



DISTRICT OF UCLUELET
Business License Public
Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2017

I. Call to order

Mayor St. Jacques called to order the Business License Public Meeting of the District of Ucluelet at 6:30pm on February 7, 2017 at Ucluelet Community Centre, 500 Matterson Drive.

II. Introduction

Mayor St. Jacques introduced the package of material available at the Public Meeting. Material was created in consultation with District staff, Council, and input received at the January 17, 2017 Business Licence Open House.

III. Review of presented information

Business License Fees

Mayor St. Jacques spoke to the proposed business license fees, as presented in the package of material. It was noted that a fee increase of 20% was applied to all businesses, giving an anticipated revenue increase from 2016 of \$13,957.80.

Mayor St. Jacques opened the floor to questions. Questions and comments received, as follows¹:

INQUIRY	RESPONSE
What will additional revenue be used for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No increase to fees in 13 years • Will apply towards full time bylaw officer • Will give \$30,000 to Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce
What revenue source paid for past bylaw officers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Came from general revenue (property taxes)
Why not paying for current bylaw officer from property taxes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional revenue not enough to cover position, so will also be drawing from property taxes (and

¹ Discussions captured are a high-level summary of conversations had during the meeting, and do not intend to reflect true dialogue. Housekeeping and non-relevant conversations are not included in these minutes.

	other sources, including small craft harbour)
<p>Is the District selling dog licences? Potential revenue from collecting on unlicensed dogs. Would like bylaw reviewed to be more enforceable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District is selling dog licenses • Heard at last public meeting about need for animal control; full-time position potentially has more time to respond to these issues • Balancing act in rural community between control and free-running dogs
<p>Has bylaw notice enforcement been considered (instead of municipal ticketing information) to avoid court?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering both; also reviewing potential for regional bylaw court to expedite process
<p>Concerned with taking revenue from small craft harbour – what portion of revenue will be reallocated?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not determined, but will be proportionate to the amount of time bylaw position spends in small craft harbour
<p>What percentage will be allocated to property taxes for collection (to support the bylaw position)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial plan process is still incomplete, so it is not yet determined
<p>What can be done to correct the disparity between business owners who run their business out of their home versus those who rent their business locations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners may up their rents to reflect any increases to their bills or taxes (up to them) • Council still in financial planning process, so final cost increase are not yet determined (e.g. a project may be dropped instead of an increase)
<p>Will there still be a discount for businesses who pay their licenses early?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No; this is being removed
<p>Will there be opportunity for a reduced rate for those who own more than one business (in one location)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea did arise at last public meeting • Could be issues with increased complexity for bylaw inspection • Currently feel increases are manageable and would like to try them, hoping businesses (and home-based businesses) will still be encouraged to be legal

<p>Do out of town businesses now require a license to operate in town?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All businesses working in town have always required licenses • Encourage business community to ask for proof of business license before hiring
<p>How will illegal out of town businesses be tracked down?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaw position will be responsible • 2016 paid business license list is now on the District website
<p>Is there option to have out of town businesses pay more than local businesses (to support local)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province will not allow the District to discriminate
<p>Is there any kind of incentive that can be offered for local businesses to help them be competitive?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce is the business community’s voice; used to run visitor services but Tourism Ucluelet has taken on that function to allow Chamber to fully devote itself to business lobbying and support • Business community can help each other “try home first”
<p>Why does \$30,000 go to the Chamber of Commerce? Does Council know what those funds will be used for?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-standing arrangement with the District, where Chamber in the past received 40% of business license revenues (amounted to about \$24,000) • Amount has been increased this year to \$30,000 to support the Chamber in their transition year • Next year, funds may go to another economic group or endeavour that will support the business community • Council has access to the Chamber’s budget
<p>Can any of Tourism Ucluelet’s budget go toward bylaw position?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Ucluelet is funded through Province by the 2% hotel tax imposed here; their mandate is tourism marketing and improving tourism economy • Province would not permit funds to be used for bylaw position (out of scope)
<p>How will the bylaw position address the problems that accompany</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Community Plan speaks to community’s direction in these areas

transients and tourists in town (e.g. illegal camping, public urination)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will refer the public to the bylaw strategy coming up for answers on priorities
Does the District permit multi-municipal business licences? Is there a possibility to create one just with Tofino?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District has researched the idea and rejected it, as it was not financially viable • District of Tofino was not interested in the idea in prior conversations

Councillor McEwen noted that Council would review the revenue generated by the bylaw enforcement process (ticketing and fine collection) at the end of the first year.

Councillor Noël noted the intent to change business license billing cycle from May to May was in recognition of comments received by Council that businesses are in a better position to pay bills during the summer months. Also, the ‘per unit’ fees were removed to create an even playing field for businesses and to prevent “punishing success”.

Bylaw Enforcement Strategy

Mayor St. Jacques introduced the proposed bylaw enforcement strategy, with tiers of priorities.

Mayor St. Jacques opened the floor to questions. Questions and comments received, as follows²:

INQUIRY	RESPONSE
How will business inspections work for mobile businesses, who can only be found at job sites?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bylaw strategy intent is to be fluid • With only one position, will rely on tours of town and complaints received
How will bylaw position distinguish licensed businesses from unlicensed businesses (citing mobile businesses)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge difficulty • Bylaw position would pick up through patrols and tips from the public • Businesses should have proof of license on them at all times
If illegal short term rental issues are sorted out, will that make business inspection and enforcement easier?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District planning to pursue assistance to help with the short term rental issue (a software used successfully in Tofino to identify short term rentals)

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<p>Suggestion to remind property owners that their short term rentals need business licenses by inserting a notice in with property tax bills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment received
<p>How does licensing work for a place like Whiskey landing?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When units are individually owned, each owner is required to have a license • Note that this area is non-residential (commercially zoned)
<p>Happy to hear work being done on illegal short term rentals; it is very hard to find a place to live in the long term in Ucluelet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&B's are allowed in residential areas; guest houses are special • Common in Ucluelet to rent out to supplement income
<p>What is the rule about vacation rentals, where no owner or manager lives on site?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no empty house vacation rentals allowed in Ucluelet • Violations can be reported to the District
<p>If a landlord does not properly upkeep a property, could that potentially prohibit the tenant (business owner) from getting a business licence?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not out to put anyone out of business • Can speak to the District to get clarity on building and bylaw situation
<p>Happy to have bylaw; issues for businesses and residents are tourists who urinate/defecate in the open, sleep in ditches, cook on public streets, steal firewood from homes, etc.</p> <p>Can the District tow or seize vehicles?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism always brings issues to town • It is a cat-and-mouse game for bylaw enforcement, chasing same people around • Try to encourage tourists to use campgrounds • District can tow vehicles when warranted and able • Encourage people to report crimes to RCMP
<p>Litter is impacting the town; also shocked by type of litter seen (needles, cigarette butts, packages with "white powders"); perhaps business owners can help keep their areas clean, lessen burden on District staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment received, will look at this
<p>Any allocation being made by District for more public toilets?</p> <p>Trouble area includes people disembarking from Tofino bus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public washrooms available at the Aquarium, Chamber building, Tugwell fields

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May just need better signage; no immediate solution planned, but are working on it • Chamber is working on making their washroom accessible from the outside
What happens if illegal businesses don't comply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute fines, and if need be, go to court
Has Ucluelet ever implemented a neighbourhood watch program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not aware if there has in the past • If community is interested in assisting bylaw through a group watch, sounds like a good idea
Does the bylaw officer position make recommendations on the fees, fines, or any related bylaws? Who looks over bylaws and checks them for fairness and improvements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, they just enforce • Various ways to trigger a review of a bylaw: issues that arise, public brings something forward, Council identifies it in strategic planning, internal staff reviews, Provincial legislation changes, etc.
Does the bylaw officer deal with prosecutions? Are costs incurred to go to court recovered there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends, position may be called upon as a witness, or may just be CAO or CFO who does it • Can try to recover costs, but it depends on the judge and situation
With business licences going up 20%, will the remaining funds needed be borne through property taxes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends; Council has not yet completed the budget process, they may increase taxes or cut a project
Why did the community stop having a bylaw officer in the past?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was a decision of a past Council
Moving forward, is there a strategy to budget for the bylaw officer position so that it isn't funded largely from taxes? Should [the public] expect another increase?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will review how much revenue was brought in at the end of the year • Council currently discussing tax increase for 2017 for other purposes, e.g. reserve accounts
How long are policies in place for? Is there any protection preventing a future Council from taking away the bylaw position?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council working to develop policy to account for District expenses like aging infrastructure, sewer lagoon repair, requests for new parks, etc. • Council does need some flexibility to make exceptions for issues that arise

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new Councils re-look at District policies; nothing prevents them from making changes
Is the District required to follow its own rules and regulations? Who does one report the District to if they break their own rules?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can send emails with questions or concerns to info@ucluelet.ca, these go to Council • Council works directly (and only) with their CAO, who manages the organization's staff
Is it possible to apply for a business licence online? And pay online with a credit card (or call one in)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently working on these kinds of improvements
What do businesses do right now until May deadline comes? Can we do business? What about new businesses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses that are approved may run their business; only thing on hold is the receipt of payment • New businesses can still apply for a license and receive approval
If a B&B with an out of town owner is run by a manager, all the money taken in goes out of town and stays out of town, which doesn't contribute to the community – can there be a time limit on these managers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has not come up in discussions • The manager is needed to deal with the tenants/guests, and this position also creates employment in town

IV. Adjournment

Mayor St. Jacques adjourned the meeting at 8:49 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Morgan Dosedall, Deputy Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved by: Andrew Yeates, Chief Administrative Officer