



**MINUTES OF A MEETING  
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF VANCOUVER ISLAND  
AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE  
on FRIDAY, December 13, 2024 at 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 Penny Cote, Alberni-Clayoquot RD, Past 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 Donna McMahon, Sunshine Coast RD, Electoral Area Representative

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

President Geselbracht called the meeting to order at 9:03am

**1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA & MINUTES**

- a. On motion by EA Representative McMahon, seconded by Director Hall  
THAT the agenda for the December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting be adopted as amended as follows:
- A round-table discussion take place after item 5(c) time permitting; and
  - Item 3(a) be moved to an in-camera discussion due to a commercially sensitive business matter was CARRIED
- b. On motion by Director Hall, seconded by EA Representative McMahon  
THAT the minutes for the October 11, 2024 meeting be adopted as amended was CARRIED

Past President Cote joined the meeting at 9:09 a.m.

**2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Geselbracht reported on the last two months. AVICC distributed a press release on watershed security, but did not receive a lot of attention on it. The Legislative Reform Ad Hoc Working Group and the Area Association representatives from across the Province all met in November. A plan is moving forward for a February Virtual session with all members of the Province through the area associations.

There was a UBCM meeting in November, and there have been conversations between the area associations to advance initiatives. UBCM has made Local Government Finance a priority – they have a package together that identifies the biggest issues. There is also work being done on housing, responsible conduct, funding for infrastructure, UNDRIP as it relates to land use planning and reconciliation, and a review of the Police Act. President Geselbracht has been appointed to the Environment Committee, and the Convention Planning committee. He had expressed interest in the resolutions committee, but did not get appointed to this. There was a conversation about a governance review of the UBCM Executive Committee – representation by region, and for First Nations. Director Hall mentioned that there is not sufficient First Nations Representation at the DFO AMAC Committee, and that he is grateful that his voice can be heard at that table through AVICC.

AVICC sent a letter from Donna re the dates for the EA Forum and the LGLA being split and they mentioned that they would keep this in mind for future years. UBCM has not yet responded to our letter. Regional Districts are under a lot of scrutiny for travel expenses, and the costs have really increased since the pandemic. We may see a lot less attendance at in-person events that we should watch out for. UBCM may see less attendance, and AVICC will be expected to ensure that our members' initiatives are brought forward on their behalf.

There was a discussion about reforming the UBCM RCMP Contract Committee – Director Hall wants to be able to provide input into this conversation on behalf of First Nations in the region. There is a round table that continues to discuss the advancement of local government priorities, but there has been no conversation about reconciliation. The intent should be to keep ALL people safe. President Geselbracht or staff will send out information on how to participate in the UBCM Committee.

On motion by Past President Cote, seconded by Director Hall  
THAT the President's Report be received was

CARRIED

### 3. **ADVOCACY**

#### a. **Legislative Reform Initiative – Next Steps: This item was discussed in-camera**

At 9:30am, on motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler  
THAT the meeting move in-camera to discuss a commercially sensitive business matter was

CARRIED

At 10:05 am the meeting moved out of camera without report, and President Geselbracht called the meeting back in order.

#### b. **2024 Advocacy Update**

At the June, August and October Executive meetings, there were conversations about advocacy planning for the term. The AVICC Executive has determined that as part of our advocacy role for our members that we host virtual education and discussion sessions. Tracey Lorensen facilitated a virtual session for our members on November 28, 2024 from 11:30am-1:30pm entitled 'Finishing Strong: Confidence and Courage in Turbulent Times'. The session focused on strategies for effective governance and leadership in challenging times. The aim was to equip participants with tools to finish their terms strong, despite the turbulent environment. A "What We Heard" report was distributed to members, and a video of the session is available for the month of December for members who were unable to attend. As of December 9, there have been 17 unique views of the video.

Invitations went out to all members via email, with a reminder a week after registration opened. Registration for the session opened in early November and was offered on a complimentary basis. A total of 48 member representatives registered for the session, and 25 attended. The session was designed for a maximum of 60 attendees to allow for interactivity and discussion. The session was hosted via Zoom Events as a webinar, and featured elements of interactivity, including polls and breakout rooms. A survey was sent out to the attendees, and the feedback was very positive from those who attended.

There was also a conversation about AVICC's other advocacy activities, including a press release on watershed security that was sent out after the elections were finished, on the meeting held on watershed security and land conservation on the Island. In addition, AVICC staff have reached

out in support of ICET's recent initiatives, and members of the AVICC Executive supported members at Minister Meetings at UBCM. The [Press Release](#) and further information about advocacy activities that took place by [AVICC at UBCM](#) have been posted on the [AVICC website](#).

There was support to include funds for another virtual session in the 2025 budget. The session was really well-run. It is hard to find the capacity to attend these events, and the video was appreciated. This year's advocacy budget will also include funds to advance the Legislative Reform Initiative – in recent years there has not been a lot spent on advocacy, and this would be a great way to utilize some of the past-years' surplus.

There are so many issues for our members, transportation, inaccurate housing assessment, services, highway safety – the issues keep piling up. Next term's Executive can determine the subject matter for a Fall 2025 session.

On motion by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig, seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler  
THAT the AVICC Executive approve a virtual session in the budget for 2025; and  
THAT the report on AVICC Advocacy be received for information was CARRIED

The Executive took a break from 10:11 to 10:18 a.m.

**c. UBCM Executive Representation from AVICC**

At the October 11, 2024 AVICC Executive Meeting there was a conversation that took place regarding the recent UBCM Executive Elections. AVICC had 6 candidates for Director at Large (out of 15 nominations), and 1 candidate for EA Representative (out of 2 nominations). None of the nominated AVICC candidates were elected, and our only position is our President as this position is appointed. There was a discussion at the UBCM table in response to a letter from LMLGA calling for a UBCM Executive governance review.

The AVICC Executive discussed options for creating a process at AVICC for UBCM nominations. It was identified that it is likely that one of the other area associations has a process in place that they are not sharing with us. Processes to recommend nominations may create additional challenges. Perhaps we can have an additional election at our convention to elect someone to run for UBCM. We should identify a small communities representative as well. For more equal representation, our association should pick our UBCM Executive Representatives. With one representative, it is impossible to keep up with the committee work that happens at UBCM. Would limiting the number of candidates ensure that we have more representation? It creates competition between area associations when we should be collaborating.

A governance review at UBCM could be the best way to advance equal representation on the UBCM Executive. There are individual letters being sent by UBCM LG members calling for a governance review. Indigenous representation should also be through the review. Advocating for the review is one side of the coin. In the meantime, we may want to consider strategies to encourage our members to vote, and that there are less candidates from the region splitting the votes.

Does AVICC need a governance review as well? The success of a Board is dependent on the diversity of its members. We currently have a Board with varying backgrounds from different regions around the geographical area. Cultural sensitivity education may also be another step in ensuring that people feel safe participating in the conversations at these tables.

On motion by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig, seconded by Past President Cote  
THAT staff work with President Geselbracht send a letter to UBCM requesting a governance review calling for more consistent and equitable representation, and that the AVICC Executive can provide input into the review; and

THAT we share the letter with our members and speak to it at the President’s Report at our convention was CARRIED

#### 4. CONVENTION

##### a. 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention Program Planning

The AVICC Executive were presented with the updated approved “Convention at a Glance” document. The schedule follows the format of the program from 2024 (and other recent years) with consideration given to feedback from last year. In 2024, the program ran late throughout and with the addition of in-person candidate speeches, staff have adjusted the schedule to include slightly less content. In the attachment, you will see that there are no longer two 15-minute information session(s) that have taken place on Saturday morning in between the resolutions sessions. The Keynote Speaker has already been confirmed.

The Executive considered the 21 session proposals available to fill the 1 pre-convention workshop, 3 plenary sessions, and 6 concurrent workshops. Staff also identified that Eli Mina proposed to offer a Sunday Plenary session, in addition to some appointment-based meetings to take place on Saturday afternoon. Staff conducted a poll via Zoom, and the Executive took a break while the results were tabulated.

The AVICC Executive took a break from 11:20 to 11:35 a.m.

Staff shared the overall rankings for all of the session proposals to start the conversation about sessions selections for the 2025 convention

Director Johnston left the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

On motion by Past President Cote, seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler  
THAT the meeting be extended to 1:00 p.m. was CARRIED

Upon review of the session rankings, content and topic priorities, Staff was asked to ask the following questions:

- Could the sessions from BC Nurses Union and Fair Care Alliance be set up as shorter sessions? Island Health and Community Action Initiative may also be a fit. The session could be a great pre-convention workshop for 2-2.5 hours on Community Health, similar in format to last year’s housing session. The session could work as either a moderated session with participants on one panel, or as separate presentations with Q & A in between.
- Salmon session may be important and could work well as a concurrent workshop – would the Pacific Salmon Foundation, and the BC Salmon Farmers Association collaborate on one session?
- Could the ICET proposal that would update members on the co-governance model

engagement currently taking place with First Nations, through Sanala Planning be changed into a 30-minute update if time was made in the schedule?

- The VIEA session (in conjunction with South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) and ICET would be a good fit for the Saturday morning working breakfast – they should be asked if Rural Islands Economic Partnership could be added to ensure that the “small islands” voice is included in the conversation.
- Could Don Lidstone do the Friday Plenary as an update on the Legislative reform Initiative rather than hosting it as an engagement session on Saturday as a concurrent workshop?
- The CEA/CLP session is important to include – perhaps as a 90-minute concurrent session, but in the space where the session would be recorded.
- The Executive directed staff to confirm Eli Mina as the Sunday morning Plenary Session.
- Housing would be a great concurrent session – would Young Anderson, Wisser and Islands Trust present a “Community Housing Solutions” session collaboratively?
- Focus on Indigenous Issues – could Indigenous Corporate Training get a local speaker instead of the proposed speaker from Kamloops with a focus on cultural sensitivity training? Alternatively the CCRD recently underwent cultural sensitivity training and could recommend a great speaker.
- The Young Anderson proposal on the Legal Perspective on advancing DRIPA would make a great concurrent session.
- Urban Matters on collaborative learning would be an interesting interactive concurrent session.
- An Island Corridor update would be timely – is there room in the program?

EA Representative McMahon left the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

On motion by Pat President Cote, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig THAT the AVICC Executive direct staff to confirm Eli Mina’s session, *“Meeting, Rules, and Responsible Governance”* as a 90-minute session on Sunday April 13<sup>th</sup> in the morning and the option for private sessions to be scheduled on the Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon with our delegates and Mr. Mina for the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention was CARRIED

The Executive also considered the Pre-Convention Study Tours recommended by the Host Communities.

On motion by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig, seconded by Past President Cote THAT the AVICC Executive direct staff to confirm the following study Tours for the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention:

- The City of Nanaimo Tour entitled “*Revitalization and Reconciliation: Exploring downtown redevelopment including opportunities for reconciliation and collaboration with First Nations*”; and
- The Regional District of Nanaimo Regional Landfill Tour was CARRIED

There was a conversation about invitations to be sent to Provincial representatives to address our delegates. Should the Premier decline our invitation, Staff is seeking direction on who should be invited in his place.

On motion by Past President Cote, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig THAT Minister Osborne then Minister Kahlon be invited to address delegates at the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention should Premier Eby decline our invitation was CARRIED

Invitations will be sent to the leaders of the opposition to address AVICC delegates, including Green Party Leader, currently Sonia Furstenau (who attended in 2022, 2023 and 2024) and Conservative Party of BC leader, John Rustad. Per AVICC’s policies, only the leaders of the opposition will be invited to speak, and they are not permitted to invite someone in their place.

An invitation will be sent to the President of UBCM, Trish Mandewo. We will also invite a representative from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to update our delegates. AVICC members who sit on the FCM Board include Will Cole-Hamilton, Councillor – City of Courtenay and Chris Coleman, Councillor – City of Victoria.

In 2024, the President sent a letter to the Mayors and Chairs of our member local governments, inviting them to extend our invitation for the non-member First Nations Chiefs or their delegates to attend the convention, and that we would waive the registration fees. We had 5 Chiefs or Councillors accept our invitation, and 3 attended, covered by the TAC Reserve Fund. If the Executive would like to extend invitations once again, staff will do so early in early February, as soon as registration opens.

On motion by Director Hall, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig THAT the Report on Program Planning for the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention be received for information was CARRIED

**b. 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 12<sup>th</sup> and staff has confirmed the band, the [Big Easy Funk Ensemble](#). 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. The A/V has been confirmed to include video recording of the plenary sessions. The Keynote Speakers have been confirmed, and the session proposals are undergoing the evaluation process.

There was a conversation about sponsorship, and the trade show. There have been four new sponsors who have requested to participate in our sponsorship program at the convention, including the following:

- Interchange Recycling has requested to be added as a Bronze Sponsor with a contribution amount of \$3000 (Group 2)
- BCAA/ Evolve E-Bike Share has also requested Bronze sponsorship with a contribution amount of \$3000 (GROUP 3)
- Urban Systems has also requested to return as a sponsor for 2025. They were included in the pre-approval at the Executive Meeting in August, as they were approved to join us as sponsors in 2020. They are considering a Bronze sponsorship, and staff are in the process of working to get them back onboard
- the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) reached out to express interest in becoming a Platinum Sponsor for the Audio-Visual at the convention. The contribution amount is \$6500 at this level, and Group 1 Sponsors are permitted a speaking opportunity. Staff requested that the Executive confirm that this organization is indeed a Group 1 Sponsor.

On motion by Director Hall, seconded by Past President Cote  
 THAT the AVICC Executive approve Interchange Recycling and BCAA/ Evolve E-Bike Share as Sponsors for the 2024 AVICC AGM & Convention; and  
 THAT the South Island Prosperity Partnership be approved as a Group 2 Sponsor at the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention was CARRIED

The Executive were also presented with information about the Trade Show to take place as part of the Convention. The Vancouver Island Conference Centre has confirmed that there is space for 32 booths in their venue (there were 26 in Victoria). As the invited sponsors communicate their booth-needs, non-sponsor booths can be confirmed to fill the space. The Executive can also provide booths at no charge to non-profit organizations. For 2025, the Executive may want to consider offering complimentary or reduced-rate booths for non-profit community organizations. ICET, the Libraries (VIRL and GVPL) and the Children’s Health Foundation have reached out to request complimentary booth space, or other access to our delegates, such as a table in the pre-convention area. Staff recommends that we wait until we confirm complimentary booths until we know how many sponsor paid booths are participating.

So far, the following organizations have reached out to request a booth at our trade show at the rate of \$2000:

- Western Canada Marine Response (returning)
- Managed Forest Council (returning)
- Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (new)
- VIEA - Vancouver Island Economic Alliance (returning)
- Indigenous Corporate Training (new)

The Executive was given the option to guarantee any (or all) of the interested organizations for booths at this time, there would be no risk of displacing sponsors, as several returning sponsors have already declined their booths. Guaranteeing these booths would commit an additional \$10K in tradeshow revenue and allow the interested organizations to confirm their budgets.

On motion by Director Hall, seconded Past President Cote  
 THAT the AVICC Executive approve the following non-sponsor organizations to participate in the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention Trade Show:

- Western Canada Marine Response;
- Managed Forest Council;
- Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness;
- VIEA - Vancouver Island Economic Alliance; and
- Indigenous Corporate Training was

CARRIED

A draft of the proposed 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention Budget was presented for approval. At the October Executive meeting, registration fees were confirmed at the same rate as for 2024. Budgetary considerations were highlighted by Staff, who presented a Convention budget forecasting almost \$80K in profit. The AVICC Convention revenues are used to offset the operational costs of the organization. A preliminary draft of the 2025 Budget was also included, showing how the additional convention revenue would help support operational and advocacy initiatives for 2025, and would also cover the anticipated deficit for 2024.

The Executive were asked for feedback on the convention budget, and the preliminary 2025 operational budget. There was general support for the convention budget. A discussion took place to review some of the expenses, such as speaker fees, and name badges.

On motion by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig, seconded by Director Hall  
 THAT the AVICC Executive approve the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention Budget as presented

On motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Craig  
 THAT the December 13, 2024 report on 2025 Convention Planning & Budget be received for information was

CARRIED

Staff was asked to take extra measures to ensure that the name badges are left on the tables at the end of the resolutions session by adding it to the script.

## 5. IN-CAMERA

At 1:11am, on motion by Past President Cotes, seconded by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler  
 THAT the meeting go in camera to discuss a personnel matter was

CARRIED

At 1:16, the meeting went out of camera and Theresa Dennison returned to the meeting

## 6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the AVICC Executive is set for Friday January 17th, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. to be held via Zoom

## ADJOURNMENT

At 1:16, on motion by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Fowler, seconded by Past President Cote  
 THAT the meeting be adjourned was

CARRIED