



**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF VANCOUVER ISLAND
AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE
on FRIDAY, June 6, 2025, 1:00 p.m.
Held electronically via Zoom**

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Ben Geselbracht, City of Nanaimo, President
Chair Vanessa Craig, RD of Nanaimo, 1st Vice President
Councillor Sarah Fowler, Village of Tahsis, 2nd Vice President
Councillor Will Cole-Hamilton, City of Courtenay, Director at Large
Councillor Trina Isakson, City of Powell River, Director at Large
Councillor Alison MacKenzie, Town of View Royal, Director at Large
Director Donna McMahon, Sunshine Coast RD, Electoral Area Representative
Director Penny Cote, Alberni-Clayoquot RD, Past President

STAFF ATTENDANCE: Theresa Dennison, AVICC Executive Director

President Geselbracht called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA & MINUTES

- a. On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by EA Representative McMahon
THAT the agenda for the June 6, 2025 meeting be adopted was CARRIED
- b. On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler
THAT the minutes for the April 10, 2025 meeting be adopted was CARRIED

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The last time we met was at convention – overall our AGM was a great success. President Geselbracht welcomed the Executive Committee to the first meeting of the 2025/2026 Term, including the two new members. There was an orientation for the two new Executive Members in May attended by President Geselbracht, Past President Cote, Staff and new Directors Alison MacKenzie and Trina Isakson.

Since convention, we have been working on the Legislative Reform Initiative. We met to strategize the next steps, which include a workshop submission for UBCM 2025. The survey closed, and Don Lidstone is incorporating the feedback into the roadmap to send it to UBCM along with a request for them to add Legislative Reform to their workplan. The next meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Legislative Reform, that includes representatives from the other four area associations, will take place on June 18.

On motion by EA Representative McMahon, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler
THAT the President's Report be received was CARRIED

3. POLICY AND ADVOCACY

- a. **2025/26 Advocacy Planning**
Staff presented a report that provided an update on the advocacy activities for the 2024/25 Term and shared information about the Advocacy survey that went out to members in April.

The Executive were asked to consider the results of the 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 2025 and January 2026. 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 July 2 deadline to submit requests; and
- Identify if there are any other advocacy activities AVICC would like to action.

The Executive held a round table to help prioritize our issues for advocacy. The discussion included the following feedback:

- There may be value in checking with the UBCM resolutions book to see if any of the AVICC-endorsed resolutions are defeated to determine if there are actions that should be taken by AVICC on behalf of our members;
- There was support for members of the AVICC Executive to attend minister meetings to support our members on priority issues identified through endorsed resolutions – last year it was very educational, and good to learn from and support our members;
- Our priorities should be issues that UBCM is not prioritizing, and other issues that may be falling by the wayside (for example, small water systems);
- On the ICET Board, they have started approving the engagement and co-governance with First Nations – we should offer to assist with communications and/or advocacy; and
- The three regional resolutions should be conveyed, and minister meetings should be requested on those issues. There may be value in requesting staff meetings rather than Minister meetings.

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

- Last year was a big year for AVICC, with a high workload for staff – we should be mindful of staff capacity as it relates to the timing of the convention – as the convention date approaches, the workload increases.
- We should wait to see what UBCM decides about their convention program (end of July) before we commit to a topic to avoid duplication.
- Small water systems may be something for AVICC to include in the advocacy plan – there have been resolutions submitted through UBCM and FCM on this matter recently - this may be good timing for an information session. There are so many 'great' examples of failing water systems.
- Housing Corporations/ Community Housing Solutions was ranked first in the survey – this is a broad topic and we should ensure the session is more narrowly focused. Comments relating to this topic were as follows:
 - Could we do a session on pre-fab or infill housing?
 - UBCM does put a lot of work into housing and it may be important to focus on solutions for smaller and larger communities – not just in urban areas.

- A panel with Councillors and/or their staff who have housing corporations and where they are in the process, including examples of the challenges encountered and the successes experienced as a result of the work.
 - The federal “Build Canada Homes” program seems like it will integrate well for communities who have housing corporations in place.
 - The session should be practical, and give people action-and-experience-based advice on how to move forward in their own communities.
 - We could incorporate information about “Tiny-Homes-on-Wheels” if it fits.
 - The Tofino Housing Corporation would be a great reference on how to do things right, what their process was, etc.
 - Less is more – make sure we don’t include too many sub-topics so that we stay focused and action-oriented.
- The survey ranked advancing DRIPA and the TRC Calls to Action in second place. How DRIPA is being applied at the Province, and impact at all levels of legislation and the Province may be a good virtual session:
 - Reece Harding gave a great presentation to the UBCM Executive in detail about this
 - Sometimes it’s a bit unclear how and why things are happening the way they are within legislation.
 - How do we deal with land-use planning as it relates to First Nations collaboration and consultation?
 - Every Ministry is downloading requirements in their directions to local government and not considering what the other Ministries are doing – how to navigate the complex additional capacity required to implement the Province’s demands with respect to DRIPA in new legislation (ex EDMA).
 - Ensure that the session is relevant to both First Nations and LG members.
 - CEDI (Community Economic Development Initiative) is an example of federal program that supports First Nation-municipal partnerships in developing joint community economic development initiatives – intake just closed on that initiative, but what other funding initiatives are out there to help support with the capacity required to implement the updated requirements

On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by Director MacKenzie
 THAT staff investigate and report back on potential virtual sessions on the topics of “Housing Corporations” and “Implementing the TRC Calls to Action, and DRIPA in Local Government” was
 CARRIED

There was also a conversation about Minister Meeting requests at UBCM. It is important that we focus on issues of regional priority. The following comments were made:

- The three regional resolutions should be conveyed to the Province.
- There has been a lot of talk about reforming the resolutions process. This is a conversation at the UBCM table at the moment and we will look forward to hearing about what they propose to do to make the process more efficient and impactful.
- Government downloading.
- When we convey the resolution, we should make sure that we include background information and historical context with the letter.
- Before being sent, out the conveyance letters should be sent to the Exec for review and feedback

On motion by 1st Vice President Craig, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler
THAT Staff work with President Geselbracht to convey R1, R2, and R3 to the Provincial
Government was

CARRIED

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton
THAT Staff invite the Premier to speak to us at our Luncheon at the UBCM Meeting, and if he
can't attend, invite Minister of Infrastructure or Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs;

THAT Staff request a meeting with the Minister of Forests and the Minister Waters Lands and
Resource Stewardship relating to R1 to discuss the stalled Privately Managed Forest Land Act and
watershed security;

THAT Staff request a meeting with the Minister of Infrastructure to discuss R3 and other
infrastructure issues in rural and remote communities;

THAT Staff request a meeting with the Minister of Transportation and Transit relating to R2; and

THAT Staff offer that AVICC Executive attend member minister meetings that are in-line with
topics endorsed at the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention and have been demonstrated as an
AVICC-member priority was

CARRIED

b. 2025 UBCM Convention Planning

AVICC will host a luncheon at the UBCM Convention on Wednesday, September 24th, 2025. 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 took place as part of our Advocacy conversation.

There was a conversation about AVICC representation at the UBCM table. Some of the other
area associations are very organized but their strategies are unconfirmed. We can send out
communications to our members encouraging them to be strategic. It was identified that there
is something structural that needs to change at UBCM to ensure equitable representation – both
AVICC and LMLGA sent letters requesting a governance review.

There may be value in sending a communication to our members about the process, encouraging
people to be strategic. We should ensure we discuss this at the UBCM lunch. It is undemocratic
to tell people how to vote, so we have to exercise caution in finding an appropriate balance.

1st Vice President Craig left the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

On motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by Director Isakson
THAT staff works with President Geselbracht to send communications about UBCM Executive
nominations and set up a meeting in advance the July 31 nomination deadline that provides
information and strategies for ensuring that AVICC gets more representation on the UBCM
Executive

CARRIED

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton
THAT the proposed program for the 2025 AVICC Lunch on September 24th at the 2025 UBCM
Convention be approved was

CARRIED

The Executive took a break from 2:34-2:45 p.m.

1st Vice President Craig returned at 2:45 p.m.

c. 2026 AVICC Bylaw and Policy Update

AVICC's Bylaws can only be amended by resolution at our AGM. It has been identified by the Executive that AVICC's Bylaws should be updated to clarify the following items at the 2026 AGM:

- Including First Nations as a "type" of organization who can apply for membership
- Including that Improvement Districts are not eligible to be members
- Review of the governance of the society – do we need more members of the Executive?

Staff will start research on these amendments throughout the summer months. The Executive was asked for feedback on the issues already identified, and if there are any other amendments that should be made to our Bylaws. Staff will bring the results of their research to a subsequent meeting.

Members of the AVICC Executive had the following comments and initial feedback:

- There is support for increasing the number of Executive Committee Members.
- Should there be a sub-committee to discuss the Bylaw review?
- We should have equitable representation that reflects our population and members – the population south of the Malahat and North of the Malahat are about even.
- We should ensure that we look at the entirety of our Bylaws to incorporate any recommended smaller changes for clarity.
- Could there be a certain quota based on region for Director at Large?
- We should ensure that having a larger group is still functional – harder to get consensus with too many people at the table.
- Could we have positions for rural and urban members?
- Could we go as high as 11 but make that the max number of Executive members? Perhaps adding one additional member is enough.
- First Nations representation is important as well, but how do we encourage this when there are not very many First Nations representatives. Could there be a First Nations advisor invited when appropriate?
- If there has been someone who is at risk of not being represented at the table, could we recruit?

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

THAT a subcommittee be formed to meet before the August Executive Meeting to review our Bylaws and make recommendations on amendments for consideration by the AVICC Executive for an extraordinary resolution to be considered by members at our 2026 AGM; and

THAT members of the Executive reach out to staff if they are interested was CARRIED

The Bylaws give the Executive the power to create and amend Executive Policies to further clarify the way the organization is managed. There may be updates that the Executive would like to make to our Executive Policies that should be considered once the Bylaw Review subcommittee is in place. Currently Section 12 (1) of the Executive Policies will be amended to allow Party Leaders can delegate other Elected MLAs from their party to speak on their behalf. In addition, we should determine if the 2022 Advocacy Policy be included in the Executive Policies, or as a standalone Policy posted on our website?

4. CONVENTION

a. 2025 Convention: Member Feedback and Convention Financials

The Executive Director provided an update on the 2025 AVICC AGM & Convention.

We saw a decrease to attendance this year with a total of 343 registered delegates and partners, which is 32 less than in 2024, and 13 more than in 2023. 417 total people who were at the convention in some capacity at some point (including volunteers, speakers and musicians) which is fewer than last year, but more than in 2023. Sponsor attendance, and invited guests (which includes First Nations, Students, Provincial Reps, and UBCM/Area Association Reps) increased. The banquet saw a significant decrease in attendance as well, and it may be time to look at changing the format.

The Convention Budget that was approved in December anticipated \$82,289 in profit, and the actual profit was \$90,962 (\$8,673 more than budgeted). 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 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 17th and the video recordings were shared on April 28th.

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 4.3 compared to 4.4 in Victoria last year, 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 speakers, Keith Baldrey and Vaughn Palmer, were the highest-scoring keynote speakers at 4.6/5 since AVICC started with the current evaluation process 20 years ago. The cost was \$8000, which is \$500 more than last year's Keynote, who also scored well.
- A total of 46 respondents commented that networking was their favourite aspect of the convention with some indicating that more time should be spent on networking. This is always the case each year demonstrating the importance of hosting our convention in-person.
- There were many comments made about the resolutions sessions. 18 delegates commented that this was their favorite aspect of the convention. There was a significant amount of feedback regarding the Chairing of the session as well as comments encouraging us to prioritize the resolutions to ensure we are discussing issues important to our members. Many also said that more time was needed for resolutions sessions. The Resolutions sessions averaged a 4.1 score, which is the same as last year, and a great improvement over 2023. This may, in part, be attributed to the number of new Elected Officials at the 2023 Convention – they are more familiar with the process in the subsequent years of the term.

- We ran consistently behind schedule again this year, but there was an improvement over last year's evaluation comments. We should be mindful that when running behind schedule, our delegates would prefer that we don't make the time up during the resolutions sessions, but cut out speakers or break time instead (within reason).
- The food and beverage, facilities, venue, banquet, audio-visual, tours, and trade show scored well as compared to past conventions and especially as compared to 2023 Nanaimo.
- The elections were rated 4.4 overall, which was an improvement over last year. Based on last year's feedback, we brought back in-person candidate speeches and continued offering video-recorded speeches. The reason in-person speeches were eliminated was primarily because during lunch, delegates would be getting lunch and networking instead of listening to the candidates as they made their speeches.

We made the election available to all elected officials, and not just those in attendance at the convention. Emails were sent to all members that outlined the process to register to vote, and a reminder went out with the communication just before convention. We had 6 non-delegate member elected officials register to vote. The amount of work involved to register a non-delegate member to vote is minimal, as it simply involves them emailing staff to be added, and then staff to review to ensure voter eligibility, and add the names and credentials to a spreadsheet that is used to enter electors in the voting software. This is simple to continue for future years.

- The workshop sessions scored higher as compared to previous years but the Plenary sessions scored lower. The comments confirm that our delegates prefer interactive facilitated sessions over "talking heads" and there were more comments than in past years with feedback on the content of the sessions.
- There were many comments both positive and constructive about the Sunday Plenary session – many thought that 90 minutes was too long. The session would have been improved had there been more interactive components, rather than it being exclusively in presentation format.

The Executive had the following comments:

- There was a conversation about investigating hosting a Hybrid convention again, and Staff will send out the reports and information from 2023 to reconsider.
- The Executive discussed how to creatively highlight other member communities now that the event is limited to take place in Nanaimo or Victoria due to attendance numbers.
- We should have more "breakout" aspects of our sessions – there are too many 'talking heads' – we should get trained facilitators to encourage collaboration and engagement.

On motion by Director Isakson, seconded by EA Representative McMahon
 THAT the report on the 2025 Convention be received was

CARRIED

b. 2026 AVICC AGM & Convention Planning

The City of Victoria will be the host community of the 2026 Convention, in partnership with other municipalities in the Greater Victoria area to take place April 23-26, 2025. The convention was last held in Victoria in 2024. The City of Victoria Council committed to the following at their April 3, 2025 meeting:

1. Approve the City as host of the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) AGM and Convention in 2026.
2. Approve an in-kind contribution of up to \$28,000.00 for room rental at the Victoria Conference Centre, and;
3. Approve a cash contribution of up to \$1000.00.

In Nanaimo, the City and Regional District share the costs for several of the expenses, including the trade show, décor, speaker gift donations, honoraria, and entertainment (other than the Banquet Band) totaling approximately \$10K. In 2024, the City of Victoria reached out to other municipalities in the Greater Victoria area to offset some of this cost, and we received donations of \$500 from five members in the CRD in addition to Victoria's contributions. The City also recommended that a \$15 per room night additional fee be charged for AVICC delegates' guestrooms, which will also help to offset the costs to the Host Community.

For 2026, it has been recommended that AVICC reach out to the CRD and the municipalities within the CRD to ask if they would like to contribute to the convention. There are a number of ways the southern communities could contribute and participate:

The AVICC Executive can provide feedback on other ways we could ask them to contribute. The intent is to share the host community benefits more broadly by including more members.

Potential sponsorship agreements could include:

- A cash donation of \$500-\$1000 to go towards expenses, and in return, we would mention them in the Program, the thank-you slides;
- Proposals for the Study Tours;
- Programming Recommendations;
- Information Tables in the pre-function area to showcase their communities and any projects that they want to showcase to AVICC members;
- Entertainment recommendations; and
- Door prizes/ Gift Baskets showcasing their communities

The Executive had the following comments and recommendations:

- We should ensure logos, thank you slides and program mentions are included in the offer;
- Could be presented as a sponsorship opportunity;
- Should we offer the same to local government outside of the CRD as well? Consider for 2027 in Nanaimo; and
- We could offer staff participation / volunteer opportunities.

On motion President Geselbracht, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler
 THAT Staff work with President Geselbracht to create a letter to the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board and the Councils of all municipalities within the CRD, inviting them to contribute as a co-host of the 2026 AVICC AGM & Convention and bring it to the next Executive Meeting was
 CARRIED

Attendance at the Banquet has been declining in the past few years and the Executive should consider our options for the Saturday Night Banquet. We also have three Banquet sponsors including a total of \$6500 for entertainment, \$4000 for the pre-banquet reception, and \$5000 to go towards the dinner food (\$15,500).

Traditionally the Banquet has included a reception beforehand, followed by a three-course plated dinner, and a band. In 2024 Victoria, we held the banquet in the Crystal Ballroom at the Fairmont Empress, and the rental rate was waived with a minimum amount for food and beverage of \$25,000 and a commitment of a minimum of 90 guestrooms.

The [Rattenbury Ballroom](#) at the Fairmont Empress is located on the lower level of the hotel, and would be more suited to a reception style event as it has a large Foyer and a ballroom that is slightly smaller than the Crystal Ballroom with lower ceilings. It has a lot of 'soft seating' options in the foyer, directly outside of the ballroom where we could have round tables for about 120.

On motion by EA Representative McMahon, seconded by Director Isakson
THAT Staff confirm a reception-style banquet in the Rattenbury Ballroom for the Saturday night of the 2026 Convention was CARRIED
OPPOSED Past President Cote & 2nd Vice President Fowler

Director Isakson left the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

At 4:00 p.m., on motion President Geselbracht, seconded by EA Representative McMahon
THAT the meeting be extended to 4:30 p.m. was CARRIED

On motion by 1st Vice President Craig, seconded by 2nd Vice President Fowler
THAT the report on 2026 Convention Planning be received for information was CARRIED

5. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATION

a. Interim Financials to May 31, 2024

Theresa Dennison presented a report that included the interim financial statements to May 31, 2025, including an updated 2025 budget forecast. She presented information about the Association's investments, and cash flow, and the Treaty Advisory Committee Reserve Fund, which now has a balance of just under \$28K.

As reported earlier in this meeting, the convention was budgeted to return a profit of \$82,289 and the current projection is that the convention will return a profit of \$90,962. Consistent with current Executive policy (since 2014), Convention surpluses are sought to cover the deficit in the operating budget outside of the convention, including to fund advocacy initiatives. The approved 2025 Budget included a profit of just under \$10K this year, to help offset some of the higher expenses expected when the convention is in Victoria in 2026. With the additional profit resulting from Convention (\$8,673), and the other updates to the forecast, the anticipated profit for the year is now just over \$19K (an improvement of \$9K+). This surplus can be used in 2026 when we will not be able to make as much profit at our convention, if the Executive decides to budget for a deficit next year.

Overall, the Association is in a strong financial position moving forward.

On motion by 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by EA Representative McMahon
THAT the Report on Interim Financials to May 31, 2025 be received was CARRIED

b. 2025/26 Executive Meeting Schedule

Theresa Dennison presented a report that included a proposed meeting schedule for the 2025/26 Term. The approved 2025 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 2026 AVICC AGM & Convention.

On motion by Past President Cote, seconded by EA Representative McMahon
THAT the AVICC Executive approve the following 2025/26 meeting schedule as proposed:

- Friday, June 6, 2025 – virtual, 1pm-4pm
- Friday, August 15, 2025 – virtual, 9am-12pm
- Friday, October 17, 2025 (in Nanaimo)
- Friday, December 12, 2025 – virtual, 9am-12pm
- Friday, January 23, 2026 – virtual, 9am-12pm
- Friday, March 27, 2026 – virtual, 9am-12pm
- Thursday April 23, 2026 – in person at convention, 12-3pm 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 2025/26 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 2nd Vice President Fowler, seconded by 1st Vice President Craig
THAT the President, the Past President, the AVICC Executive Coordinator, and the UBCM General Manager, Victoria Operations be the designated signing officers for the 2025/26 Term was CARRIED

d. Membership Dues Status Report

Theresa Dennison provided an update on the 2024 AVICC membership dues. Membership was advised at the 2025 AVICC AGM that there was a 3% increase for this year, which was less than the 5% increase approved in 2022, 2023, and 2024. The minimum fee for communities with small populations remained the same as in 2024 at \$400. The total membership dues for 2025 is \$125,390. The region saw a 1.01% population increase from January 2024 to January 2025, which is why the overall dues revenue increased more than 3% (4%). This includes the withdrawal of the Town of Gibsons from AVICC to join LMLGA. Of the 54 AVICC members, 15 members paid the minimum dues of \$400 this year, and the member with the largest population (the District of Saanich) paid \$13,615.09. At the time of the meeting 75% of all dues have been collected. Staff will continue to follow up on the outstanding dues, and will advise if there are any issues.

On motion by EA Representative McMahon, seconded by Director Cole-Hamilton
THAT the report on 2025 membership dues be received was CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:10 p.m. on motion by Director Cole-Hamilton, seconded by Director MacKenzie
THAT the meeting be adjourned was CARRIED

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the AVICC Executive is set for Friday August 15, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. to be held via Zoom.