



**MINUTES OF A MEETING  
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF VANCOUVER ISLAND  
AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE  
on FRIDAY, June 14, 2024, 9:00 a.m.  
Held electronically via Zoom**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Ben Geselbracht, City of Nanaimo, President  
Director Vanessa Craig, RD of Nanaimo, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Councillor Sarah Fowler, Village of Tahsis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Director Travis Hall, Central Coast RD, Director at Large  
Councillor Will Cole-Hamilton, City of Courtenay, Director at Large  
Councillor Tanille Johnston, City of Campbell River, Director at Large  
Director Penny Cote, Alberni-Clayoquot RD, Past President

**STAFF ATTENDANCE:** Theresa Dennison, AVICC Executive Coordinator

**ABSENT:** Director Donna McMahon, Sunshine Coast RD, Electoral Area Representative

President Geselbracht called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA & MINUTES**

- a. On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig  
THAT the agenda for the June 14, 2024 meeting be adopted was CARRIED
  
- b. On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig  
THAT the minutes for the April 11, 2024 meeting be adopted was CARRIED

**2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Geselbracht welcomed the 2024/25 Executive members, including the new members. There was an orientation for the two new Executive Members in May attended by President Geselbracht, Past President Cote, Staff and Directors Johnston and Cole-Hamilton. President Geselbracht has been working with staff on administrative approvals and training. He also met with four of the five area association presidents to have a round table about what the advocacy priorities were for each group. There is diversity and similarities between members from the different regions in the Province. He brought up legislative reform initiatives, and there was interest in moving this forward with collaboration. There was a conversation about potentially co-hosting a joint virtual education and discussion session with to look at the issues that the different regions are facing as a result of the current LGA, to raise awareness of this initiative and to get examples from other regions. AKBLG expressed interest in financially helping with a joint session. The other issue that was discussed was to do with codes of conduct and toxic culture in local government. There was a shared desire to coordinate amongst the area associations – they will be meeting again July 13.

The UBCM President and Executive Director have reached out to ask questions about legislative reform. Legislative reform is directly relating to the modernization of the LGA, although it also includes the shared services/interests between regional districts and municipalities. UBCM was doing work on “strong fiscal futures” which may relate to the legislative reform issue. RDN and ACRD have been moving this forward in the background, and having the buy-in from other area associations will help propel this forward. It is important to get examples of why the change is needed, including the

concerns UBCM members may have across the Province, and not just in the AVICC region.

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton  
THAT the President's Report be received was

CARRIED

At 9:23am, Director Hall joined the meeting.

### 3. CONVENTION

#### a. 2024 Convention: Final Budget and Member Feedback

The Executive Coordinator provided an update on the 2024 AVICC AGM & Convention.

We saw a significant increase to attendance this year with a total of 375 registered delegates and partners, and a 453 total people who were at the convention in some capacity at some point (including volunteers, speakers and musicians). The majority of this increase was due to additional attendance by members including 30 more elected officials than last year. The Executive asked Staff to provide more information about where specifically the additional member delegates came from as compared to last year.

The Convention Budget that was approved January 12th anticipated \$34,522 in profit, and the actual profit \$38,975 (\$4,454 more than budgeted). This is mostly as a result of higher sponsorship revenues than in the budget. The convention profit is important to the association, as it helps offset the operating costs for the rest of the year, while keeping dues low for our members.

Staff sent thank you letters and cards to the sponsors, speakers, invited guests, and contributing municipalities. The annual report has been filed and the Board of Directors have been updated with the Registrar. The Resolutions Disposition has been posted on the website, shared with members, and forwarded to UBCM. The Convention presentations and draft AGM minutes were posted online on April 18<sup>th</sup> and the video recordings were shared on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

AVICC Delegates were asked to complete an evaluation form on the Sunday morning of the convention. The overall rating of the convention (out of 5) was 4.4 compared to 4.2 in Nanaimo in 2023, 4.6 in 2022 in Victoria, 4.2 for Powell River in 2019 and 4.3 for Victoria in 2018.

Common themes are as follows:

- The keynote speaker, Diane Kalen-Sukra, scored well as compared to recent years with a rating of 4.2.
- A total of 47 respondents commented that networking was their favourite aspect of the convention with some indicating that more time should be spent on networking.
- The Resolutions sessions averaged a 4.1 score, which is a great improvement over last year. This may, in part, be attributed to the number of new Elected Officials at the 2023 Convention – they would have been more familiar with the process in the second year of the term. There were many comments about the resolutions sessions. Staff identified that for next year, they would prepare a PowerPoint to accompany the resolutions rules and procedures that the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President shares with delegates in advance of the first resolutions session.
- The greatest area for improvement identified through the session comments was around timing, and keeping on time. Staff will have to be more mindful of ensuring that there is adequate time in the program for sessions to run late, and the members of the Executive

could start calling people back at least 5 minutes before the end of the breaks. It was recommended that we schedule less “short” presentations from partner organizations as a way to allow more time in the schedule.

- The food and beverage, facilities, venue, banquet, audio-visual and trade show scored well as compared to past conventions.
- The elections were rated 4.2 overall. There were a few comments made about bringing back in-person candidate speeches. Since 2020, candidates have been submitting video recordings of their candidate speeches to share online. If we were to bring back candidate speeches, the election schedule would go back to being “set” rather than moving on to the next part of the election if the previous part is acclaimed.
- This year, we made the election available to all elected officials, and not just those in attendance at the convention. We did not have any non-delegate member elected officials register to vote. The amount of work involved to register a non-delegate member to vote is minimal and it is also a simple thing we can continue to do to improve member accessibility for those who have barriers to attend the in-person convention.
- The sessions scored relatively high overall but slightly lower than in previous years. There were 15 respondents who noted that the education sessions were their favourite aspect of the convention. The comments confirm that our delegates prefer interactive facilitated sessions over “talking head” presentations.
- The Sunday Plenary Session “Striking the Balance: Engagement and Respect” was the highest-rated session of the convention at 4.7. The content, timing, and delivery met the desired outcomes that the Executive intended when developing the session.

The issue on mental health and safety, and what elected officials are dealing with, similar to this year’s session, could be included at every convention. This is a huge issue for our members and we should ensure that we provide support in this way. FCM had a lot of sessions on codes of conduct and abuse towards elected officials. There was a discussion about safety during in-camera sessions.

Staff was asked to look at including an app to get feedback about unsafe behavior at our convention, and to create additional ways for delegates to communicate with each other.

Past President Cote attended LMLGA and the program had less content than ours – there are no breakout sessions. There may be an opportunity to scale back our offerings, although the breakout sessions seem to be appreciated by our members, and it is recommended that we continue with the same format as in past years.

There was a conversation about alternate locations for convention. The last time it was in a location other than Nanaimo or Victoria was 2019 in Powell River. Staff provided information about the minimum event space and hotel room requirements and confirmed that the process is that the members submit an application for interest to the Association, and this is reviewed by staff and presented to the Executive.

On motion by President Geselbracht, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton  
THAT AVICC open the opportunity for other locations to host convention and Staff to develop a set of criteria that take into account space and budgetary considerations for interested communities to address and submit a proposal was CARRIED

Members should be given the opportunity to showcase their communities at the AVICC convention whether they are large enough to host. This could be done in Nanaimo, as the space could accommodate information tables or trade show booths for members.

At 10:25am, Director Hall left the meeting.

On motion by President Geselbracht, seconded by Past President Cote  
THAT in-person and virtual candidate speeches be included in the 2025 program was CARRIED

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton  
THAT the report on the 2024 Convention be received was CARRIED

**b. 2024 UBCM Convention Planning**

AVICC will host a luncheon at the UBCM Convention on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The agenda includes a provincial address, a presentation from next year's host community, and candidate speeches for AVICC members running for the UBCM Executive. A discussion about Minister meetings at the UBCM convention will take place as part of our Advocacy conversation.

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton  
THAT the proposed program for the 2024 AVICC Lunch on September 18<sup>th</sup> at the 2024 UBCM Convention be approved was CARRIED

The Executive took a break from 10:15-10:26am.

**4. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATION**

**a. Interim Financials to May 31, 2024**

Theresa Dennison presented a report that included the interim financial statements to May 31, 2024. The convention was budgeted to return a profit of \$34,522 and the current projection is that the convention will return a profit of \$38,975. Consistent with current Executive policy (since 2014), Convention surpluses are sought to cover the deficit in the budget outside of the convention, including expenses to fund advocacy initiatives.

AVICC has investments with MFABC, and has cash in a high-interest chequing account with Coast Capital Savings. The Executive directed staff to work on a Financial Investment Policy, using UBCM's as a guide. UBCM shared their Policy with Staff this past winter, just as the convention work started increasing in intensity. Our Financial Consultant is the retired CFO of UBCM, and she was involved in writing UBCM's Policy. She has been asked to review UBCM's Policy, and recommend how it could be simplified for AVICC, who has much less to invest. A draft Financial Policy will be presented later this term for discussion, feedback and direction.

\$37,567.34 was remaining in the "Treaty Advisory Committee" reserve fund as of December 31, 2023 to be used for the purposes of continuing and offsetting costs of future reconciliation initiatives, for example, funding presenters at future conventions on this topic, providing courses to members, or providing initial free membership to new first nations members. \$7,099 from the TAC Reserve Fund was used at the 2024 Convention to cover the 75th Anniversary Logo and pins designed by a First Nations Artist that we gave to our delegates and the travel expenses for her to attend. It was also used for capacity funding for a session on advancing the TRC Calls to Action, and registrations for First Nations leaders to attend as our guests. There is currently \$30,468 remaining in this reserve fund.

Ms. Dennison shared the Association’s 2024 approved budget, and a comparative forecast now that we are almost halfway through the year. The approved 2024 Budget anticipated a \$15,501 deficit this year, which was the first time in recent history AVICC did not approve a “zero” budget. With the additional profit resulting from Convention (\$4,454), the adjustment to the Dues based on population increase (\$3,790), and with the adjustments made to the expenses, the anticipated deficit for the year is now \$6,980.

The budget includes an expense relating to the 2024 Audit. In 2023, prior to transition, the Executive had a conversation about whether the Association should continue with our current auditor, or if staff should request quotes from other firms. The Executive continued status-quo as it was our year of transition in 2023. Staff will go get quotes from other firms and present to the Executive at the August meeting.

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig  
THAT the Report on Interim Financials to May 31, 2024 be received was CARRIED

Our 2024 Convention Keynote Speaker, Diane Kalen-Sukra is hosting a free virtual summit on toxic culture in local government in October 2024. She presented AVICC with an opportunity to sponsor the event, which would provide us with exposure online, and allow us to make a “statement” that would be read to attendees. We have already shared Ms. Kalen-Sukra’s online information, and anyone interested had the opportunity to follow her on social media or subscribe to her newsletter, and would have heard about the event already. We do not have a sponsorship request policy, and this would be part of our advocacy budget. Given that there is no precedence on sponsorship participation for the Association, and that our current advocacy policy does not include financial contributions to external events, staff will decline respectfully.

It was identified that there should be a policy on remuneration for Executive and member participation at external groups.

**b. 2024/25 Executive Meeting Schedule**

Theresa Dennison presented a report that included a proposed meeting schedule for the 2024/25 Term. The approved 2024 Budget includes five electronic meetings, and two in-person meetings, with one taking place on-site at the convention. Meeting dates have been proposed with consideration given to the convention planning cycle for the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention.

On motion by President Geselbracht, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig  
THAT the proposed meeting schedule for the 2024/25 AVICC Term as attached to the Executive Coordinator’s June 14, 2024 report be approved with the following amendments:

- October 11<sup>th</sup> be changed to a virtual meeting was DEFEATED

On motion by Director Johnston, seconded by Past President Cote  
THAT the proposed meeting schedule for the 2024/25 AVICC Term as attached to the Executive Coordinator’s June 14, 2024 report be approved with the following amendment:

- October 11<sup>th</sup> be changed to start at 10am was CARRIED

**c. 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 2025/25 Term. The Association has a requirement to have two signatures or electronic approvals for all payments. Now that the account is set up to have eTransfers, there are far less cheque payments required, but it is convenient to have UBCM's General Manager as a signatory for cheques when necessary as no one else on the Executive lives near AVICC Staff's home office.

On motion by Past President Cote, seconded by Director Johnston  
THAT the President, the Past President, the AVICC Executive Coordinator, and the UBCM General Manager, Victoria Operations be the designated signing officers for the 2024/25 Term was

CARRIED

**d. Membership Dues Status Report**

Theresa Dennison provided an update on the 2024 AVICC membership dues. Membership was advised at the 2024 AVICC AGM that there was a 5% increase for this year, which was the same increase approved in 2022 and 2023. The minimum fee for communities with small populations was increased from \$375 to \$400. The total membership dues for 2024 is \$121,036. To date, 95% of the dues have been collected. The Executive made the decision to continue with a moderate increase this year, despite the forecasted deficit budget, since there have been surpluses in past years, and our members are also facing significant increases due to inflation and the current economic state.

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig  
THAT the report on 2024 membership dues be received was

CARRIED

The Executive took a break from 11:09 – 11:27am.

**e. First Nations Membership at AVICC**

In advance of the 2024 convention, AVICC reached out to the member Mayors, Chairs, and Chiefs to extend an invitation for the local First Nations Chiefs in their communities to attend the convention as our guest. There were five Nations who registered for the convention. Following the convention, AVICC had two First Nations Bands reach out to express their interest in joining the association.

At the 2024 AVICC Convention, a resolution was endorsed asking that *"UBCM provide an outreach program to British Columbia's First Nations on becoming full UBCM members."* Although all First Nations are able to register for the convention as non-members, only members are permitted the privilege of the floor and are able to vote at the AGM and during the resolutions sessions.

AVICC's Bylaws and Executive Policies define who can become a member of the Association. A Local Government within the defined region may apply, if they have elected representation, the ability to tax and the ability to exercise regulatory power or provide local services. It was determined that if a First Nations community can meet this criteria, and agrees to pay dues in their first full year of membership may be eligible to become members.

AVICC considered following UBCM's lead and waive the dues for the remainder of the year, and offer complimentary registration for any new member representatives for the following convention. Since AVICC has a much smaller budget than UBCM, offering two complimentary registrations ensures we could offer the same to additional First Nations who become members.

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton

THAT the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities formally recognize that both treaty, and non-treaty First Nation governments may meet the following AVICC membership criteria:

- a. elected representation;
- b. ability to tax; and
- c. ability to exercise regulatory power or provide local services; and

THAT in the spirit of reconciliation and relationship building, AVICC advise First Nation governments that meet AVICC's membership criteria and agree to pay annual dues, that they may apply to join the AVICC;

THAT AVICC offer to waive the dues for the remainder of the year for new members and offer complimentary business session registration for all new member representatives for the following convention was DEFEATED

On motion by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton

THAT the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities formally recognize that both treaty, and non-treaty First Nation governments may meet the following AVICC membership criteria:

- a. elected representation;
- b. ability to tax; and
- c. ability to exercise regulatory power or provide local services; and

THAT in the spirit of reconciliation and relationship building, AVICC advise First Nation governments that meet AVICC's membership criteria and agree to pay annual dues, that they may apply to join the AVICC;

THAT AVICC offer to waive the dues for the remainder of the year for new members and offer complimentary business session registration for two new member representatives for the following convention was CARRIED

## 5. POLICY AND ADVOCACY

### a. 2024 Advocacy Planning

Staff presented a report that provided an update on the advocacy activities for the 2023/24 Term and shared information about the Advocacy survey that went out to members in April.

The Executive were asked to consider the results of a member survey on advocacy, as well as the resolutions endorsed at the AGM to provide direction on the following:

- Planning an education session for November 2024 and January 2025. Staff will be looking for direction on dates and topics and can come back with more information at the August meeting;
- Identify any resolutions AVICC would like to convey outside of UBCM's process – note that the one endorsed regional resolution will not be forwarded to UBCM and is with AVICC to action, but that the rest of the resolutions have been forwarded to UBCM for consideration by UBCM membership in September;
- Confirm if AVICC will request any Minister meetings at UBCM by the June 21 deadline to submit requests; and
- Identify if there are any other advocacy activities AVICC would like to action.

On motion by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig, seconded by Past President Cote  
THAT the meeting be extended to 1:00pm was

CARRIED

The Executive held a round table to help prioritize our issues for advocacy. The discussion was as follows:

- We should select two or three priorities so we stay focused. Legislative Reform would be of great importance. E&N Land Grant resolutions keep getting rejected by UBCM because it's regional. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure issues are connected to so many members (and Legislative Reform). Cost sharing for Hospital Districts, and other health and social services was brought up several times through our resolutions process. UBCM has put a lot of focus on housing, and it may be best not to duplicate their work.
- AVICC only has one employee and we have to be mindful of capacity – make sure we refer to our Advocacy Policy (endorsed in 2022). It would be good to learn more about climate change and water issues, including infrastructure for water management.
- Legislative Reform would be a strong foundational piece with support from other area associations. Watershed security, with respect to privately managed forest land is of importance, and has been brought up regionally through resolutions in 2023 and this year, so that conversation should continue with the Province.
- Legislative reform should be our top priority. Code of Conduct and ethical behaviour is also of great importance. Watershed security, food security, and MOTI issues should also be considered.
- The Legislative Reform Initiative needs advancement. Watershed security is also important. How can we support our members? UNDRIP should be carried along with anything we decide – should be incorporated into everything we do.
- We should ask members what we can do to help on their initiatives if they relate to endorsed resolutions.
- Legislative Reform and Watershed security are most important.
- UBCM has taken on the housing issue and we don't want to duplicate.
- There are many resolutions to do with watershed security. We could set up an educational workshop on this, with discussion groups afterwards that split the various issues. Could we ask for a Minister meeting on watershed and share the multiple resolutions that were endorsed on the issue, including the regional resolutions from this year and last.
- MOTI is something that is top of mind for many of our members and it could be another option for an educational item or Ministers meeting.
- Financial reform and structures relate to the Legislative Reform initiative and also were mentioned numerous times in the survey and resolutions process.

The Executive provided the following feedback on Education and Discussion Session to research and bring back to the August Executive meeting:

- The session should have breakout discussion groups
- Legislative Reform – work with the working group to see how we could best advance this initiative through a session. President Geselbracht will report back on how we can help. We may want to consider sending a request to other area associations to collaborate or just attend.
- VICC Climate Action Leadership Group – host them in a session where they would take



the lead, perhaps with a focus on watershed security. How could we assist them in advancing the climate action initiatives in the region.

- Supports for elected officials – Contact facilitators such as Tracey Lorenson for quotes and proposals. There may be value in reviewing the notes and audio recordings from the Keynote and Sunday Plenary Session at the 2024 convention to unpack what is most needed by our members.
- Keep in mind that these sessions may inform sessions for the 2024 convention.
- Leverage third party facilitators – we don't have capacity to do this ourselves.

On motion by President Geselbracht, seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler

THAT President Geselbracht will liaise with the Legislative Reform Strategy group to get consent to approach other area associations to request collaboration on this session was CARRIED

There was also a conversation about Minister Meeting requests at UBCM. It is important that we focus on issues of regional priority.

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by by 1st Vice President Craig

THAT Staff work with President Geselbracht to convey R2 and request minister meetings on the subject of watershed security and land conservation;

THAT Staff reach out to ICET Staff to follow up on the ICET's funding and offer assistance and support for any Minister Meetings on the matter;

THAT Staff request a meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs to discuss the Legislative Reform Initiative, Municipal Finance, and other important initiatives; and

THAT Staff offer that AVICC Executive attend member minister meetings that are in-line with topics endorsed at the 2024 AVICC AGM & Convention was CARRIED

Director Johnston left the meeting at 12:45pm.

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by by 1st Vice President Craig

THAT if AKBLG asks for support from AVICC on writing a letter to the Premier on Legislative Reform, that President Geselbracht have permission to have those conversations showing support upon consultation with the working group was CARRIED

Past President Cote left the meeting at 1:08pm

## ADJOURNMENT

At 1:08pm, the meeting adjourned as there was no longer quorum.

### **b. REFERRED RESOLUTION: OF1: Addressing the Risk to Wild Salmon**

Off-the-Floor resolution *OF1: Addressing the Risk to Wild Salmon* was admitted for debate at the 2024 AGM & Convention, and was ultimately referred to the Executive for consideration.

Since there was no longer quorum, item 5(b) was deferred to the next meeting.

### **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the AVICC Executive is set for Friday August 9, 2024, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. to be held via Zoom.