



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

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Ben Geselbracht, City of Nanaimo, President
Director Vanessa Craig, RD of Nanaimo, 1st Vice President
Councillor Sarah Fowler, Village of Tahsis, 2nd 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
Director Donna McMahon, Sunshine Coast RD, Electoral Area Representative

STAFF ATTENDANCE: Theresa Dennison, AVICC Executive Coordinator

President Geselbracht called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA & MINUTES

- a. On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by 1st Vice President Craig
THAT the agenda for the August 9, 2024 meeting be adopted was CARRIED

- b. On motion by 1st Vice President Craig, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton
THAT the minutes for the June 14, 2024 meeting be adopted was CARRIED

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Geselbracht reported on activity taken place since the last meeting. He met with the other Area Association Presidents for a second time – mostly to discuss the Legislative Reform Initiative. There was general support for a virtual event early next year. There was a request for a formal letter for collaboration that will be discussed later in the meeting. They would like to provide input on the session, and possibly some funding. We would also be working with the Ad-Hoc working group on Legislative Reform, to determine the scope of the session based on input and level of collaboration. Several other concerns were voiced at the meeting, on issues around the Province. The Ad-Hoc member committee has been reaching out to the CAOs to create broader representation in the group, and the first meeting will take place in the Fall to plan the session. Collaboration with the other Area Associations is a great initiative, and perhaps the Past Presidents should also be invited. UBCM meetings are very tightly run and there is limited time to schedule meetings outside of the UBCM Agenda for the Area Associations to get together.

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Hall
THAT the President's Report be received was CARRIED

3. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATION

- a. **Statement of Investment Policy**
DELEGATION: Kathleen Spalek, CPA, CGA was invited to join the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

At the October 13, 2023 Executive meeting, following AVICC's transition away from UBCM, the AVICC Executive were presented with options for increasing or diversifying the Association's investments. The Executive directed staff to work on a Statement of Investment Policy (SIP), using UBCM's as a guide, upon consultation with several members of the AVICC Executive. AVICC's Financial Consultant, Kathleen Spalek, 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. Ms. Spalek has reviewed UBCM's Policy, and is seeking direction on what to incorporate into AVICC's Policy.

Staff provided an update on AVICC's current investments, and working capital, and presented options for investments through MFABC and financial institutions. Before the Board decides to invest a portion of excess funds, it is recommended that they define the objectives for investing, identify risk tolerance and adopt an investment policy. It is important to define AVICC's circumstances and goals and create a systematic approach to documenting objectives, constraints and governance mechanisms in order to clarify responsibilities and establish accountabilities. A Statement of Investment Policy (SIP) serves as a strategic guide in the planning and implementation of an overall investment program.

Director Johnston joined the meeting at 9:27 a.m.

Staff and Ms. Spalek requested feedback and direction with respect to a Statement of Investment Plan for AVICC.

The Executive provided the following feedback:

- We are a "low risk" organization, we are holding on to our members' money. Keep it as simple as we can. Stay in low-risk cash and cash equivalents. The Board could manage this – no point in a Committee when the Board still has to provide direction
- Add framework to specify how much cash should be on hand.
- Bond funds are another option with MFA to consider.
- Executive Board can manage funds, no Committee or external investment manager required.
- Risk tolerance is low. Investments should be status quo, short-term or liquid investments. We could be spending our profits on advocacy for our members, or reducing fees.
- Is there a risk in locking up a certain amount of funds for a period of time? We can look at cash flow needs and then "ladder" out the money so that there is something coming to maturity each year.
- We can check with MFA to provide further advice on bonds/ fixed investments.
- We should look at ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments being incorporated into the policy.
- We can keep our investments within MFA or go through banks. MFA offers diverse options and supports our members, but we can make it optional in the Policy to invest in a GIC from a bank.

Ms. Spalek will incorporate the feedback from this meeting and work with Staff on the Policy for the Executive's consideration at a future meeting. Once the Policy has been adopted, the AVICC Executive can then consider diversifying or changing the amount of the Association's investments. After each fiscal year, Staff will report out on the investments, and the Executive can consider changes to the investments and/or the Policy.

On motion by 1st Vice President Craig, seconded by Director Hall
THAT Staff work with Kathleen Spalek on a Statement of Investment Policy for AVICC,
incorporating the feedback from the August 9, 2024 AVICC Executive Meeting was CARRIED

President Geselbracht thanked Kathleen Spalek for attending the meeting, and she departed the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

b. Appointment of an Auditor for 2024

The AVICC Executive approves the appointment of an auditor each year. At the May 12, 2023 meeting, the AVICC Executive appointed KPMG as our auditor, and directed staff to obtain quotes for the Association's 2024 Audit. Staff presented options for a full Audit, an Accountant Reviewed Financial Statement or a Compilation Engagement Report (formerly called Notice-to-Reader) from KPMG, as well as two other firms. Several of the firms contacted did not respond. The quote from KPMG was lower than the other firms.

On motion by EA Representative McMahon, seconded by 1st Vice President Craig
THAT KPMG be appointed as auditors for the 2024 fiscal year was CARRIED

c. 2024-07-22 Correspondence – Town of Gibsons

The Executive reviewed a letter from the Mayor of Gibsons requesting a letter of support for the Town of Gibsons to request membership in the Lower Mainland Local Government Association (LMLGA). Geographically, the town of Gibsons lies on the border of the AVICC and LMLGA regions, but is part of the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD), which is only included in AVICC's Bylaws relating to membership eligibility. LMLGA would be required to update their Bylaws to include the SCR D, or the Town of Gibsons for membership eligibility. No change would be required to the AVICC Bylaws, as membership is optional.

There are several Regional Districts who belong to two area associations, there are municipalities who belong to different area associations than the other municipalities in their regional districts, and there is an electoral area who belongs to a different area association than their regional district. Membership is optional for all Area Associations. The Town of Gibsons sent a request to join LMLGA, and LMLGA replied that they want a letter of support from AVICC and UBCM as next steps.

There was a conversation about providing this letter of support. It should be noted that they have been a valued contributing member in the past and they would be missed. We can't actively prevent them from leaving AVICC. The letter should highlight the benefits of AVICC, and note that they could belong to two area associations if they desired. The letter should also highlight the similarities that the Town of Gibsons has with other AVICC members, including participation in regional committees such as the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

On motion by Director Hall, seconded by Past President Cote
THAT AVICC Staff work with President Geselbracht on a letter of support in response to the Town of Gibsons' request for membership in the Lower Mainland Local Government Association was CARRIED

There was a break from 10:23- 10:33 a.m.

4. POLICY AND ADVOCACY

a. 2024 Advocacy Update and Education & Discussion Sessions

At the June 14th Executive meeting, there was a conversation on advocacy planning for the term. The Executive considered the results of a survey completed by members throughout the month of April, as well as the resolutions endorsed at convention to determine our members' advocacy priorities. 77 member representatives participated in the survey, and there were 55 endorsed resolutions at the 2024 AGM & Convention. There are many issues that impact our communities, and it was determined that AVICC, with our limited capacity, should focus on a couple of the issues that were deemed most important to our regional members.

Based on the survey and resolutions analysis, the priority issues for our members were housing; watershed security & land conservation; legislative reform; transportation issues; climate adaptation; and cultural safety for elected officials. The Executive provided direction on several immediate actions for staff to take as next steps:

- AVICC has conveyed the endorsed regional resolution, R2 – Conservation of Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR). All other endorsed resolutions have been forwarded to UBCM for consideration at their convention in September.
- A Minister meeting at the UBCM Convention has been requested with the Minister of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship to discuss R2, and on other land conservation and watershed security issues. AVICC has also requested a meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs to discuss how we can best support the advancement of the Legislative Reform Initiative, and to request advice on how to advocate on behalf of AVICC members most effectively on their priority issues.
- Staff has also communicated to all members that the AVICC Executive would like to offer their support on any Minister Meetings relating to issues on endorsed resolutions at the 2024 AVICC Convention.
- AVICC Staff reached out to Staff at ICET and has offered our support for their advocacy initiatives. ICET will be submitting a session proposal for the AVICC Convention to educate our members about their initiatives, which include co-governance with the indigenous communities in the region, and long-term recapitalization.

In addition, the Executive directed staff to come back with proposals for two virtual education and discussion sessions to take place in November and January. Staff requested direction on dates, length of session, and potential topics for the sessions. The Executive were presented with options for sessions on Legislative Reform, from Tracey Lorenson on conflict and governance, and from the Community Energy Association on Watershed and Food Security.

Legislative Reform

President Geselbracht approached the Legislative Reform Working Group with the idea of bringing the initiative to the other area associations for education, engagement, and discussion, as conversations with UBCM and the Province have indicated that more demonstrated support from the rest of BC local governments is required before action will be taken. Proposed next steps for this session include reaching out to formally request collaboration, to meet with the other area associations and the working group to develop a strategy for the education and discussion session, that would be open to all area association members, and facilitated by a third-party facilitator.

Tracey Lorenson: Finishing Strong: Confidence & Courage in Turbulent Waters

Tracey Lorenson presented a session to AVICC members at the 2024 convention called "Striking

the Balance: Engagement and Respect.” The session was very highly rated through the convention evaluation process, and delegates appreciated the action-focused and interactive approach to her session. Comments were made that our members benefit from sessions that address conflict, and the personal and professional challenges faced by elected officials. Ms. Lorensen has recommended that our delegates would benefit from a “mid-term” session now that they are over halfway through their term. After a summary of what we learned at her AVICC session, she is proposing that we address how to effectively use those tools to get initiatives over the line. We can leverage the personal strength we learned about in the last session and learn how to apply these lessons as we take action for our communities in the final year of the term.

Participants would learn how to influence inside of their own natural social preferences while navigating conflicting views – accepting that we will never make everyone happy in a healthy democracy. It takes courage to do the right thing even if it doesn’t make you popular. Now that there is a fourth year in the BC Local Government term, how will we use that extra time to serve our communities?

Tracey recommends that a 2-hour interactive online session will be a good amount of time – she would allow for about 90 minutes in the session for facilitated content, and then offer to continue the Q & A for the last 30 minutes to allow our members to have a choice to stay in the session to participate in the Q & A, or to leave to get back to their day. The total cost for her for the session is \$4000. She is available with 2 months’ notice for a November or January session, and is requesting that she tentatively holds both dates until a decision has been made. She is also willing to change the direction or content of the session at the direction of the AVICC Executive.

CEA: Land and Water Resiliency & Food Security

The Vancouver Island and Coastal Community Climate Leadership (VICC-CL) Steering Committee contracts the Community Energy Association (CEA) to provide secretariate services. Staff reached out to the CEA to discuss the potential of working with AVICC to provide a virtual education and discussion session for our members on Watershed Security, Land Conservation, and Food Security. The CEA has recommended that they could facilitate and structure a session based on what was heard at the May 2024 Climate Leadership Summit. The session would include topics identified by the VICC-CL Steering Committee, have facilitated break-out groups, and could be adapted based on the AVICC Executive’s direction to meet our members’ priorities. They could also enlist subject matter experts to speak to specifics such as Watershed Security and Land Conservation and Resiliency.

Priority topics identified through the [2024 VICC Climate Leadership Summit](#) were shared with the Executive and discussed. The cost is estimated to be about \$4000 for a 2-hour session, which would include the preparation, technology, and facilitation of the session. This could be more or less, depending on the level of AVICC involvement in the planning and facilitation, and if capacity funding or honoraria would be required for any subject-matter experts. To have enough time to put this session together successfully, it needs to be confirmed by the beginning of September for a late-November session, or mid-October for a late-January session. This session could also help inform a session by the CEA for our 2025 convention – either as a continuation, or as a session on another topic

The AVICC Executive provided their feedback on the three options.

The Legislative Reform initiative was a top priority that could possibly lead to a special resolution from all five area associations. This session should be facilitated by a professional facilitator (not a lawyer) and take place in January to allow for the other area associations to work with the existing working group to inform the session.

Tracey Lorensen's session proposal was also supported, and would be the simplest logistically, as she is known for her facilitation skills and her session at the convention was very well-received.

The CEA proposal was also supported, as watershed security is a huge issue in BC and especially on the Island. It was suggested that CEA put together a briefing about who is working on this issue – how do we best address the problem. There are a lot of organizations working on this – to provide a meaningful workshop. Set folks to start mapping it out would have to come before executing on a workshop. How do we get resources behind mapping this out and strategically figure out what would make sense. This session would require a lot of work, and could be identified as a session at convention in April.

It was also identified that relationship development with Indigenous communities – advocacy for increasing funds for those initiatives – would be a valuable advocacy conversation. Those relationships are causing great partnerships with the Nations and their Regional Districts and to enhance those relationships, we need to have funds.

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Hall

THAT President Geselbracht work with staff to update and send the letter included in the August 9, 2024 Report on Advocacy to the other Area Association Presidents and continue to work with the Legislative Reform Initiative Working Group to develop a virtual session supported by AVICC for January 2025 was CARRIED

On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by Past President Cote

THAT Staff confirm Tracey Lorensen to facilitate a virtual education session for \$4000 that builds on the AVICC Session at the 2024 Convention for late November was CARRIED

There was a recommendation that the best timing for a virtual event would be on Thursdays or Fridays around lunch time.

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. The enactment clause included in the Resolution is as follows:

Therefore be it resolved, that UBCM ask the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to do what is in the best interest of local salmon health and the economy of the region, that open-net fish farms either be decommissioned or moved towards closed containment methods that completely eliminate outbreaks of sea lice and other fish pathogens within the natural environment.

The AVICC Executive has the option to endorse, amend and endorse, or defeat the resolution. If the resolution is endorsed, action may be considered by the AVICC Executive. The sponsor also had the option to submit this resolution directly to UBCM, but it did not get submitted due to staff issues. Background on past policy, and ongoing initiatives on this issue were presented.

On motion by EA Representative McMahon, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton THAT the resolution *OF1: Addressing the Risk to Wild Salmon* referred to the AVICC Executive at the 2024 AVICC Convention be defeated and that Staff work with President Geselbracht communicate to the Sponsor that this is an important issues, and recommend that the sponsor update and resubmit the resolution for the 2025 AVICC Convention to allow for full debate by our members or off-the-floor at the 2024 UBCM Convention was CARRIED

5. CONVENTION

a. 2025 AVICC AGM & CONVENTION PLANNING

Theresa Dennison provided an update on planning for the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention, taking place in Nanaimo April 11-13, 2025, hosted by the City of Nanaimo and the Regional District of Nanaimo. To date, the venue, catering, and hotel room blocks have been confirmed and communicated to members.

The Banquet has been scheduled for April 12th and staff is seeking direction on entertainment for the event. President Geselbracht was approached by an AVICC member with a band recommendation that would meet our delegates' expectations, the [Big Easy Funk Ensemble](#). The Executive could also make an alternate recommendation.

On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler THAT Staff confirm the Big Easy Funk Ensemble as the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention Banquet Entertainment was CARRIED

Staff shared information about the Elections, confirming the direction to offer in-person and online candidate speeches, and the ability for non-delegate members to vote, using the online voting platform.

Staff provided a draft 2025 Convention at a Glance document for consideration that includes the basic proposed format and timing in the program, taking into consideration the feedback and direction from the June 14th meeting, which followed the format of the 2024 Convention.

On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler THAT the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention follow the same basic format as the 2022-2024 AVICC AGM & Convention as presented in the August 9, 2024 report on the 2025 Convention Planning Update was CARRIED

Staff provided information about historical keynote speakers, and asked for the Executive's feedback, and recommendations of speakers that could be within our budget. It was noted that the budget may have to be flexible, as costs are increasing for most great speakers. Staff will reach out to the following potential keynote speakers to check availability and rates:

- [Khelsilem](#) (Dustin Rivers), Squamish Nation Council Chairperson (was unavailable on our dates, but was the Keynote at the LMLGA convention last year)
- Keith Baldry & Vaughan Palmer – Political Commentators to speak to current events, and the relationship between the Province and Local Governments
- Eli Mina – maybe not a keynote? But in the program somewhere?
- Someone to talk about AI would be really interesting – Perhaps offering an Indigenous perspective
- Alex Samuel – spoke about internet connectivity in remote communities? AI discussion?

John Jack and Jeff Lehman who submitted proposals last year, could still be considered after the October conversation. The Executive can send additional recommendations by email, and staff will conduct research and present available options at the next meeting.

AVICC will send out a request for submissions on sessions to the membership and partner organizations in the Fall with a cut-off for late November/early December, with decisions confirmed at the December and January Executive meetings. The host communities will recommend study tours, to be confirmed at the October or December meetings.

Audio Visual services have been confirmed with the venue's in-house A/V company. The cost of A/V in Nanaimo is significantly lower than in Victoria in 2024, and the Executive confirmed that they would like to continue with Video recordings for 2025.

At 12:01 p.m. on motion by Past President Cote, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton
That the meeting be extended to 1:00 p.m.

At 12:05 p.m. EA Representative McMahon left the meeting

An initial draft of the proposed 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention Budget will be presented to the Executive at the October 11, 2024 Executive Meeting. It is anticipated that costs will be lower in Nanaimo than in Victoria, especially relating to the food and beverage and audio visual costs. A conversation will take place at that meeting regarding proposed registration fees. It should be noted that the revenues from the convention are used to off-set the operational costs of the Association. Staff will prepare the budget in view of the feedback from today's meeting

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by 1st Vice President Craig
THAT the August 9, 2024 report on 2025 Convention Planning be received for information was
CARRIED

b. 2025 Convention Sponsorship

On October 25, 2013 the AVICC Executive approved the sponsorship policy that forms part of the Executive Policies. On October 28, 2023, the AVICC Executive made updates to the AVICC Sponsorship Policy. The changes were made to define the three groups of sponsors more clearly, and to remove speaking opportunities from any for-profit organization, or non-government agencies.

Sponsorship for the 2024 convention, excluding tradeshow booth revenue, was \$92,500 compared to \$71,000 in 2023 and \$81,900 in 2022. The recommendation for the Executive to approve sponsors for 2025 is based on the continued assumption that the 2025 Convention can be held in-person, with a continuation of event-specific sponsorship categories (e.g. banquet entertainment). The recommendation is to offer sponsorships to all previously approved sponsors from the 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 conventions. A list of the in-person convention Sponsors, categories, benefits, and contribution amounts for 2019-2024 was included with the report.

Most sponsorship levels include a booth at the trade show, although several sponsors choose not to participate in the trade show. In some locations, exhibitors had to be turned away. AVICC offers complimentary and discounted trade show booths to non-profit organizations and to the local chamber of commerce/tourism group. In 2024, in Victoria, an additional \$18,000 in trade show revenue was collected, compared to \$9000 in Nanaimo in 2023 and \$14,200 in Victoria in

2022. Staff will seek further direction from the AVICC Executive regarding complimentary booths once the number of booths that can be accommodated in 2025 is confirmed.

On motion by First Vice President Craig, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton THAT all previously approved 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 sponsors be approved and invited to continue their sponsorships in the coming year based on the convention being held as an in-person event was CARRIED

If we are reaching out to the Chiefs in the region to participate at our convention, we should ensure there is time to commit to a schedule in advance. We should ensure that we reach out earlier than we did last year, and also send out a reminder about a month later.

c. 2024 UBCM Convention Planning & Student Delegates

As in past years, AVICC will host a luncheon at the UBCM Convention on Wednesday, September 18th, 2024. UBCM sets the location and the cost that is intended to cover the cost of lunch, gratuities, taxes and incidentals. Any special requests (e.g. additional AV) by the Area Association are an additional cost. The program was approved at the June 2024 Executive Meeting.

The Premier has been invited to address our delegates at our lunch, but should he be unavailable, an alternate representative should be identified. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Rob Fleming, has indicated that he will attend our luncheon, and may be a good alternative, as our members identified MOTI issues as one of their priorities through the Advocacy Survey and through the resolutions process. The AVICC Executive can also identify any other Provincial Representatives they would like to hear address our delegates. They may also want to suggest questions for a “Q&A Session” with the representative, similar to what we did with Premier Eby in 2023.

On motion by 1st Vice President Craig, seconded by Past President Cote THAT the AVICC Executive identify Minister Fleming and Minister Cullen be invited to address the delegates at the 2024 AVICC Lunch at the 2024 UBCM Convention should the Premier decline our invitation and if they are unavailable, Minister Kang could be invited; and

THAT once a speaker has been confirmed that Staff work with the Executive via email to develop questions for a Q & A Session was CARRIED

The last few years AVICC has helped set up meetings with Ministers and Ministerial staff on issues involving multiple member governments. As communicated in a report on advocacy earlier in this meeting, AVICC has requested two Minister meetings:

- Minister of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship to discuss R2, and on other land conservation and watershed security issues; and
- Minister of Municipal Affairs to discuss how we can best support the advancement of the Legislative Reform Initiative, and to request advice on how to advocate on behalf of AVICC members most effectively on their priority issues.

Staff has also communicated to all members that the AVICC Executive would like to offer their support on any Minister Meetings relating to issues on endorsed resolutions at the 2024 AVICC Convention.

The UBCM Convention Committee has once again invited each Area Association to register up to three student participants for the 2024 Convention in Vancouver on a complimentary basis. The student registration information was sent to members in mid-July, shortly after it was received to allow as much time as possible for our members to identify suitable candidates in their communities. Last year, AVICC offered to cover half the travel costs up to \$1000, and a complimentary ticket to the AVICC Luncheon.

On motion by 1st Vice President Craig, seconded by Past President Cote
THAT the AVICC Executive direct staff to communicate the opportunity for student registration at UBCM to all members, and offer to assist with a 50% travel and accommodation reimbursement for up to \$1000 per student participant to assist with the student's travel costs;

THAT one complimentary ticket to the AVICC lunch be offered by AVICC for each student participant with an invitation to address our delegates; and

THAT AVICC is not responsible for the student delegate at the convention was CARRIED

On motion by Director Hall, seconded by 1st Vice President Craig
THAT the report on 2024 UBCM Convention Planning be received was CARRIED

6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the AVICC Executive is set for Friday October 11, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. to be held at the Regional District of Nanaimo

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:31, on motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by 1st Vice President Craig
THAT the meeting be adjourned was CARRIED