



TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN

Minutes of a Regular meeting of Council held and transmitted electronically via Council Chambers located at 39 South Shore Road, Lake Cowichan, BC on Tuesday, October 28th, 2025

PRESENT: Tim McGonigle, Mayor
Councillor Carolyne Austin
Councillor Aaron Frisby
Councillor Kristine Sandhu
Councillor Lorna Vomacka

STAFF: John Thomas, Chief Administrative Officer
Jas Sandhu, Superintendent, Public Works and Engineering Services
Brigid Reynolds, Contract Planner
Roni-Lee Roach, Executive Secretary

PUBLIC: 8

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS

None.

3. AGENDA

No. R.0106/25
Agenda

Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that the agenda be approved as amended.

CARRIED.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

No. R.0107/25
Regular Council
Meeting Minutes

(a) Moved: Councillor Sandhu
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that the minutes of the Regular meeting of Council held on September 16th, 2025, be adopted.

CARRIED.

No. R.0108/25
Committee of the
Whole

(b) Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu
that the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on October 14th, 2025, be adopted.

CARRIED.

6. BUSINESS ARISING AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councillor Frisby declared a conflict of interest on the Development Variance Permit matter at 169 South Shore Road at 5:02 pm.

No. R.0109/25
Development Variance
Permit DVP2025-06
169 South Shore Road

(a) Moved: Councillor Sandhu
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that Council approve the DVP2025-06 on a variance for the property located at 169 South Shore Road, legally described as Lot A, District Lot 12, Cowichan Lake District, Plan VIP31954 (PID: 000-048-356) to vary Zoning Bylaw Schedule B, Section 7.2, a) iv) for 3 parking stalls.

CARRIED.

Councillor Frisby returned to the meeting at 5:06 pm.



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No. R.0110/25
Actionable Resolutions –
October 14, 2025

- (b) Moved: Councillor Sandhu
Seconded: Councillor Frisby
that Council adopt the actionable resolutions from the October 14th, 2025, Committee of the Whole as presented:
- 1—Veteran’s Themed Crosswalk**
that Council approve the installation of a Veteran’s crosswalk to be installed at the Stanley Road and South Shore Road intersection leading the cenotaph to be completed before the 2025 November 11th ceremony; and
- that the Lake Cowichan Legion Branch No. 210 be advised of the approval to their request for a Veteran’s Themed crosswalk.
- 2 – Strategic Planning Workshop – Fall 2025**
that Council direct staff to organize a Council Workshop for the purposes of discussing the Strategic Plan to be held on November 6th and November 7th, 2025, facilitated by the CAO.
- 3—Inspection of 135 North Shore Road**
that the staff report be received; and
- that Council pause further consideration of the Zoning Bylaw amendment until such time that deficiencies are remedied, and the property is compliant with the BC Building Code
- 4—Pause on Future Amending Zoning Bylaw Applications for Short Term Rentals**
that Council pause further consideration on short term rental application(s) until a report is brought forward no later than January, 2026.
- 5—Finance Report**
that the staff report be received.
- 6—Fire Department – Incident Report**
that Council approve the Lake Cowichan Fire Department’s incident report in the amount of \$12,107.44 for September, 2025.
- 7—Fire Department – Grant Application for Equipment and Training**
that the Town of Lake Cowichan submit an application under the UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Program (CEPP) for equipment and training for the Lake Cowichan Volunteer Fire Department, in the amount of \$30,000.
- 8—Sidewalk Repairs**
that Council approve replacement of sidewalks using asphalt, achieving cost savings and improved asset resilience;
- that Council direct staff to move forward with implementation as soon as practicable using currently budgeted funds for sidewalks; and
- that Council direct staff to proceed develop a multi-year Sidewalk Renewal and Maintenance Program based on this material standard.
- 9—Leave of Absence**
that Council approve a leave of absence for Councillor Austin from meetings held this day.

CARRIED.

No. R.0111/25
Appointments to
Committees, Boards and
External Bodies

- (c) Moved: Councillor Vomacka
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that all current Council appointments to Committees, Boards and external bodies remain in effect until amended or rescinded by Council.

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7. DELEGATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

None.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

No. R.0112/25
Art Exhibit Proposal

- (a) Moved: Councillor Austin
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that Council direct staff to contact Ms. Nonoka Kawasaki for the accommodation of the proposed exhibit as stated in her correspondence. **CARRIED.**

No. R.0113/25
Letter of Resignation

- (b) Moved: Councillor Austin
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that Council accept the resignation of Duncan Brown from the Advisory Planning Commission. **CARRIED.**

No. R.0114/25
Letter of Thanks

- Moved: Councillor Austin
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that Council send a letter of thanks to Duncan Brown for his involvement and valuable assistance and participation on the Advisory Planning Commission. **CARRIED.**

The following correspondence items were received as information:

- (c) Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities –
Education and Engagement Opportunities.

No. R.0115/25
Consent for CVRD Bylaw
No. 4650 – Regional
Emergency
Management
Establishment Bylaw,
2025

- (d) Moved: Councillor Sandhu
Seconded: Councillor Frisby
that the Town of Lake Cowichan consents to the adoption of CVRD Bylaw No. 4650 – Regional Emergency Management Establishment Bylaw, 2025. **CARRIED.**

9. COUNCIL AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of the
Whole

- (a) No report for the Committee of the Whole as the minutes and recommendations were approved earlier in the meeting.

Cowichan Lake
Recreation Commission

- (b) Councillor Frisby reported on the Recreation Commission meeting held on October 22nd, 2025 and advised that the next Commission meeting would be held on November 24th, 2025.

Vancouver Island
Regional Library

- (c) Councillor Vomacka gave a verbal report on the Library Board meeting held on Saturday, September 20th, 2025.

Advisory Planning
Commission

- (d) Councillor Sandhu reported that the minutes of the Commission meeting held on Thursday, October 23rd, 2025 would be made available at the next meeting of Council.

Community Forest Co-
operative

- (e) No report for the Community Forest Co-operative.

Cowichan Valley
Regional District

- (f) Mayor McGonigle gave a verbal report on the Regional District's Board and Committee meetings held in the month of October.



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- Community Outreach Team **(g)** Councillor Austin gave a verbal report on the Community Outreach Team meetings recently held.

- Our Cowichan **(h)** Councillor Austin gave a verbal report on her attendance at the recent Our Cowichan meeting.

She requested that information on the matter of mental health shared in its recent newsletter be shared on the Town’s website.

- Cowichan Watershed Board **(i)** Councillor Sandhu reported on the Watershed Board meeting held on October 27th, 2025 with a presentation made by Brian Houle, Domtar. She further reported on the weir project and that Phase 2 would be undertaken shortly. The next meeting of the Watershed Board will be held on November 24th, 2025.

Mayor McGonigle extended his thanks to staff for all their diligent work to mitigate the Town’s discharge of effluent and work with the Province to ensure the Town’s compliance.

- Ohtaki Twinning **(j)** Councillor Frisby reported that the next delegation from Ohtaki, Japan would be planning to come to Lake Cowichan October 11th to 15th, 2026.

The Chief Administrative Officer reported that the planning of the visit will be brought forward to budget with the upcoming discussions at the Strategic Plan meeting.

Councillor Austin reported on the plans underway for the 2027 delegation to travel to Ohtaki and the group of 9 student would be holding its next meeting on November 18th, 2025 in Council Chambers.

10. OTHER REPORTS

11. STAFF REPORTS

- No. R.0116/25
Development Variance
Permit DVP2025-07
7987 Greendale Road

(a) Moved: Councillor Vomacka
 Seconded: Councillor Frisby
 that Council approve DVP2025-07 to vary section 5.1.6 f. i. to reduce the front lot line setback from 6.1 m to 5.0 m and to remove the requirement that the front face of the garage shall be set back from the front face of the dwelling to permit the construction of a shop (accessory building) at 7987 Greendale Rd, on the lot legally described as Lot 1, District Lot 16, Cowichan Lake District, Plan 9301 (PID 005-609-402) as presented.

CARRIED.

- No. R.0117/25
Development Permit
DP2025-07
291 Castley Heights

(b) Moved: Councillor Sandhu
 Seconded: Councillor Frisby
 that Council approve DP2025-07 to regularize construction of the retaining wall in DPA -2 at 291 Castley Heights, as shown in the general location on the attached site plan, on the lot legally described as Lot 13, Section 5, Renfrew District, Plan VIP54940 (PID 017-909-236).

CARRIED.

- No. R.0118/25
Development Permit
DP2025-11
456 Winter Drive

(c) Moved: Councillor Sandhu
 Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
 that Council approve DP2025-11 for the property located at 456 Winter Rd, legally described as Lot 2, Section 6, Renfrew District, Cowichan Lake District, Plan EPP138345 (PID 032-429-568 VIP88703 in conformance with the following conditions:

 - 1. All development shall be in accordance with
 - a. Attached site plan
 - b. Riparian Areas Protection Regulation: Assessment Report, prepared by Bob Crandall, dated June 9, 2025



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- 2. Prior to any land alteration and building permit issuance
 - a. Delineate the SPEA boundary with high visibility fencing.
 - b. Implement sediment and erosion control measures in consultation with the QEP consistent with the RAPR Assessment Report.
 - c. Provide a landscape bond for the value of the replacement trees, including labour, to secure the replanting of 10 appropriate tree species as outlined in the criteria applicable to the replacement of trees authorized for removal under the *Fisheries Act, Wildlife Act or Land Title Act* by BC Environment, Fish, Wildlife and Habitat Protection.
- 3. Prior to occupancy permit issuance:
 - a. Install some form of permanent demarcation of the SPEA line.

CARRIED.

No. R.0119/25
Development Variance
Permit DVP2025-08
476 Winter Drive

- (d)** Moved: Councillor Vomacka
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that Council approve DVP2025-08 to reduce the front yard setback from 7.5 m to 5.0 m [Zoning Bylaw section 5.1.6. f)i)] and to approve the development permit for the property located at 476 Winter Rd, legally described as Lot 7, Section 6, Renfrew District, Cowichan Lake District, Plan EPP138345 (PID 032-429-614) in conformance with the following conditions:
- 1. All development shall be in accordance with
 - a. Attached site plan
 - b. Riparian Areas Protection Regulation: Assessment Report, prepared by Bob Crandall, dated June 29, 2025
 - c. Geotechnical Design Parameters – Bearing and Site Conditions for Design, prepared by Lewkowich Engineering Associates Ltd. Dated June 10, 2025
 - 2. Prior to any land alteration and building permit issuance
 - a. Delineate the SPEA boundary with high visibility fencing.
 - b. Implement sediment and erosion control measures in consultation with the QEP consistent with the RAPR Assessment Report.
 - 3. Prior to occupancy permit issuance:
 - a. Install some form of permanent demarcation of the SPEA line.

CARRIED.

2026 Financial Plan
Process

- (e)** John Thomas reviewed the staff report on the 2026 financial plan process and the dates for the proposed process and meeting dates as outlined met with Council’s approval.

No. R.0120/25
Insurance Renewal

- (f)** Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that Council approve the insurance proposal from Aon Reed Stenhouse at a cost of \$160,889 for the renewal term November 1, 2025, to October 31, 2026; and
that the Town of Lake Cowichan renew the fleet insurance with Westland Insurance at cost not to exceed \$43,000.

CARRIED.

No. R.0121/25
Spending Limits –
Procurement Policy

- (g)** Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that Council accept the staff report on the spending limits and procurement policy, specifically as related to sole sourcing provisions; and
that Council discuss its procurement policy at the upcoming strategic planning sessions.

CARRIED.

No. R.0122/25
Budget Amendment
– Ambulance Station
Heat Pump

- (h)** Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that Council amend the 2025 capital budget by adding \$20,000 for the ambulance building heat pump and also reducing the Mildred Child area upgrades capital budget by \$20,000.



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CARRIED.

No. R.0123/25
Fire Department
2026 Budget

- (i) Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu
that Council accept the staff report on the proposed 2026 budget for the Lake Cowichan Fire Department; and
that Council approve the Lake Cowichan Fire Department 2026 budget as presented.

CARRIED.

Councillor Frisby requested clarification on the matter of the future acquisition of a ladder truck for the department.

12. BYLAWS

No. R.0124/25
Permissive Tax
Exemption – Bishop
of Victoria Lease to
Food Bank
No. 1123-2025

- (a) Moved: Councillor Frisby
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that the “Town of Lake Cowichan Permissive Tax Exemption for Bishop of Victoria Catholic Church Parish Rectory Lease to Lake Cowichan Food Bank Bylaw No. 1123-2025” may be reconsidered and adopted.

CARRIED.

13. NEW BUSINESS

No. R.0125/25
Leave of Absence

- (b) Moved: Councillor Vomacka
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu
that Council approve a leave of absence for Councillor Frisby for the November 4th Committee of the Whole meeting.

CARRIED.

- (a) Mayor McGonigle read out the following statement:

“Council is honoured to share that we are gathered this evening to celebrate the appointment of a new Freeman of the Town of Lake Cowichan. The title of Freeman of the Town represents the highest civic honour that Council may bestow. It is reserved for those who have made exceptional and lasting contributions to the social, cultural, or civic life of our community — individuals who have demonstrated integrity, compassion, and a deep commitment to the advancement of our Town and its people. Over the years, those appointed as Freeman have embodied the very spirit of citizenship, generosity, and community pride that defines Town of Lake Cowichan. Council remains deeply grateful for their contributions and the example they continue to set for future generations. It is our honour and privilege to confer the title of Freeman of the Town to Mr. Ross Forrest.

At this time, each member of Council is invited to share a few words about the new appointee and the significance of this honour.

Council extends its warmest congratulations and heartfelt appreciation to Ross Forrest for his many years of exemplary service, leadership, and commitment to the people of Lake Cowichan.

His name will join the other Freeman of the Town: AB (Archie) Greenwell – 1987, Thomas Gordon – 2004, Berend (Barry) Volkers – 2008, Hazel Elves Beech – 2011, Patricia E. Foster – 2015, and Pat Weaver – 2022. “

Council directs staff to organize a ceremonial gathering for all individuals who have been appointed as Freeman of the Town in the coming months.

Ross Forrest thanked Mayor, Council and the community for this award.

14. MAYOR’S REPORT

The Mayor’s 3rd Quarterly report for 2025 was provided.



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As we gather for this meeting, I want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to the incredible volunteers in our community. Your unwavering commitment and dedication are the backbone of our Town's vibrancy. Whether it's organizing events, supporting local initiatives, or lending a helping hand in times of need, your efforts do not go unnoticed. I would also like to extend a special thank you to our staff and employees. Your hard work and determination play a vital role in our ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of life in our community. Together, we are making strides towards a brighter future, and it is your service that makes all the difference. Let us continue to support one another and work collaboratively to foster a sense of belonging and pride in our Town. Thank you for your dedication and service.

It's been four months since Mr. Thomas has joined us as our new CAO, and the transition is going well. With our knowledgeable staff, and Council, we attended the annual UBCM conference in Victoria last month and had very successful conversations with various ministries on ideas for improvements in the Cowichan Lake area. Everything from Health needs, environmental protection issues, and crown land opportunities for use by the Town. Hoping that these meetings bring exciting news in the near future.

As we enter the last year of this term, we will be looking to make strides towards reviewing our Strategic Plan to reflect the pressures of the current economic climate, and adjust accordingly. Special thanks go out to Staff and Council for your continued support as we advance the vision for the Town. Councillor Frisby will relinquish the Deputy Mayor's role as Councillor Vomacka takes over for the final year. We appreciate Councillor Frisby's dedication and service in this position and look forward to Councillor Vomacka's leadership. Together, we remain committed to fostering a growing, vibrant community that meets the needs of all our residents. Let's work collaboratively to overcome challenges and seize new opportunities in the coming months.

15. NOTICES OF MOTION

16. QUESTION PERIOD

17. IN CAMERA

No. R.0126/25
Retire to In-Camera

Moved: Councillor Vomacka
Seconded: Councillor Sandhu
that the Council close the meeting to the public to deal with issues dealing with labour relations which falls under s. 90(1) (c) of the Community Charter. (6:30 pm).

CARRIED.

18. ADJOURNMENT

No. R.0127/25
Adjournment

Moved: Councillor Vomacka
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that Council arise without report and adjourn the meeting (7:24 pm).

CARRIED.

Certified correct _____.

Confirmed on the _____ day of _____, 2025.

Mayor