

## Speakers' Series on Civic Leadership

### Course Descriptions

#### **Introductory Session** – Tuesday, April 24, 2018 (Mandatory) – Carrie Chassels

This session will provide an overview of the topics and issues that will be covered in the four main learning sessions of the Civic Leadership pilot initiative. Participants will review and discuss the broad range of key competencies and qualifications that contribute to the characteristics of effective councillors that enable a productive council. With the aid of a self-assessment tool, potential candidates will be guided through an evaluation of their readiness to become an effective elected civic leader.

#### **Session 1: Day-to-day Duties of a Council Member** – Tuesday, May 1, 2018 - Al Kenning, Gary Weikum, Brian Clemens

This session will offer an overview of the essential and basic duties of a council member. Participants will gain an understanding of the many competing priorities council members face, the decision-making process and Council's relationship with the City Manager and with staff. Two fundamental areas that are crucial to a council member's role will be featured: planning and budget responsibilities.

**Municipal planning** - This section will provide an introduction to the framework for planning, an overview of major municipal planning documents and the processes used for adoption and implementation. Learn how planning is used to create bylaws that regulate day-to-day development and resident behaviour as well as create a long-term vision for the community. A range of matters will be covered, including: land use, social issues, community services, heritage resources, environmental health, economic development, traffic and parking management, and infrastructure.

**Municipal finance** - This section will help participants to understand where the City of Nanaimo's money comes from, where it goes, and what a councillor should know when reviewing and discussing budgets and property taxation. Municipal finance can be complicated, even for people who are used to dealing with budgets and financial information. Participants will learn how to navigate the City of Nanaimo's website to access and decipher a wealth of financial information and key financial documents.

#### **Session 2: Roles and Responsibilities of Elected Officials** – Thursday, May 3, 2018 - Allison Habkirk

This session aims to explain the role of elected officials in our system of local government in B.C. Participants will gain an understanding of their role and responsibilities, which will support them in becoming an effective elected official. This session will touch on:

- the roles and responsibilities of local government elected officials;
- the authorities and powers that underpin the work of Council;
- the limitations and checks and balances on council's authority;
- the relationships with, and accountabilities to, other governments and agencies and the public;
- the role of staff in our council-manager system;
- the commitment associated with swearing the oath of office.

**Session 3: Communications and Outreach** – Monday, May 7, 2018 - Kim Smythe, Gary Weikum

The first section of this session will begin with a definition of stakeholders and community partners and various considerations for elected leaders and their administrators to communicate with them effectively. The section will emphasize that these communications only work when information is shared between all parties in a continuum of communications. Setting the foundation for a shared vision and goals is essential to initiating communications more likely to result in satisfying progress for both parties.

This second portion of this session will examine the continuum of public engagement processes that are available to municipal government to meet community needs and expectations. The pros and cons of various approaches will be examined with the goal to match an appropriate participation strategy with identified community issues and expectations. Public participation in civic affairs is an important expectation and foundation of our democratic system and of responsible governance, making it critical that Council understand the scope of an initiative, identify potential stakeholders and the appropriate level of public participation.

**Session 4: Enabling a Productive Council** – Wednesday, May 9, 2018 – Patrick Ross

This session will explore new ideas and strategies to enhance participants' leadership capacities with a view to better understanding how effective leadership enables a productive and collaborative council. Fundamental leadership skills, such as communication, managing differences and disagreements, and co-creating a shared purpose to bring people together will be covered in an engaging and provocative session.