

NEWS RELEASE

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Nanaimo's Voice at UBCM Gets Stronger

Summary

Last week, members of Nanaimo's City Council attended the 2019 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention, held in Vancouver. The UBCM Convention is an annual event that provides local governments, from across the province, the opportunity to gather, share their experiences, and take a united position on issues impacting their communities. Through panel discussions, meetings with provincial ministers, and endorsement of Resolutions; creation of new policies, both at the local and provincial levels of government, can occur to strengthen local governments.

During the 116th UBCM Convention, Nanaimo City Council brought forward Resolutions, were panelists speaking about the environment and social issues, and so much more:

Nanaimo City Council on Panels

- Wednesday, September 25, 2019 - Ship-source Oil Pollution: Compensation 101: Mayor Leonard Krog
- Thursday, September 26, 2019 - Tackling the Housing Crisis through Leadership & Co-Creation: Councillor Erin Hemmens

Nanaimo Council's UBCM Resolutions Focus on Enhancing Strategic Themes: Environmental Responsibility, Governance Excellence, and Economic Health

- Governance Excellence:
 - **(Endorsed)** Resolution B124, Property Taxation: Amendment to Section 193 of the *Community Charter* to allow municipalities to adjust their property tax rates by setting density brackets in their jurisdiction, to use at their discretion, as an incentive to reduce urban sprawl and as a method of assigning infrastructure and maintenance costs more accurately amongst end users.
 - Resolution C19, Development Cost Charges: the provincial government amend the Local Government Act to allow for the imposition of Development Cost Charges in areas other than sewage, water, drainage, highway facilities and park land.

- Environmental Responsibility:
 - Resolution B157, Indoor Agricultural Fertilization Practices: the provincial government to explore including in the BC Agricultural Best Practices, the requirement for closed loop greenhouse irrigation systems in commercial greenhouse and indoor agricultural structures, to prevent commercial fertilizers from being emitted into the environment.
 - Resolution B169, Low Impact Foundation Systems for Farm Use Structures: the provincial government to encourage the use of low carbon, low impact, cement-free foundation technologies for farm use structures and buildings within the ALR, thereby reducing the deposition of fill material and elimination of arable soil capability in the long term.
- Economic Health:
 - **(Endorsed)** Resolution B167, Cannabis Plants on the Agricultural Land Reserve: please note there were a number of requests for consideration, including that the provincial government amend the ALR Regulation in order to clarify the interpretation of section 2(2.5) of the ALR Regulation regarding the lawful production of cannabis “inside a structure (a) that has a base consisting entirely of soil”, and clarify that when producing cannabis in a greenhouse, it has the same meaning as “Greenhouse” under section 2(o)(i) of the Regulation. Circumscribing cannabis production in structures that are lawful by regulation for all other crops, may not withstand judicial review.

Please note that due to time constraints, resolutions [B169 to B193.1 in Section B – Part 3-b](#), were referred to the UBCM Executive.

Government Advocacy

City of Nanaimo Council also met with provincial ministers and senior government staff to discuss mental health and addictions as well as transportation related-matters impacting the City:

- Monday, September 23, 2019: met with the President and CEO of Island Health, Kathy MacNeil as well as the Board Chair, Leah Hollins.
- Tuesday, September 24, 2019: met with the Honourable Judy Darcy, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.
- Thursday, September 26, 2019: met with the Honourable Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and infrastructure.

Mayor Krog was also interviewed by a number of media outlets such as [CBC News](#) and the [Vancouver Sun](#) on compassion fatigue as it relates to homelessness and mental health.

Nanaimo Takes Seat at the UBCM Executive Table

Congratulations to Councillor Ben Geselbracht who was elected as one of five (5) Directors at Large on the UBCM Executive. The members elect an Executive during the Convention to ensure the directions set by the general membership are carried forward. The UBCM Executive ensure the directions set by their colleagues at the 2019 UBCM convention are carried forward. They also provides direction to UBCM between Conventions.

Quotes

“Nearly one year since this Council got elected, our discussions and actions around climate change, social issues, and governance excellence has resulted in Nanaimo having a strong voice at a very important Convention. Senior government representatives heard loud and clear about the compassion fatigue our community is facing, how we need them to partner with communities like ours to address social issues and disorders, and how coastal communities need to be better protected, amongst many other topics. I am proud of this Council’s continued commitment to tackling some challenging matters facing our community and the world, one step at a time.”

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

“Our communities are being challenged by climate change, drug addiction, homelessness, and economic uncertainties. I am honoured to have been elected as a Director at Large on the UBCM Executive where I look forward to working on, and advocating for, policies and programs important to Nanaimo and the many communities throughout B.C.”

Ben Geselbracht
Councillor/UBCM Director at Large
City of Nanaimo

Links:

[2019 UBCM Convention Program](#)

[2019 UBCM Resolutions](#)

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