



**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF VANCOUVER ISLAND
AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE
on FRIDAY, May 12th, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
Held electronically via Zoom**

IN ATTENDANCE: Director Penny Cote, Alberni-Clayoquot RD, President
Councillor Ben Geselbracht, City of Nanaimo, 1st Vice President
Director Vanessa Craig, RD of Nanaimo, 2nd Vice President
Director Ian Morrison, Cowichan Valley RD, Past President
Director Donna McMahon, Sunshine Coast RD, Electoral Area Representative
Councillor Sarah Fowler, Village of Tahsis, Director at Large
Councillor Janet Dorward, District of Port Hardy, Director at Large

ABSENT: Director Travis Hall, Central Coast RD, Director at Large

STAFF ATTENDANCE: Theresa Dennison, AVICC Executive Coordinator

President Cote called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. She welcomed the new Director at Large, Janet Dorward, and the Executive members introduced themselves.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

a. AGENDA

On motion by EA Representative McMahon and 1st Vice President Geselbracht
THAT the agenda for the May 12th, 2023 meeting be adopted was CARRIED

b. MINUTES

On motion by Past President Morrison and Director Fowler
THAT the minutes of the April 13th, 2023 meeting be adopted was CARRIED

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Cote provided an update on all that has taken place since the convention. She recently attended the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LGMA) AGM & Convention. LMLGA was very different than the AVICC convention. They only had two plenary sessions, no break-outs or concurrent sessions. Meetings started at 7pm on the first day, and they had their keynote, and then went straight into the business portion of the AGM. It was held on a Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. AVICC can be proud of the amount of content at our convention. Their resolutions debate and voting took place in one session. They considered the same sponsorship resolution as at AVICC, and it went to a standing vote and it did not pass. It was obvious that there were lots of newly elected officials. A meeting will be set up with the Area Association coordinators for the beginning of June to debrief and also to talk about business models.

President Cote's attendance at LMLGA initiated her to consider the Executive composition as compared to the other area associations; there is a large majority of South Island municipalities but they are not represented on the AVICC Board. Any change would have to take place at the next AGM for member approval, and we may want to look at having a second EA director as well. This has been included as an item on the agenda for this meeting.

AVICC has a lot on the go for this year; we want to do some advocacy and need to decide what that will look like within the parameters of the Advocacy Policy that was endorsed at the 2022 AGM. We have transition coming, and Glen has already been contacted, with a conversation to happen in June.

On motion by President Cote, seconded by Director Fowler

THAT the President's Report be received was

CARRIED

3. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATION

a. 2023/24 Executive Meeting Schedule

Theresa Dennison presented a report that included a proposed meeting schedule for the 2023/24 Term. The approved 2023 Budget includes five electronic meetings, and two in-person meetings, with one taking place at the convention. Meeting dates have been proposed with consideration given to the August 1, 2023 transition from UBCM, as well as the convention planning cycle for the 2024 AVICC AGM & Convention.

On motion by Past President Morrison, seconded by 2nd Vice President Craig

THAT the proposed meeting schedule for the 2023/24 AVICC Term as attached to the Executive Coordinator's May 12, 2023 report be approved with the following amendments:

(a) July 28, 2023 be changed to July 24, 2023 was

CARRIED

b. Signing Officers

Theresa Dennison presented a report outlining the past practices regarding the AVICC Coast Capital Savings Signing Officers, and recommended that the current Signing Officers remain in place for the 2023/24 Term until a decision is made regarding the AVICC Signing Authorities as part of the August 1, 2023 transition from UBCM.

It was noted that it is important to keep the requirement to have two signatures. Theresa Dennison noted that she had been in communications with Coast Capital to make arrangements for electronic approval of electronic transfers to be made possible while keeping with the dual approval requirement.

On motion by 1st Vice president Geselbracht, seconded by Past President Morrison

THAT the President, the Past President, the AVICC Executive Coordinator, and the UBCM General Manager, Victoria Operations be the designated signing officers for the 2023/24 Term was

CARRIED

c. Orientation Discussion and Questions

An opportunity was provided for new and returning Executive members to ask questions and review the role of the AVICC Executive.

d. Transition Considerations

Theresa Dennison presented a report that provided background and considerations for the August 1, 2023 AVICC transition away from UBCM. The previous contract for staff services between AVICC and UBCM has been terminated effective July 31, 2023. The report identified actions and decisions required regarding financial transitions, administrative considerations, the employment contract for the AVICC Executive Coordinator, and any updates required to the Bylaws and Policies.

The Executive identified and discussed several items for consideration, and noted the following:

- A request was made to compare the expenses from pre-and post-transition expenditures as a table in a future report.
- It is important to ensure that we have someone who can assist with the transfer of financial data from the existing UBCM financial software to the new software obtained through transition.
- It was recommended that we should consider contracting bookkeeping services to assist with reporting, and ensuring our financial information is accurate and easy to access.
- There are approximately 15 banker's boxes containing historical AVICC files, as well as three other boxes including convention supplies that are currently stored at the UBCM office. UBCM has asked that these items be stored elsewhere by the end of the year. The cost of a storage unit is approximately \$100 per month. It is also possible that the contents of these boxes are also stored electronically, but it would take time to sort and digitize the boxes. This could be done after the transition date.
- It was noted that we should have a disaster response recovery plan/ business continuity plan in place. Someone should be designated to have access to the AVICC files, in case of an emergency, to ensure business continuity. The files will be stored on a cloud, and on a hard-drive in the Executive Coordinator's home office. Staff has asked to reach out to the other area associations to see what they have in place to create a business continuity plan post-transition.
- The current mailing address is at the UBCM Local Government House office in Victoria. Staff will have to get a P.O. Box for mail, as the AVICC has no physical office location.

It was recommended that the Executive form a sub-committee to update the Bylaws and Executive Policies after transition. It is not required that these are updated prior to transition. It was noted that the purpose of the association are not listed as part of the Bylaws. The Advocacy Policy that was endorsed by members at the 2022 convention should be added to the existing Executive policies, and it was also recommended that a table of contents be added to the Policies.

The Executive confirmed their current direction for staff with respect to transition, and will provide further direction at the next meeting.

On motion by Director Fowler, seconded by 2nd Vice President Craig
 THAT the Executive authorize staff to reach out to former CFO of UBCM, Kathleen Spalek for advice regarding AVICC's financial matters; and
 THAT staff do research on bookkeeping services was CARRIED

On motion by 1st Vice President Geselbracht, seconded by Past President Morrison
 THAT the Executive appoint KPMG for the 2023 annual audit; and
 THAT staff publish an RFP for annual audit services in 2024 for the 2024 audit was CARRIED

On motion by 1st Vice President Geselbracht, seconded by 2nd Vice President Craig
 THAT President Cote and Past President Morrison work with UBCM General Manager Glen Brown, and UBCM to re-write the contract for the Executive Coordinator position, and then meet with AVICC Table Officers to discuss and recommend an approved contract to the Executive was CARRIED

On motion by 2nd Vice President Craig, seconded by Director Fowler
 THAT staff is authorized to get a staff cellphone for AVICC was CARRIED

On motion by 1st Vice President Geselbracht, seconded by Director
THAT the report on Transition Considerations be received was

CARRIED

The Executive took a break from 10:20-10:32am

e. AVICC Executive Composition Conversation

President Cote shared the idea that the AVICC Executive could benefit from having a representative from the Greater Victoria region as part of the composition of the AVICC Executive. Comparative information about the Executive composition, number of members, and population of the five area associations was provided.

Historically AVICC does have representation for the Capital Regional District although the 2023/24 Executive is a bit of an anomaly and does not have representation from the CRD. We do typically have a geographically diverse group. If we are adding a representative from the CRD, perhaps we have a “South” “Mid” and “North” representative as well. It was noted that too many people on the Board would be unwieldy and difficult to manage.

A gap was identified by the President while at LMLGA; AVICC has the largest number of members, and the lowest number of Executive members. The CRD has 13 municipalities and 4 Electoral Areas and represents 45% of our population. Trends tend to happen from big communities. The decision would have to be made by membership at the 2024 AGM. Many of the other area Regional Districts have more electoral areas, and it may also be something to consider that another EA representative may be a good addition. LMLGA is an interesting comparative organization, as it is mostly about Metro Vancouver and their attendance at the area association events does not appear to be a priority for their members.

This hasn't come up as an issue, and given that the Capital Region can nominate and vote for their own members- the means are there for them to have representation. Having more people on the Executive could bring additional perspective, although it would take up more time at meetings.

Given that we are undergoing transition, it may change the dynamic of our access to the Capital that we get by being part of UBCM, so there is value in this, although it may not be the right time for changing the composition of our Executive Committee. It was also noted that we have had support from the CRD with respect to convention, and there is no representation on our Board. Perhaps we could invite a representative from the Host Community to attend a convention planning Executive meeting for advice?

On motion by 2nd Vice President Craig seconded by Director Fowler
THAT the report on AVICC Executive Composition be received was

CARRIED

4. CONVENTION

a. Convention Evaluations, Sponsorship Policy Feedback

Theresa Dennison shared the results of the evaluation forms completed by delegates on the Sunday morning at the conclusion of the 2023 AVICC AGM & Convention. The convention was an success, seeing the greatest attendance numbers in AVICC history. The convention was also \$18,000 more profitable than anticipated, mostly due to reduced staffing and other costs, as

well as a significant host community contribution. Thank you letters have been emailed and mailed and convention materials posted on the AVICC web-site.

The overall rating of the convention was 4.2 compared to 4.6 in 2022 in Victoria, 4.2 for Powell River in 2019 and 4.3 for Victoria in 2018. There were many comments on the evaluations thanking AVICC for the convention, and mentioning how happy members were to be meeting in-person.

There were several common themes from the ratings and comments on the evaluation forms:

- The keynote speaker, Tomson Highway, had varied reviews, and scored the lowest of any AVICC keynote speaker with a rating of 2.9. It was remarked by quite a few respondents that the sound was poor, and that the topic or presentation was not relevant to the delegates.
- A total of 71 respondents commented that networking was their favourite aspect of the convention with some indicating that more time should be spent on networking.
- There were many comments made about the resolutions sessions. Quite a few delegates commented that this was their favourite aspect of the convention. There was a significant amount of feedback regarding the Chairing of the session- specifically around amendments, procedures, and controlling the room. Many also said that more time was needed for resolutions sessions.
- Mostly positive, but also mixed reviews on the food, and the ratings for food were relatively high.
- The facilities, venue, and trade show scored well as compared to past conventions.
- The Audio-Visual scored lower than in past years at 4.1. A few comments were made that people had a hard time hearing- especially for the Keynote Speaker.
- The reviews of the banquet were mostly positive, with a few comments that fish was not the best choice for the entrée. The band was very well-received.
- There were a few comments made about bringing back in-person candidate speeches, although the elections scored a 4.2, which is in-line with previous years.
- The sessions scored relatively high overall, and there were 22 respondents who noted that the sessions or learning was their favourite aspect of the convention.
- It should be noted that the “Attainable Housing” session was omitted from the evaluation form in error, but that 5 delegates wrote it in to provide it with a score.
- There were 15 respondents who wrote that the “Reconcili-Action” Sunday morning session was their favourite part of the convention. A few commented that they would want to have John Jack back to speak again.

From looking at the scores, and the procedures for handling resolutions. This low score is typical for a first convention after an election. We should take that feedback with this context in mind. We did get through all of the resolutions submitted for 2023, and finished early. Our members currently submit more resolutions than any other area association.

The keynote wasn't ideal but some delegates really enjoyed the address, and there were some gems in there. Some of the negative comments would be as a result of the poor A/V for Mr. Highway's address. Some loved it, and some hated it or found it offensive. It was an opportunity for conversation afterwards, which is always a good thing. At the LMLGA they had a former mayor of Calgary as the keynote, and he was excellent. In future we could interrupt to fix the A/V if needed.

We should be proud of the results of the 2023 AVICC AGM & Convention. All-in-all we have a solid base to work on.

The one resolutions session on Saturday morning was a bit messy- should the Parliamentarian have stepped in? We got away from requiring amendments to be handed in in-writing. There were many new members who would have benefitted from further explanation of the rules and process. We did a lot of preparation work on the resolutions sessions, but perhaps in future, we could include a video introduction to post online and share with members as an additional way to provide the information in advance about resolutions process.

Because we are a society and not a local government, and there are differences between how process is handled. We need to make sure we understand Roberts Rules of Order -according to the parliamentarian, an amendment that was blurted out by the sponsor has to be accepted by the Chair. As Chair, is it required to take the Parliamentarian's direction? There are varied expectations, and as Chair you have the leeway to do what makes sense.

There were positive comments about the variety of food throughout the convention.

Regarding the comments regarding speakers and slides; there is not much we can do about that. It's difficult to vet the speakers as we only have one staff person. The conference had a lot of variety in their sessions- much more than at LMLGA.

It was recommended that we add some structured networking opportunities. There were groups that sat together and didn't mix. They are not getting the benefit out of the conference- we could provide opportunities to encourage mixing. Should we do a scavenger hunt throughout the conference, and assign teams randomly so that people have the weekend to finish and submit, or create teams/opportunities to learn about each other's communities.

There was a conversation about the comments about decorum. People should be respectful. It was recommended that in the speakers' notes, and throughout the script, it could be noted that "if you want to have a side conversation, take it out of the room". We can look at some of the comments with the perspective of where people were sitting in the room. People at the front of the room were engaged and got value out of the keynote and other sessions, people in the back would not have been as engaged, and would have had more distractions.

The convention evaluation Form also included a request for comments on our existing Sponsorship Policy. There were 24 comments to change the policy, 21 comments in support of the policy, and 14 who wrote "no" or "no comment." In addition there were 9 comments that didn't indicate whether to change the policy or not. It was also noted that a resolution asking AVICC not to accept Fossil Fuel sponsorship for conventions, that was defeated by membership at the 2023 AVICC AGM & Convention.

LMLGA also had this same resolution and it was NOT ENDORSED.

The survey question comments were inconclusive. It was an interesting debate and the opinion of members is clearly split. The changes we made to the policy last year really made sense, was inclusive, and allows the Executive to make decisions regarding sponsorship.

On motion by Past President Morrison, seconded by Director Fowler

THAT the report on Convention Evaluations and Sponsorship Policy Comments be received was
CARRIED

b. Hybrid Convention and Future Convention Planning

At the 2023 AVICC Convention, a resolution requesting that AVICC offer electronic attendance at the AVICC Convention was referred to the Executive. Staff presented a report about potential costs and implications should the Executive decide that a hybrid-electronic convention be considered for 2024.

AVICC Staff reached out to Encore Canada, who is a “Hybrid + Certified” provider, as well as the in-house A/V company at the Victoria Conference Centre. It should be noted that the total cost for A/V in 2022 and in 2023 was about \$22K. The discussion included several options for costing:

- **Status Quo**- same amount and type of A/V as in Victoria 2022: **\$35K** + taxes and fees
- **Fully Hybrid**- delegates can both view and participate virtually (ask questions/ engage/ debate)- including resolutions sessions and elections- **\$231K** + tax and fees
- **Part Hybrid**- Virtual delegates can only watch the livestream and can't engage, vote or debate- **\$84K** + taxes and fees

Staff advised that the report noted that the quote does not include participation in break-out sessions, when in fact they do.

There are many other implications to consider, such as the logistics around voting and participation, the staff-time required to execute a hybrid event, the impact on hotel blocks and Host Community exposure, increased registration fees, impact on sponsorship and trade show participants, and potential internet connectivity issues.

Staff also reached out to the Municipal Information Systems Association, who held a hybrid convention in 2022, and have modified the format for their hybrid convention in 2023. They saw that the majority of their attendees did attend the convention in person, and that the effort to provide the “in-person” experience to virtual attendees was impossible to achieve. It was noted that MISA does not have resolutions or elections at their convention.

Some of the Executive feel that Hybrid is inclusive, and we need to take steps. Perhaps we could record the sessions and share later. Some absolutely hate spending the entire day at a computer. The additional costs are too prohibitive and perhaps our money would be better spent on the Legislative Reform initiative.

The practical reality is that we do our conventions very well. We are a member-driven organization, we have heard some comments about the need to accessibility for those who can't make it, but mostly people enjoy the networking opportunities. If there is a desire later in the year to put this in front of the members as a special resolution and see if the membership wants to spend the money.

It was also noted that “we don't know what we don't know.” We are missing voices for some portion of the membership. When we are talking about the future of what government looks like, there are ways to ease into it. How do we bring the voices that are missing to the convention?

The Applied College of Biology has been doing Hybrid conventions for years, and use tools like “slido” for Q & A. It was acknowledged that the virtual experience won’t be as good as the in-person one. The Executive would like to see what we can do for next year, but start small.

The cost for the Hybrid virtual ticket has to reflect the value, although the increased costs for hosting a Hybrid convention would require that fees increase overall.

There is interest in having certain sessions recorded and offered to the members as part of our advocacy work. We can also offer financial support for members to attend from small communities by providing reduced rates if needed. There is value in having all of the delegates in the room. It was recommended that we have sessions videoed and after the fact, having lunch and learn sessions.

The impact on hotels and sponsorship for the convention need to be considered. Virtual tradeshow is not really well-attended.

It would also be interesting to put out a survey for the 2025 convention, and survey those who do not attend and ask why. Perhaps we send an online survey to members. One step towards inclusivity could be to allow ALL voting members to vote in the election, and not just those registered for the convention. Staff will confirm if only voting members attending the convention may vote in the election and bring the information to the next meeting.

THAT Staff proceed with getting quotes for recording and posting the main sessions for the 2024 convention was CARRIED

On motion by Director Fowler, seconded by Electoral Area Representative McMahon
THAT the meeting be extended to 12:30pm was CARRIED

On motion by EA Representative McMahon seconded by Director Fowler
THAT the report on Hybrid Convention and Future Convention Planning be received was CARRIED

5. POLICY

a. Regional Resolutions

At the 2023 AVICC AGM & Convention, there were four resolutions that were endorsed, that were considered by UBCM and the Resolutions Committee to be regionally-specific in nature. These endorsed regionally focused resolutions will not be forwarded to UBCM for consideration at their Annual Convention. Rather these resolutions will remain with AVICC where they may be actioned. Staff is seeking direction from the Executive on actions to be taken, if any, for each of these resolutions:

i) **R1) Vancouver Island Housing Plan - Responding to the Homelessness Crisis, City of Courtenay:**

*Therefore be it resolved that the AVICC and UBCM executive facilitate a meeting between Vancouver Island Mayors, **Chairs, and Chiefs**, and the Premier, the Minister of Housing, and BC Housing officials to demand an immediate action plan to address the homelessness crisis and its impacts on Vancouver Island communities*

Maybe the best thing to do if the Sponsor is willing to help out with this. We don’t take the lead on advocacy work. Staff to send a request to the City of Courtenay requiring further information; write a

letter requesting a meeting, cc'ing all of the Mayors, Chiefs and Chairs on Vancouver Island to gauge interest. The resolution is asking for a meeting where we demand that the Ministry of Housing deal with housing on the Island. What would be interesting is if we could utilize technology, facilitated by the City of Courtenay, and get the Ministry of Housing present, and make the point repetitively and the end result is to put together a more comprehensive plan to deal with the issue.

The entire resolution is problematic because it is demanding an action plan but doesn't specify who. Is the preliminary action is to have President Cote reach out to Lisa Helps, advisor to the Housing Minister, and share the resolution and ask for advice and assistance. There is a provincial election likely taking place in the Fall, which may impact our ability to set up this meeting.

On motion by Past President Morrison, seconded by 2nd Vice President Craig
THAT President Cote reach out to the City of Courtenay to ask for clarity on the resolution and the intended action was CARRIED

On motion by 1st Vice President Geselbracht, seconded by 2nd Vice President Craig
THAT President Cote connect with Lisa Helps, Special Advisor to the Premier to share the resolution and ask for advice on how to best proceed with the Province was CARRIED

The following three regional resolutions were endorsed, and are asking that AVICC write a letter:

ii) R3) Watershed Security Strategy and Fund, Village of Cumberland:

Therefore be it resolved that AVICC request that the Province of BC and the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Management acknowledge this unique context and fund the critical work required to achieve watershed security on eastern Vancouver

iii) R4) E&N Land Grant Biodiversity and Restoration, Nanaimo Regional District:

Therefore be it resolved that on this 140th anniversary of the E&N Land Grant, the AVICC call upon the Governments of Canada and British Columbia to identify areas within the E&N Land Grant as a priority for the protection and conservation of biodiversity for their 2030 targets, and engage with impacted First Nations, local governments and land owners in a process to protect and restore the biodiversity of the southeast region of Vancouver Island with a focus on community watershed catchment areas, riparian areas along fish-bearing rivers and streams, sensitive ecosystems and habitats, and culturally significant areas.

iv) R5) Recapitalization of Island Coastal Economic Trust, Capital Regional District

Therefore be it resolved that AVICC and UBCM urge the Province to recapitalize the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) with a generational investment of \$150 million

Once direction has been given to Staff regarding actions for these resolutions, a communication to the sponsor of each endorsed resolution will be sent by Staff to provide an update on the actions that were determined.

On motion by 1st Vice President Geselbracht, seconded by Director Fowler
THAT the Executive direct staff and President Cote to work with the Sponsoring organizations to develop a letter to action the endorsed regional resolutions R3, R4, and R5 was CARRIED

b. Oceans Protection Plan Salish Sea Strategy Initiative- Joint Planning Committee Appointment

In March 2023, Transport Canada reached out to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities to request participation in the Oceans Protection Plan’s Salish Sea Strategy Initiative. The Strategy intends to bring together a broad coalition of partners (different levels of government, First Nations, US Tribes, NGOs, academic groups, industry, and US/State government groups) to address the lack of awareness of existing marine transportation related and oceans protection work taking place throughout the Salish Sea. The Strategy consists of three main outputs including: establishing a joint planning committee, holding two conference style events over the next 5 years, and developing a defined process/mechanism to link regional concerns with existing work.

AVICC was invited to send a local government representative to participate on the Joint Planning Committee for the Initiative. The inaugural meeting of the Joint Planning Committee was held on March 28, 2023 and the information and meeting notes from this meeting were provided. Under AVICC Executive Policies, the President has authority to appoint representatives to external groups, and will advise the Executive of the proposed appointee.

On motion by Ben Geselbracht, seconded by Past President Morrison

THAT the report on the Oceans Protection Plan Salish Sea Strategy Initiative- Joint Planning Committee Appointment be received; and

THAT Staff appoint 2nd President Craig the Joint Planning Committee was CARRIED

c. Role of the AVICC Executive

President Cote reviewed an email sent out by EA Rep Donna, to follow up on the EA Forum. All communications send on behalf of AVICC needs to be endorsed by the Executive. The letter included a call-out for a potential call out.

Our conference provides three things, including networking, education and advocacy. Director McMahon states that the this is more of a networking and education piece. Previous Director at Large, Mark Gisborne did start a group outside of AVICC using a separate platform.

There may be a desire to include topics for lunch-and-learns to have EA topics within a larger scope where all are invited. EA Representative McMahon indicated that she was just checking for level of engagement from the members, and the response was not very positive so far.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the AVICC Executive is set for Friday June 16, 2023 at 9:00a.m. to be held be Zoom

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:32pm on motion by 1st Vice president Geselbracht, seconded by Director Fowler

THAT the meeting be adjourned was CARRIED