responded that in all the surveys that the District of Sooke has completed, sidewalks have been the number one priority for the residents of Sooke. Ms. Brooke suggested that art corner, physical fitness and accessibility are assets achieved through sidewalks.

Gail Hall Sooke River Road, asked if the quality of Sooke River Road would be guaranteed after completion of the works. It was clarified that CRD Water is responsible

for the work and that they are required to reinstate the road to the centre line. Ms. Hall commented that the blacktop is shifting and breaking away. Staff assured that an inspection will be done by District of Sooke staff within weeks. Ms. Hall expressed concern as to the bridge at Todd Creek and staff stated that they are aware of the conditions of the bridge.

Clive Kitchener, Maple Avenue South, thanked Mr. Devana and Mr. Parliament for their explanations of Financial Management and suggested that streaming Council meetings could be an avenue of public awareness. Mr. Kitchener also mentioned the [discoversooke.ca](http://discoversooke.ca) website.

Mr. Devana announced that he would be scheduling an extra open house for the Financial Plan.

David Mallett, Westview Terrace, commented on the condition of Sooke River Road and suggested that residents call the engineer at CRD Water.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

**Certified Correct:**

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**Janet Evans**  
**Mayor**

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**Evan Parliament**  
**Chief Administrative Officer**