VILLAGE OF SAYWARD
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
March 19, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Village of Sayward respectfully acknowledges that the land we gather on is on the unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

Present: Mayor Mark Baker
Councillor Scott Burchett
Councillor Debbie Coates
Councillor Jason Johnson
Councillor Sue Poulsen

In Attendance: John Thomas, Acting CAO/Corporate Officer
Lisa Clark, Chief Financial Officer
Jennifer Redshaw, Office Administrator

1. **Call to Order**

   The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

2. **Public Input**

   a) Don Bruce of 201 Sayward Heights asked what would it cost to tear this building (the Kelsey Centre) down. He also asked why you would do that.

3. **Introduction of Late Items- None**

4. **Approval of Agenda**

   MOTION C25/34
   MOVED AND SECONDED
   THAT the agenda for the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council for Wednesday March 19, 2025, be approved as presented.

   CARRIED

5. **Petitions and Delegation - None**

6. **Correspondence - None**

7. **Council Reports - None**

8. **Reports of Committees - None**

9. **Mayor's Report- None**

10. **Unfinished Business - None**

11. **Staff Reports**

a) Kelsey Centre Financials

MOTION C25/35
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT Council receives this report for information and discussion.

CARRIED

MOTION C25/36
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Kelsey Centre Pool re-open as soon as repairs are complete.

Opposed Mayor Baker, Cllr Coates, Cllr Johnson **DEFEATED**

b) SRD's Kelsey Centre Review Committee

MOTION C25/37
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Village of Sayward Council be requested to clarify to the Kelsey Centre Review Committee specifically what they want from the SRD.

CARRIED

MOTION C25/38
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT Staff develop a 50/50 funding model minus grants between the SRD and the Village of Sayward.

Opposed Mayor Baker, Cllr Coates, Cllr Johnson **DEFEATED**

MOTION C25/39
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT Staff develop a 50/50 funding model with the Village of Sayward and the Strathcona Regional District, minus any grants that either entity can put in, for the operations and capital costs of the Kelsey Centre pool and recreation centre.

Opposed Cllr Coates, Cllr Johnson **CARRIED**

MOTION C25/40
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT council receives this report for information

CARRIED

MOTION C25/41
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT Staff provide the SRD's Kelsey Centre Review Committee with their required information.

CARRIED

12. New Business - None

13. Public Question Period

a) Gerald Whalley, Area A Director of the Strathcona Regional District provided clarification regarding SRD procedures and said that this must be a single participant

service not a joint service agreement. Joint service agreements are only applicable when assets are jointly owned. He also advised that once the requested information is presented to the SRD's Kelsey Centre Review Committee, they will get a firm dollar value that the village is asking for. The committee would then make recommendations to the Strathcona Regional District Board. The Board would then make a motion to proceed, likely with an AAP (Alternate Approval Process) for SRD residents to support or not. Therefore, there is no room for negotiation. Mr. Whalley asked if the proposed 50/50 split of costs is for just the pool or the whole Kelsey Centre.

Mayor Baker replied that the 50/50 split would apply to the entire Kelsey Centre.

CAO Thomas added that the financial analysis of the information provided by the village with be done by the SRD's staff. An AAP is not a referendum or a plebiscite, it is an approval process that SRD constituents vote on with the baseline assumption that it is supported unless they indicate otherwise.

b) David Malinski of 431 MacMillan Drive asked if School District 72 provides any funds towards the pool, and that this is a revenue source that should be examined.

CAO Thomas advised that all sources of revenue are reflected in the financial plan documents.

c) Art Bowbrick of 77 Kelsey Lane observed that the Kelsey Centre is where people go during an emergency, and this has been left out of the discussion. If we have an emergency plan, the Kelsey Centre must be open for this purpose. Mr. Bowbrick remembers the Sayward flood of 1975. He said we should learn from that experience and is hopeful this can be figured out.

CAO Thomas clarified that the Kelsey Centre is to remain open, and the pool is closed temporarily.

d) Don Malcomson of 870 Sayward Road wondered if the cost sharing of the Kelsey Centre be a set dollar value rather than a percentage as Mr. Whalley suggested that a dollar amount might be a better idea.

CAO Thomas explained that a percentage is better because annual costs will change and if it is set at a dollar value any costs above that value would be carried solely by the village.

e) Aide Cruize of 461 MacMillan Drive explained that she is a newcomer to Sayward village and one of the reasons she moved here was that the Kelsey Centre provided a facility that fulfills the needs of her two boys under 12 years old. She also asked how Council plans to raise the millions of dollars that are needed. She told Council to not give residents false hope that the pool will re-open.

Mayor Baker said that there is currently no plan on how to raise $4 million by 2044, but that the plan is not to raise taxes by 123%.

Cllr Johnson said that this is a terribly complex issue with many tough decisions and many moving parts. He said this is not just a Kelsey Centre discussion, which runs a deficit, but that water and sewer are pressing issues also in the millions of dollars.

Cllr Burchett explained that certain revenue such as the gas tax and grants, not just tax dollars, all help pay for capital projects.

Cllr Poulsen said that the deficit each year is partially paid from reserves that are all but used up, as well as other grants. We are not looking at paying $20 million dollars back in 2044. The reason for going to the SRD is to share the cost of the Kelsey Centre with the residents of the Sayward Valley.

CAO Thomas said the SRD did a feasibility study on recreation for all municipalities within the SRD. Most of the regional models for recreation Vancouver Island are done with a regional model with co-owners. The Village of Sayward is the sole owner of the Kelsey Centre. This building serves the region, so why can't we have a regional funding model where everyone contributes to it, rather than shutting it all down.

f) Ellie Sampson of 710 Sayward Road said she has lived here for 5 years and waited 40 years to retire here. The primary reason Ms. Sampson lives here is because of the Kelsey Centre and the pool. It has proved an asset and her mobility has improved. Last year she won the challenge with the most pool lengths swam, ever, at 1545 lengths. As a retired person she does not encourage her friends to come here because it's not going to provide a good lifestyle. Perhaps look at Mental Health, Health and Wellness, Participation Canada to find money to keep the pool. Her question is why after 40+ years of it functioning, why is it not now?

Cllr Johnson said there is no argument about the absolute significance of the Kelsey Centre and pool. It is an emergency shelter and gathering place. We have been living on a credit card; we are in situation critical. We have major challenges right now and there are no easy decisions. We must find a model and there's not much time to do it.

g) Irene Callaghan of 230 Kelsey Way agreed that the Kelsey Centre is needed but the sewer and water infrastructure must be done. She has asked to have her sewer cleaned out and it has backed up four times. To Ms. Callaghan, sewer and water is the most important thing in this community. She asked what is going to happen to this building during an earthquake. She said there is no point putting money into the Kelsey Centre if it is not earthquake safe. Port Hardy shut their pool down for 2 years until they had enough money to reopen it.

h) Cassie Schmidt of 437 Community Road said she is an employee of the Kelsey Centre but that if she doesn't have a job at the pool, she will find another way to serve her community. She inquired that as a valley property owner, if we vote to contribute to the Kelsey Centre, is it possible that you could still vote to keep the pool closed.

Cllr Burchett responded, "not me".

Mayor Baker said that no, if the SRD and Area A contribute to the Kelsey Centre, they would not vote to keep the pool closed.

i) David Malinski of 431 MacMillan Drive had questions regarding the Asset Management Report, confirming that priority class 1 is the highest level. His estimation is that those three items total $876,500 of which there are two C.O.F. (consequences of failure). Mr. Malinski asked if these are the lift stations mentioned earlier. He said that entire section

is approx. $4 million and including replacement of Rescue #33. Mr. Malinski said SVRS has committed to tens of thousands of dollars towards Rescue #33 replacement and it's in discussion with the SRD. He also said Fire Engine #3 is currently out of service due to maintenance issues and is 104% of its lifespan. Mr. Malinski asked what the numbers mean beside the municipal owned buildings. He asked what the current asset value is and if this is a replacement number for the buildings. Mr. Malinski is unclear on the village's bond status and suggested that a discussion be opened regarding bonds.

CFO Clark advised that the numbers reference project numbers taken from the Tangible Assets spreadsheet.

Cllr Johnson said that priority 3 items are not being addressed at this time and won't be considered until they become a priority 2 item.

CAO Thomas advised that the last column at the end of the spreadsheet identifies the estimated cost to replace the asset and that current value is subjective so would require an appraisal be done.

14. In Camera – None

15. Adjournment

MOTION C25/42
MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council for Wednesday March 19, 2025, be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06pm.

Original Signed

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Mayor

Original Signed

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Corporate Officer