

DATE: August 09, 2018**FILE:** 4200-20/Referenda**TO:** Chair and Directors
Committee of the Whole**FROM:** Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative OfficerSupported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer*R. Dyson***RE: Public Opinion Question on Governance Structure Review**

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the responses received to the board initiative to seek support from Comox Valley local governments to pose a non-binding community opinion question on a proposed governance structure study.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

None. This report is provided for information only.

Executive Summary

At the June 26, 2018 regular meeting, the board endorsed the following resolution:

THAT the councils for the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and the Village of Cumberland and the Electoral Areas Services Committee be requested to consider including the following non-binding question on their ballots on October 20, 2018:

"Are you in favour of conducting a study, in partnership with the Province of BC, to review the governance structures and policies of (insert local government name here) and other local governments within the Comox Valley to consider the feasibility and implications of restructure?"

YES or NO

AND FINALLY THAT up to \$10,000 from the Comox Valley Regional District's member municipalities and electoral areas administration services be used to support the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce in promoting awareness and a clear understanding about this referendum.

Following the board's decision, letters were sent to the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and the Comox Valley Regional District's Electoral Areas Services Committee requesting their consideration of adding the above-noted question to their ballots for the 2018 local government elections.

Responses from each respective jurisdiction have now been received and are provided in Appendix A of this report. The responses indicate that only the City of Courtenay has agreed to pose this question on their 2018 election ballot.

As the proposed initiative does not require elector assent, the board may still at a future date consider any direction or other involvement in this initiative.

Prepared by:

J. Martens

Jake Martens
Manager of Legislative Services

Concurrence:

C. Wile

Christianne Wile
Acting General Manager of
Corporate Services

Attachments: Appendix A – “Correspondence received in response letters re: governance structure study”

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Toll free: 1-800-331-6007
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4200-20

July 27, 2018

Sent via email: jmartens@comoxvalleyrd.ca

Board of Directors
Comox Valley Regional District
600 Comox Road,
Courtenay, BC V9N 3P6

Dear Chair Jolliffe:

Re: Non-Binding Community Opinion Question – Governance Restructure Study

On behalf of the Electoral Areas Services Committee, I am writing in response to your letter dated June 29, 2018 regarding a request to include a non-binding community opinion question on Electoral Areas A, B and C ballots for the 2018 general local elections.

Your request was considered by the Electoral Areas Services Committee at the July 9, 2018 meeting and the following resolution was endorsed:

“THAT the Electoral Areas Services Committee will not include the governance restructure study question on its ballots and will not provide any funds from its Electoral Areas Administration Services fund for such a question.”

Thank you for forwarding this request for our consideration.

Sincerely,

E. Grieve

Edwin Grieve
Chair, Electoral Areas Services Committee



TOWN OF COMOX

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

File No: 2370-40

August 8, 2018

Mr. Bruce Jolliffe, Board Chair
Comox Valley Regional District
600 Comox Road
Courtenay BC V9N 3P6

Dear Mr. Jolliffe:

Thank you for your June 29, 2018 letter advising of the resolution adopted by the Comox Valley Regional District Board, regarding its request for the Town of Comox to consider including the following non-binding question on our 2018 municipal election ballot:

“Are you in favour of conducting a study, in partnership with the Province of BC, to review the governance structures and policies of the Town of Comox and other local governments within the Comox Valley to consider the feasibility and implications of restructure?” YES or NO

Please be advised that the Council of the Town of Comox carefully considered this request at its Regular Meeting of August 1, 2018. While there was much discussion regarding the issue, Council felt that there was not enough information at this point in order to move forward with adding the question to the municipal election ballot on October 20, 2018.

While no resolution was passed with respect to this issue, it was felt by members of Council that this is an important issue that should continue to be clarified and explored in the future.

If you require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact Town staff or me at 250 339-2202.

Yours truly,

Paul Ives, Q.C.
Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



File No. 0400-61

July 12, 2018

B. Jolliffe, Chair
Comox Valley Regional District
600 Comox Road
Courtenay, BC V9N 3P6

Rec'd 20180717
File: 470-20/Cumberland
Directors correspondence site
J. Warren
R. Dyson

Dear Chair Jolliffe,

Thank you for your letter of June 29, 2018 regarding the request from the Board to consider placing a non-binding community opinion question on a Comox Valley governance restructure study on the October 2018 local general election ballot for the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, and the Electoral Areas.

As you are aware, Cumberland Council has been consistent and unanimous in its opposition to the proposal since the initiative began in 2015. Council considered this most recent request at its meeting on July 9, 2018 and determined that the Village will not include a question on a governance study on the fall ballot. I feel that is important to note that while the Village values its autonomy to govern and to determine community planning and service provision, we feel very fortunate to participate in regional services and maintain contracts and agreements with the Comox Valley Regional District and the City of Courtenay for the provision of services that are mutually beneficial to all parties.

As the Village remains opposed to a restructure, Council also has concerns about the provision of \$10,000 to the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce to promote awareness of the governance review. This concern arises from the fact that the Chamber is a known advocate of governance restructure in the Comox Valley and is not an impartial party to the process. Further, it is felt that the Chamber is an unsuitable organization to publicize such a ballot question as it represents business interested in the Valley. Providing funding

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Village of Cumberland

July 12, 2018

to the Chamber could be perceived as providing assistance to business interests. It is an unsuitable allocation of funds, the task which would be better undertaken by the Regional District itself. I would ask that the Board reconsider its premature and injudicious approval of this expenditure from the general administration service fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with Council's position in this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Leslie Baird
Mayor

From: Ward, John
To: [Jake Martens](#)
Cc: [Sorichta, Wendy](#)
Subject: Ballot Question
Date: Thursday, August 02, 2018 8:51:58 AM

Jake, please be advised that at its regular meeting held July 16, 2018 Council passed the following resolution:

“That Council support the non-binding community opinion question to consider a governance restructure study for Comox Valley local governments as posed in the June 19, 2018 correspondence received from the Comox Valley Regional District; and

That the question:

*“Are you in favour of conducting a study, in partnership with the Province of BC, to review the governance structures and policies of the City of Courtenay and other local governments within the Comox Valley to consider the feasibility and implications of restructure?”
YES or NO”*

Be included on the October 20, 2018 local government general election ballot.”

Thanks

John Ward, CMC
Director of Legislative & Corporate Services
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
City of Courtenay
Tel. 250-703-4853
jward@courtenay.ca | www.courtenay.ca

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