

VILLAGE OF PORT ALICE  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
HELD WEDNESDAY, 12 April, 2006  
AT 7:00 PM

|                  |            |            |
|------------------|------------|------------|
| MEMBERS PRESENT: | L. Pepper  | Mayor      |
|                  | B. Hay     | Councillor |
|                  | G. Neely   | Councillor |
|                  | D. Vye     | Councillor |
|                  | A. Bazinet | Councillor |

|               |              |                              |
|---------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| ALSO PRESENT: | G. Morrison  | Chief Administrative Officer |
|               | C. Prescott  | Delegate, School Trustee     |
|               | K. Cameron   | Spectator (spokesperson)     |
|               | R. Palmer    | Spectator                    |
|               | C. Zeumer    | Spectator                    |
|               | D. Stewart   | Spectator                    |
|               | K. Willis    | Spectator                    |
|               | R. Willis    | Spectator                    |
|               | R. Watson    | Spectator                    |
|               | S. Tamburini | Spectator                    |
|               | N. Tamburini | Spectator                    |
|               | B. Overland  | Spectator                    |
|               | J. Overland  | Spectator                    |
|               | M. Flostrand | Spectator                    |
|               | L. Watson    | Spectator                    |
|               | H. Palmer    | Spectator                    |
|               | G. Morgan    | Spectator                    |
|               | S. Morgan    | Spectator                    |
|               | T. Hodkinson | Spectator                    |
|               | P. Hodkinson | Spectator                    |

Mayor and Council chose to delay the Regular Council meeting in order to hear the spectators concerns regarding the upcoming property tax rate increase.

Mayor Pepper welcomed the guests and asked the group who would be speaking on their behalf.

Kevin Cameron was chosen as the spokesperson and began by referring to the recent article in the North Island Gazette that indicated Port Alice tax payers could see their property taxes double or triple. Kevin questioned if there was a better way to handle this process. Could the municipality borrow money or run a deficit? What about public input?

Mayor Pepper informed the group that there is a public process available before adopting the upcoming Financial Plan. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Centre Board Room. The general public is invited to voice their concerns about how local government is spending tax dollars. Council will consider the public's concerns before adopting the Financial Plan and setting the Tax Rates.

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Mayor Pepper explained the circumstances that lead to the new pulp mill owner's successful negotiation of reduced taxation.

2004 Port Alice Specialty filed for Bankruptcy Protection.

The plan was to dismantle the pulp mill.

This was not an acceptable option for Council.

A group of Inspectors was formed and a Trustee for the mill was hired.

A process of searching for a new potential owner began.

Mr. Bassett (Neucel) was the only real competitor and was conditional.

A major reduction in municipal taxes was a high priority and after much negotiation Council learned that if his request was not granted he would simply walk away.

Again this was not an acceptable option for Council so concessions were made and an agreement between the Village of Port Alice and Neucel was made. Neucel would invest major capital dollars to upgrade the mill in exchange for a break on taxes as follows:

|      |            |
|------|------------|
| 2006 | \$390,000. |
| 2007 | \$550,000. |
| 2008 | \$660,000. |
| 2009 | \$740,000. |
| 2010 | \$710,000. |

Council was determined to keep the municipality intact and get people back to work. Council realized that there would be difficult times ahead higher taxes, less services subsidized by taxes and more user pay but this option was the least damaging to the community.

Council and staff have been following fiscal restraint and continue to spend on a need to purchase basis only. This practice will keep expenses as low as possible to ensure that taxes are not raised beyond what is necessary. Council and staff are not travelling and the Village is relying more and more on volunteer services. Staff levels are at the minimum.

The Province has made two financial contributions in the form of transitional funding to help the Village get through the next five years. The Province made the final financial contribution after they were satisfied that the local government had done everything possible to reduce spending. The operation of the arena was a definite frill in the Province's eyes and although Council was not happy to close the operation realized it was necessary to receive transition funding.

Mayor Pepper invited questions and comments which resulted in the following:

The Gardener is a frill. The Village should not waste money on gardening.

The Public Works crew does not have a high profile.

Some street lights are burning all night long – Could they be turned off at midnight?

It's important for the Village to stay looking nice and present a good front.

All property owners should maintain their own boulevards.

Picking up yard debris will cease after May 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Village must respect the CUPE Agreement.

Why are the culverts sitting on the boulevard? Village must wait for Fisheries construction work window.

How will the transition funding be allocated? Debenture debt, emergency equipment for the

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fire department, and other operating expenses. Staffing levels are about as low as they can go.

The Light Industrial Park lots will be sold after a marketing plan is completed. The gas station should be built this year if not then Lot 1 in the Industrial Park will be available for that purpose.

What about tax concessions for the home owner, will the penalty be reduced or waived? Council is aware that this will be a tough year financially for a lot of people. Mayor Pepper reminded people to claim the home owner grant portion of their taxes so at least this amount would not be penalized. Mayor Pepper assured the group that there is a period of three years to settle a property tax account if need be.

Mayor Pepper explained the rarity of Neucel being granted such a break and that these circumstances required the Province of BC to create special legislation in order for this plan to be achievable. If this agreement had not been reached municipal services would have to decline further and the taxes would easily triple. A last resort option would be to unincorporate the municipality and become an electoral area of the Regional District.

Will the arena open when Neucel's taxes increase? The opening of the arena is in the hands of the Arena User Group. If they are successful in raising the funding required, and fill a schedule it is possible.

Mayor Pepper informed the group that in 2007 policing costs will be downloaded to local governments therefore Port Alice will have these expenses to cover also.

Increased taxes while reducing health, education, and recreation services (no arena) is a huge concern. Will the taxes really double?

As Neucel's taxes increase will the residential taxes go down? That will depend on if the Village has to replace worn out equipment or if there is an unforeseen event or emergency.

Alderwood Acres mobile home park opted to keep pad rent down when families had little to know income. They will not be able to increase their rates soon enough to recover the upcoming tax bill.

Port Alice has been fortunate to experience such a great corporate citizen such as Doman Industries. However those days are over. There are plenty of services and things to do in our neighbouring North Island Communities for a price.

School Trustee, Carol Prescott took a few minutes to share some of her concerns with the group. The three grade split is a huge concern and needs to be changed. She asked that a letter of support be written by Tuesday for presentation at the next meeting.

If taxes double would it help if people approached the Province? Would they assist any further? – Not likely.

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How long is the reduced tax agreement with Neucel? – Five years. 2006 will be the worst and after this things should become more stable.

Kevin thanked Council for answering their questions and most of the spectators left the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

|                      |              |           |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------|
| SPECTATORS REMAINING | B. Overland  | Spectator |
|                      | J. Overland  | Spectator |
|                      | M. Flostrand | Spectator |

The Regular meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by Mayor Pepper.

**ADDITIONS / DELETIONS to the Agenda**

Council accepted the addition of Communications # 8) Ken & Lynda Archer, dated 11 April 2006, re maple tree in front of home; #9) Sea View School, dated 11 April 2006, re painting of fish on storm drains; #10) Bonnie Overland RN, dated 11 April 2006, re stop smoking program and free use of room at Community Centre; #11) Janice MacLeod of Port Alice Golf Club, undated, re temporary change to liquor license.

**DELEGATIONS: Carol Prescott, School Trustee, School District 85**

Carol Prescott attended the Council meeting and presented Council with statistics that would support her suspicions that Sea View School is seriously understaffed. Sea View is presently third worst off with respect to student/staffing ratio and all classes are split by three grade levels.

Carol is asking for letters of support to take to the next school board meeting on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. There is funding available to provide for one more teacher. This would enable a new configuration of classes reducing the number of three grade split classes from three to two. The School Board is always looking a ways to increase enrolment and this would help. Families would be much more receptive to enrolling their children in a school with a two grade split than a three grade split.

Teachers at Sea View do not have the necessary time required to spend with the students because of the special needs of some of the students and the additional work of the three grade splits.

Community Schools are making their presence known and there may be ways that School District No. 85 and the Village of Port Alice can partner. Mayor Pepper shared one example that may be considered. School District No. 85 could purchase a lawn mower for Port Alice and Village staff, being that they belong to the same union, could cut the grass at the school.

Mayor Pepper thanked Trustee Prescott for her report.

**MINUTES from Council and Committees of Council  
155/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Minutes of the:

1. Regular Council Meeting held 22 March;
2. Recreation Committee, held 05 April;

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3. Public Works Committee, held 06 April;
4. Transition Advisory Committee, held 27 March:  
be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

**BUSINESS ARISING from Minutes and Unfinished Business**

**Recommendation from Recreation Committee Meeting of 5 April**

**Move for Health Day challenge – May 10<sup>th</sup>**

It was decided that Port Alice not participate in the Health Day Challenge on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Staffing – CC Casual Janitor**

**156/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the position of Casual Community Centre Janitor be advertised immediately.

CARRIED

**Recommendation from Public Works Committee Meeting of 6 April**

**Transfer Station Recycling – White Goods**

**157/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the following process be implemented, on a trial basis during the period May 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>. The process will be considered successful if the collection rate is 75% or greater.

The rate payer will purchase a “Transfer Station White Goods or Tire Disposal Coupon” at the Municipal Office, at a rate of \$15.00 per appliance, and \$3.00 per tire.

The rate payer receives a sticker that they will apply to the appliance.

The Public Works Department will keep a record of white goods and tires that are disposed of without a sticker. The rate of success will be measured at the end of the trial period and reported to the Public Works Committee at their meeting in September for a recommendation to Council.

The Committee further recommends that the following Notice to Property Owners be distributed with the next utility billings on or before April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**VILLAGE OF PORT ALICE  
NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS**

**TRANSFER STATION**

The Regional District of Mt. Waddington recently passed a bylaw that requires the Village of Port Alice to pay a tipping fee for certain items that are put in the blue bin. The Village is not able to subsidize these additional costs and, therefore, asks for your cooperation in voluntarily paying for the items that result in additional costs to the Village.

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You are welcome to discard the following items at the transfer station, however effective May 1<sup>st</sup> a \$15.00 fee will be charged for the following items:

Fridges, Freezers, Stoves, Washers, Dryers,

Furnaces, Hot Water Heaters, Dishwashers

A \$3.00 fee will be charged for each tire.

You may purchase your white goods or tire disposal coupon at the Municipal Office Monday to Friday during office hours.

Payment by the honour system will be monitored between May 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> and provided it is successful it will continue. If the honour system is not successful (75% collection or greater) a recycling fee will be added to the utility bills effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006.

### BOULEVARDS

Many property owners use Municipal Boulevards for parking. Council recognizes there is a lack in parking in Port Alice, therefore this practice is acceptable, provided that the following conditions are met:

1. The vehicle, boat or trailer must have a valid license plate on it.
1. The property owner using the boulevard must maintain it in a safe and tidy manner.
1. The property owner must not use the boulevard as a place to store personal property. (I.e. fire wood, construction material, etc.)
1. The property owner must repair, or pay for the repair, of any damage done to the boulevard by the property owner.

### GARDEN DEBRIS

Effective May 29, 2006 the Public Works crew will no longer be picking up garden debris from the boulevards. Disposal of garden debris will become the responsibility of the property owner. The designated site for garden debris is at the tree line behind the Angus Dawson Memorial Ball Field.

The Village intends to continue with the spring (April) and fall (October) clean up. That will be the only time property owners will be permitted to dispose of debris on the boulevards.

Your cooperation is most appreciated and if you have any questions please call the Municipal Office at (250) 284-3391 or the Public Works Dept. (250) 284-6612.

CARRIED

### **Drinking Fountain – Lions Park**

**158/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that appropriate signage be installed on the picnic shelter, by the faucet, informing the public that drinking water is available from April – November. And further that the Public Works department install a spring loaded faucet on the tap.

CARRIED

### **Seniors Centre Building Repairs**

**159/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that Total Custom Carpentry's Invoice be approved for payment as per Min. #110/06.

CARRIED

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**Gardeners Contract**

**160/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that Minute No. 130/06 be rescinded; and further that Heather McNeivitts be offered the Gardener Contract at the same contract price of \$950.00 per month, commencing on April 1, 2006 and ending on October 31, 2006.

CARRIED

**Garden Debris**

**161/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that garden debris pick up from the boulevards cease this spring and that the final pick up be advertised for Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup>; and further that a notice to this effect be included with the notice to property owners that is due to go out with the upcoming utility bills.

CARRIED

**Welcome Sign: Maintenance**

**162/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the information at the welcome sign be replaced and further that the sign be weather proofed if possible.

CARRIED

**Gutters at the Community Centre**

**163/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Village get a quote from Rick Schofield for the cost of installing gutters above the fitness room and the Library.

CARRIED

**MINUTES from Other Organizations**

**164/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the minutes of the  
Regional District of Mount Waddington, 21 February 2006;  
Mount Waddington Regional Hospital District, 21 February 2006;  
Vancouver Island North Woodlands Advisory Group, 02 March 2006, be received.

CARRIED

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**Incoming Mail Log**

**165/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Incoming Mail Log for the period 20 March to 10 April, 2006 be received.

CARRIED

**Receipt of Miscellaneous Communications**

**166/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that communication from:

1. The Seniors Advocacy Project Steering Committee, dated 22 March 2006, re Seniors Advocacy Project Appendix B.
2. BC Water & Waste Association, undated, re Notice of Special Resolution.
3. City of Burnaby, dated 29 March 2006, re Request for council support to create bylaw.

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4. Friends of the Marble River, dated 24, March 2006, re Victoria Lake/Port Alice Water Power Project;  
be received.

CARRIED

**Ministry of Public Safety**

**167/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the communication from the Ministry of Public Safety, dated 13 March 2006, re Emergency Preparedness Week 2006, be received and further that it be passed on to the Emergency Coordinator, Kevin Cameron.

CARRIED

**Claire Trevena, MLA**

**168/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the communication from Claire Trevena, MLA, dated 6 April 2006, re delays in providing full time doctor to Port Alice, be received and further that a letter of thanks be sent to her.

CARRIED

**Ken & Lynda Archer, Boulevard Tree**

**169/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the communication from Ken & Lynda Archer, dated 11 April 2006, re request to remove Maple tree on their boulevard be tabled for further review and further that a letter be sent to the Archers informing them of this.

CARRIED

**Sea View E.J.S. School**

**170/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the communication from Sea View E.J.S. School, dated 11 April 2006, re request to paint yellow fish on the storm drains be approved and further that the Public Works Department supply the school with the paint.

CARRIED

**Bonnie Overland, "Stop Smoking" Support Group**

**171/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the communication from Bonnie Overland, dated 11 April 2006, re request for the use of a room in the Community Centre, free of charge once a week for the "Stop Smoking" Support Group be approved.

CARRIED

**Port Alice Golf Club – Temporary Change to Liquor License**

**172/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the communication from the Port Alice Golf Club dated 12 April 2006, re Temporary Change to Liquor License from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. be approved and further that the RCMP be notified if this change.

CARRIED

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**REPORTS**

**Chief Administrative Officer's – Finance Warrant**

**173/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that Finance Warrant No. 03, 2006, in the amount of \$88,615.95 be approved.

CARRIED

**Chief Administrative Officer's – Web Site Links Policy**

**174/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Port Alice website links policy draft be approved.

CARRIED

**Fire Chief – Monthly**

**175/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Fire Chief's monthly report for March 2006 be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

**Recreation Department**

**176/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Community Centre Supervisor's report, be accepted.

CARRIED

**Public Works Department**

**Public Works Foreman's – Monthly**

**177/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Public Works monthly report for March 2006 be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

**Compressor for Sewer Treatment Plant**

**178/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that approval be given to purchase a spare compressor for the sewer treatment plant at a cost not to exceed \$2,592.00 before taxes and further that the public works department be authorized to perform checks on the plant as required over the Easter weekend.

CARRIED

**BYLAWS**

**Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 517, 2006**

**179/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that Village of Port Alice Zoning Amendment 8 – Commercial 1, Bylaw No. 517 be read for the second and third time.

CARRIED

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**Fire Department and Fire Prevention Amendment Bylaw No. 518, 2006**

**180/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Village of Port Alice Volunteer Fire Department and Fire Prevention bylaw no 518, 2006 be reconsidered and adopted.

CARRIED

**Financial Plan 2006 – 2010 Bylaw No. 519, 2006**

**181/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Village of Port Alice Financial Plan 2006 – 2010 be given first, reading.

CARRIED

**Financial Plan 2006 – 2010 Bylaw No. 519, 2006**

**182/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the Village of Port Alice Financial Plan 2006 – 2010 be given second and third, reading.

CARRIED

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Alderwood Acres and Port Alice Campground**

**183/06**

It was duly moved and seconded that the report from the meeting between Alderwood Acres and the Port Alice Campground, dated 27 March 2006, re use of vacant spots in Alderwood Acres being used for overflow when Port Alice Campground is full, be received.

CARRIED

**QUESTION PERIOD**

**Adjournment**

It was duly moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn at 9:25 PM to In-Camera to deal with legal, labour, land or litigation matters.

CARRIED

Certified Correct \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer

\_\_\_\_\_

Mayor

Confirmed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.