INAUGURAL MEETING OF TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Monday, November 2, 2026, at 7:00pm
Fraser River Presentation Theatre
4th Floor, 20338 – 65 Avenue, Langley, BC

M I N U T E S

PRESENT: Mayor J. Lundgren

Councillors L. Chalus, S. Ferguson, M. Kunst, B. Martens, M. Pratt, K. Richter, T. Townsley, and B. Whitmarsh

C. Kooner, S. Richardson, S. Ruff, A. Ruhl, and J. Winslade

W. Bauer and V. Burnett

Township Clerk Wendy Bauer called the meeting to order.

OFFICIAL PIPING IN OF COUNCIL ELECT AND OFFICIALS

The Mayor-Elect and Councillors-Elect were piped into the Presentation Theatre by Colin Barrett, accompanied by an Honour Guard consisting of Township of Langley Firefighters, Captain Jason Linn and Captain Peter Nicol, and RCMP Constables, Talbot McNutt and Dennis Bell.

A. NATIONAL ANTHEM

1. https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=589

"O Canada" was led by Janais Luciano of the Langley Community Music School.

B. OATH OF OFFICE

1. https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=778

The Honourable Judge James C. Henry administered the Oath of Office to Mayor-Elect Jay Lundgren and Councillors-Elect Kim Richter, Michael V. Pratt, Teresa Townsley, Margaret Kunst, Barb Martens, Lauren Chalus, Steve Ferguson, and Blair Whitmarsh.

Mayor Lundgren assumed the Chair.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLES

https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=1330

Mayor Lundgren acknowledged the Traditional Territories of the Coast Salish Peoples.

C. ACTING MAYOR APPOINTMENT

1. Acting Mayor Appointment

https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=1345

Moved by Councillor Martens,
Seconded by Councillor Kunst,
That the Acting Mayor be rotated amongst Councillors as follows:

NAME	FROM	TO
Councillor Kunst	November 2, 2026	January 31, 2027
Councillor Martens	February 1, 2027	April 30, 2027
Councillor Whitmarsh	May 1, 2027	July 31, 2027
Councillor Richter	August 1, 2027	October 31, 2027
Councillor Townsley	November 1, 2027	January 31, 2028
Councillor Chalus	February 1, 2028	April 30, 2028
Councillor Pratt	May 1, 2028	July 31, 2028
Councillor Ferguson	August 1, 2028	October 31, 2028
Councillor Kunst	November 1, 2028	January 31, 2029
Councillor Martens	February 1, 2029	April 30, 2029
Councillor Whitmarsh	May 1, 2029	July 31, 2029
Councillor Richter	August 1, 2029	October 31, 2029
Councillor Townsley	November 1, 2029	January 31, 2030
Councillor Chalus	February 1, 2030	April 30, 2030
Councillor Pratt	May 1, 2030	July 31, 2030
Councillor Ferguson	August 1, 2030	October 31, 2030

CARRIED

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

1. Councillor Blair Whitmarsh

https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=1399

Thank you to all the residents of Langley who voted in the recent election and took time to engage the electoral process by researching each of the candidates. I am humbled by the support that I received and I promise to do my best to lead with vision, passion, and integrity. I, along with other members of Langley Strong, promised to restore civic transparency, financial accountability, and community respect through a comprehensive campaign platform. The work on this platform begins today and you, the residents of Langley, are invited to be part of the community building that will take place over this four-year term.

This was my first re-election process as part of a coordinated team and there is no way I could have run this type of campaign on my own. Thanks to each member of the Langley Strong team for your dedication, passion, and the hard work that you each gave over the past months.
I am amazed at how old friends, new friends, and family came together to form a strong and dynamic team with a common purpose.

It would take too long to talk about each person from the team, but I want to highlight one member from the Langley Strong team who demonstrated true team spirit through his hard work and team dedication. Mr. Shumail Javed, who is seated here today, was tireless in his efforts to support Langley Strong and to be elected as a member of this council table. His efforts inspired me daily. Not only is Shumail an amazing member of our community as he serves in so many ways, but he has also become a good friend for me and my family.

The election road can be challenging and tiresome and I want to thank every person who put their name forward in this election. The democratic process was alive and well and that is something that we should all be proud of. I met many new people, made new friends, and I have respect for every person who put their name on the ballot in this election. I want to thank outgoing council members, Tim Baillie, Rob Rindt, and Eric Woodward, for the time they spent serving our community over the previous term.

Congratulations to each member of council for being elected and for your continued passion for the Township of Langley. Many different visions, ideas, and concepts were brought forward during the election for an improved community and the new Council is now tasked with moving forward with purpose and integrity. I am excited to work with each member of Council and the Township of Langley staff who have been so helpful during my time on Council.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

We have an incredibly talented and dedicated staff in the Township of Langley and I know that, given the support and opportunity to flourish, they will do amazing things for the betterment of our community. I am committed to listening, asking questions, and making decisions that best serve our community and residents.

Most of all, I would like to thank my wife Lorraine and immediate family, Karina, Brandon, Jolayne, Weston, Tana, Chad, and my nine grandchildren. They have provided inspiration, encouragement and personal sacrifice both during the election and the years I have served on Council. In addition, thanks to my Mom, sister Renai, brother in-law Atticus, and good friends Drew and Mary-Katherine for their continued support. Without the support from family and friends it would be impossible to run in an election and serve the community in an effective way.

Langley is truly a wonderful place to live and raise a family. I am excited for the opportunity to shape the future of Langley and to strategically guide the Township of today and tomorrow. A new path forward that every person in Langley can be proud of. I look forward to hearing from the community, working with members of this newly elected council, and supporting the outstanding men and women who work in the Township of Langley. Thank you.

2. Councillor Steve Ferguson
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=1681

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, friends, family members, and invited guests. First of all I want to thank the residents of Langley Township for electing me for this term. I am humbled and extremely honoured to sit here in chambers today! Langley Township is a wonderful community, I strongly believe it to be the most liveable community in our Metro Region - if not the entire province! I want to congratulate Mayor Jay Lundgren and his team for their successful election to our Langley Township Council, and all those who put their names forward. Running for public office is not an easy chore, it takes a lot of work and time. I also want to congratulate my colleague Councillor Michael Pratt for getting re-elected to Council as well. It has been a pleasure working with Councillors Tim Baillie and Rob Rindt in achieving many accomplishments with Mayor Eric Woodward. Roads, engineering projects, soccer, lacrosse, hockey, BMX, and other recreation items. Myself and the Mayor with Metro MFA regional parks, regional recycling at a $21 million project, exciting times for the future for Langley Township.

Thank you to my family: Lydia, Matt, Alexander, Sarah, Will, and my granddaughter Victoria. And of course the hardest working person in my campaign, my lovely wife Denise. I couldn't do it without her - all these years, all these elections. Agreeing on some things, definitely disagreeing on others. Love you honey and many, many thanks for all your support.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

I have worked with six mayors and Mayor Lundgren will be my seventh. Mayor John Beales (my first mayor…I learned a lot from him). Although John has passed away, I have these memories of him:

"Well, I asked a lot of questions at council meetings, extended the meeting quite a few times…went up in his airplane with him, he was also a pilot. Shortest trip I have ever been on (5 minutes…up lost power…glided done…straight to the shop). I presented a motion to council "that a road be named after Mayor Beales at the airport"….The John Beales Way. I was able to speak with his son Barry Beales today about a number of things regarding his dad. Barry Beales had this to say about that! The right way the wrong way….the John Beales Way.

Mayor John Scholtens. (Actually gave me a Deputy Mayor position…lasted a few months until the rest of council voted me down). Oh well. Back to my first election. Actually John's wife Fanny (a fellow Otter Co-op board Member) said Steve; "I think you should run for council" so I did…and I won. I asked Mayor Scholtens for a quote: this is what he said: Steve you are. "The most enthusiastic, exciting, and infectious councillor I has ever worked with". Certainly humbled by that quote. Thank you Mayor John.

When asking Mayor Kurt Alberts, he sent me clipping of elections and happenings back in 1988. The 200th street overpass and other functions in the community. Kurt was (along with the 3 amigos) very instrumental in the building of the Langley Events Centre. "Steve, in 1988 you were Alderman Steve Ferguson, I was Planning Director, and we had to fight with the province to get traffic lights on 200th street and Willowbrook Drive. In 2002 you were the comeback kid as an Independent! The ever-changing face of Langley but it comes down to serving the Community in the best way you can!"

When asking Mayor Rick Green, he was the mayor for the official opening of the Golden Ears bridge joining the two communities of Langley and Maple Ridge! (A big deal). His direct quote: "Mayor Green was responsible for the uncovering of a previously unknown Master Agreement to reactivate the Interurban with passenger rail between the Old Pattulo Bridge and the City of Chilliwack, something he and their society are still hard at work on!" Something I fully support.

Mayor Jack Froese. I was unable to get a direct quote from Mayor Froese. I worked with Mayor Froese at Metro Vancouver and remember the challenge of finally getting the correct Langley wording and zoning requirements for the Regional Growth Plan. Metro took Langley Township to court but by no means was it easy. It was a land use challenge and Langley Township won twice in court under appeal! Jack loved parades and had a saying: "Can't have a parade without the mayor". He was responsible for the Aldergrove Community Centre, New Pool, and Water experience.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

Mayor Eric Woodward. I was on the 2018 council with Eric under Mayor Froese's term. Had the opportunity to work with him on budgets and important capital matters within the Township. I learned that we had much in common and we formed a team in 2022. He was elected Mayor and focused on 208 Street, Fraser Highway, major roads, recreation, and other things. It was an honour to work with Eric on these projects.

Now Mayor Lundgren….the future awaits you. I will always make myself available for you and look forward to working with you.

I put before you a proclamation with a hat work by the former Chief of Justice Begbie: I put before you that Stephen James Ferguson, on this 2nd day of November in the year of our lord 2026, has officially become the longest serving Township of Langley Councillor in the community's history by beginning his 10th term! And as evidenced by records of the Township of Langley archives:

- 1987-1996
- 2002-2014
- 2018-2026

And as also evidenced by seal of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities dated September 25, 2025, and signed by the president (Trish Mandeo), and executive Director (Gary McIsaac).
I proclaim this to be true and accurate, signed Steven J. Ferguson. Thank you Mr. Mayor, I wish you well.

3. Councillor Lauren Chalus
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=2142

Good evening, family, friends, and members of our community.

Being here today is both an incredible honour and a responsibility I do not take lightly.

I want to start by thanking the residents of the Township of Langley for placing their trust in me and giving me the opportunity to serve the community I am so proud to call home.

I also want to thank my husband, family, and friends for all the support that you gave me during this campaign, and to our Langley Strong team.

When I made the decision to run for Council, it wasn't because I had always envisioned a future in politics. It was because I care deeply about this community, the direction we're heading, and the future we're leaving behind.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

As a younger member of Council, I bring the perspective of a generation that is looking ahead and thinking about where we will raise our families and whether we can afford to stay in the community we grew up in and love.

But looking forward also means remembering where we came from. Langley's history, agricultural roots, unique neighbourhoods, and the generations who built this community deserve our respect and protection.

Throughout our campaign, Langley Strong spoke about restoring respect. To me, that starts right here, at this Council table. It means listening with an open mind, making thoughtful and responsible decisions, and remembering that public service is about the people we represent.

I am excited to bring my experience, young energy, and perspective to this role, and to work collaboratively with my colleagues to make a meaningful difference.

Because the Langley we build today is the Langley future generations will call home.

Thank you!

4. Councillor Barb Martens
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=2264

Thank you, and good evening.

First, I'd like to congratulate our new Mayor Jay Lundgren and my fellow councillors. It's an honour to be sitting around this table with you, and I look forward to what we can accomplish together.

I'd also like to acknowledge our outgoing Mayor and councillors and thank them for their service to the Township.

To the residents of the Township of Langley, thank you for placing your trust in me for another four years. Being re-elected means a great deal to me, and I don't take that trust or the responsibility that comes with it lightly.

And to my family Matt, Abby, Amaya, and my friends Steve and Heather Wade, my fellow Rotarians, and the many volunteers who supported us along the way, thank you. Elections are a lot of work, and I certainly didn't get here on my own.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

Four years ago, I came to this Council table with a long career in public service behind me and a genuine desire to make a difference in my community.

I thought I knew a thing or two about public service. And then I got elected to municipal Council!

It's fair to say I've learned a lot.

There have been successes, challenges and some difficult moments. But those experiences have made me a better councillor and reinforced why I wanted to serve in the first place.

I've long admired the work of Brené Brown, and one of her quotes has particular meaning for me:

"Integrity is choosing courage over comfort."

Those few words say so much.

Because sometimes public service requires us to ask uncomfortable questions, make difficult decisions and stand by what we believe is right, even when it would be easier not to.

But I've also learned that courage and respect must go hand in hand. Standing firm in our convictions doesn't mean closing our minds to another perspective.

And that's the spirit I intend to bring to this next term of Council.

Throughout the election campaign, I spoke often about restoring respect.

Respect for our residents. Respect for the unique communities that make up our Township. Respect for our neighbours and community partners. And respect for one another around this Council table.

I believe we have an opportunity to set a new tone.

That doesn't mean we'll always agree. In fact, I hope we don't always agree. Good questions, healthy debate and different perspectives lead to better decisions.

But we can disagree without being disagreeable. We can challenge ideas without making things personal. And we can remember that every one of us was elected because we care about this community.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

We have important work ahead.

Our Township is growing, and with that growth comes responsibility. We need to make thoughtful decisions about infrastructure, public safety and how we spend taxpayers' money. We need to focus on needs before wants, be transparent about our decisions and ensure our communities have a voice in shaping their future.

And we need to rebuild and strengthen relationships, because we'll accomplish far more by working together than by working apart.

I've spent much of my life in public service, and one thing I've learned is that leadership isn't about having all the answers. It's about listening, asking the hard questions and being accountable for the decisions we make.

As I begin my second term, my commitment remains the same.

I will show up. I will do the work. I will ask the hard questions. And I will always remember that I am here to represent all residents of the Township of Langley.

I'm grateful for the lessons of the past four years, but I'm even more hopeful about the four years ahead.

We have an opportunity to turn the page, restore respect and get on with the important business of serving our community.

And I am ready to get to work. Thank you.

5. Councillor Margaret Kunst
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=2503

Good evening everyone. To the residents of the Township of Langley, thank you for once again placing your trust in me, and giving me the opportunity to serve you for another four years, it is a privilege I don't take for granted. After months of door knocking, attending all candidates' meetings, and giving more speeches than I care to count, I wondered what I could possibly say tonight that you haven't already heard, so ill just speak from my heart.

The last four years have not been a picnic, but then again, I didn't sign up to go on picnics. I signed up to make tough decisions, tackle the challenges we face, and help guide the township into the future. After eight years on council I know this work isn't always easy, but it's meaningful and worth doing. When people ask me why I would consider doing another four years, my answer always comes back to the people.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

Ive lived in Langley my entire life. I grew up here, and now have the privilege of watching my grandchildren grow up here too. If there's one thing I've come to appreciate over these past eight years, it's the importance of relationships. Relationships with the residents who trust us to represent them, and the people who volunteer, run businesses, support their neighbours, and contribute so much to our community. Ive also learned that some of the most meaningful work you do as a councillor happens outside of council chambers. Sometimes its as simple as responding to a residents concern, making a phone call, or connecting someone with the right person who can help. These may seem like small things, but to the people involved they can make a real difference.

As we begin this new term, I want to congratulate our new Mayor Jay Lundgren, and my fellow councillors Barb Martens, Blair Whitmarsh, Kim Richter, Teresa Townsley, Lauren Chalus, Michael Pratt, and Steve Ferguson. I look forward to working alongside each of you as we make decisions that will shape our Township's future. I'd also like to acknowledge my colleagues from the previous council and thank them for their service. Mayor Woodward, Tim Baillie, and Rob Rindt. To the Langley Strong team and Shumail Javed, our volunteers and supporters, thank you for the countless hours and the hard work behind the scenes.

To our Township staff, thank you for all you do for our community and I look forward to working with you once again. As we look ahead, strengthening relationships with our First Nations, neighbouring communities, and senior level government will be important as we tackle the challenges of a growing Township. I'm looking forward to helping build those partnerships. As a woman of faith, I'm grateful to God for the opportunity to serve this community.

To my dear husband Fred, our four children and their spouses, and seven grandchildren, my mom and my brother, my dear friends who have been there for me along the way, thank you for your love, patience, and encouragement. Public life is not always easy on families, and I am grateful for your understanding and your support. I could not do this without you, and I love you all so much.

Finally, to my grandchildren who sometimes ask me, "Nana, are you the boss of the town?". Well, I have a little confession to make. As much as I love that you think Nana is the boss of the town, I am not. All these people sitting beside you and behind you, they are the residents of the Township, and they are the ones we are here to serve. Thank you.

6. Councillor Teresa Townsley
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=2733

Today as a new councillor, I take my seat at this table with four things foremost in my heart: **humility, courage, respect, and gratitude.**

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

Humility, because the trust placed in me by the residents of Langley is a privilege, not an entitlement.

Courage, because good leadership requires thoughtful questions, difficult decisions, and **always**, the conviction to do what is right.

Respect, for our colleagues, our dedicated staff, and every resident we have the honour of serving. May we lead by example through thoughtful, constructive, and respectful public dialogue.

And **Gratitude**, to everyone who supported and encouraged us along this journey.

To my husband Bill, my two children who cannot be here today, and my parents who are here with us — thank you for your love and unwavering support.

And a special thank you to Councillor Kim Richter. Kim, your friendship and belief in me, even when I doubted myself, have meant more than words can express.

Langley is a remarkable community, and its future deserves our very best.

I am honoured to serve you, grateful for your trust, and ready to get to work.

Thank you.

7. Councillor Michael V. Pratt
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=2831

In my remarks four years ago, I ended by thanking my friends and family. This time, however, after the last ten months, I want to start by expressing my sincere, profound appreciation for those who have supported me. For my fiancée, Ashley, who has had patience and understanding beyond measure during the campaign and who was always there for advice or simply a listening ear when I needed it. I could not have done this without you. For my parents, Jim and Jane, who have supported and helped me through three elections now. When their 20-year-old son said in the summer of 2017 that he wanted to run for Council to play a small role in building a better Township, they encouraged it, when many parents would have otherwise politely told their kid to focus on something else. For my grandma, who is here tonight, who's always supported me and kept her eye out for newspaper clippings, and whose dad ran in 1956 for the BC Liberals up in the South Peace against W.A.C. Bennett's Social Credit Party. I have one of his campaign ads framed in my office at home as a constant reminder that going up against long odds is never a bad thing; in fact, it's a family tradition.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

I also have a deep appreciation for those who stepped up in this election and put their names forward as candidates for Progress For Langley, for Langley Strong, and as independents. For Council and for School Board. Running for local office may be one of the hardest job interviews possible, and someone only goes through it if they have a genuine desire to serve their community to the best of their ability to do what they believe to be the right things for their community. The beautiful thing about democracy is that while we might disagree on what those things are, when we are elected, it's our job to try to think outside of our own worldview and work with the others who have been elected with us.

Taking a moment to think about the last four years, I want to extend my thanks to Eric Woodward, Tim Baillie, Rob Rindt, and Misty van Popta, all of whom gave their time and energy to serving this community we all love. To Mr. Woodward in particular, thank you for four years of leadership. Regardless of where we each stood on a decision, I always appreciated your willingness to discuss the issues and work every day on behalf of our community.

It's been over 15 years since my sister and I stood here in these chambers to ask then Mayor Rick Green and Council for support in creating the Walk to Remember Memorial at the Derek Doubleday Arboretum. I realized the difference the local government can make back then, and that realization was reinforced daily over the past four years, and that makes it truly a privilege to have had so many residents of this amazing Township put their trust in me for another four years. It is a serious responsibility that each of us has been given to work every single day to leave this place better than we found it.

That notion of leaving something better than you found it has been a guide for me my whole life, but especially over the last four years, and certainly over the next four. 34,029 people cast a ballot in this election, thousands of them for people other than myself. Every day I will work to represent all of those people, and those who didn't vote, not just those who voted for our team. It is incredibly exciting and gratifying to have the opportunity to continue to work to build our community, and I'm looking forward to what these four years will hold. Thank you, sincerely, thank you, to the people of Langley Township for this privilege.

A final thank you to all of the amazing staff at the Township of Langley. Across every department, the people of Langley Township are served by amazing, hard-working individuals who keep one of the largest municipalities in our Province working as well as it does. To those who organized tonight, thank you. It's been a beautiful evening, and we all appreciate every effort you put in to make it so.

D. COUNCILLORS' INAUGURAL COMMENTS

To Mayor Lundgren and to all of my fellow Councillors: congratulations. We are public servants, and I look forward to serving alongside you all for the next four years, to making decisions, to doing our best, and to working every day to leave the home we all love better than we found it.

8. Councillor Kim Richter
https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=3098

What an unprecedented opportunity you have all given us today!

Thank you so very much for your belief in what we can do, the challenge to get it done, and especially for your support and trust in us to do it.

We would not be here today without each and everyone of you; Or without the many long hours and hard work done by the entire Langley Strong campaign team including our always patient Campaign Manager Derek Robson, our extraordinary Communications Lead Annika Panzini, all our advisors, and our many volunteers who made it happen.

I send my sincere appreciation and gratitude to each of you, especially the President and Vice President of the Langley Strong Electoral Organization: Barb Sharp and Rebecca Darnell.

To my amazing family, Bob, Stafford, Sterling, Graecen, and "Uncle Drew", you are my everything. Thank you for always standing behind me every step of the way.

It is a great privilege and honour to be able to continue to serve our beloved Township for another four years on Council, most especially with my Langley Strong colleagues this time.

I will continue to stand up and speak out for you and your issues, just as I have always done.

Now its time for us to roll up our sleeves and work together on charting and delivering a positive path forward for all our Township communities and residents. It's time to restore respect for our taxpayers and residents. I am so looking forward to resolving the many challenges ahead of us this term. Again, thank you all very much for allowing me to be part of this next adventure!

E. MAYOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Mayor Lundgren provided the following inaugural address to all those present:

1. https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=3298

Thank you.

Sixteen days ago, the people of Langley Township chose me to serve as their Mayor. I want to start where I will try to start every day for the next four years: by saying I am honoured, and I know this is a trust, not a prize. You lent it to me to steward on your behalf. But this office and this Township is yours.

Before I say anything about what comes next, I want to say something about who came before.

Eric Woodward gave eight years to this Township, four as a Councillor and four as Mayor. That is eight years of evenings in this chamber, of weekends at events, of time away from other things. Whatever our disagreements, that service was real, and I thank him for it. I also want to thank Councillors Tim Baillie and Rob Rindt for the four years they gave this community. Public life asks a lot of the people who step into it, and their families. They stepped up. That deserves our respect.

I also want to acknowledge two people whose counsel I have come to value: former Mayor Jack Froese and former Mayor Kurt Alberts. Between them they led this Township for more than twenty years. They did not have to take my calls. They did, and they were generous with what they had learned, including the hard parts. I intend to keep calling.

None of this happens without family. Seven months ago, Melissa and I sat by our fireplace and decided to do something we had never planned on. It's been Melissa's support, encouragement and wisdom that has brought me to this place today. Her Servant Heart to others, is a principle she's instilled in our family. Serving others is something that was taught and modelled to me from a young age from my incredible parents Bob and Gini. It's something that I've learned as an adult from my incredible in-laws Andy and Cary, who live a life of service to others, not for recognition, but out of a heart of gratitude and love. To our four kids: I love you all so much. Thank you for sharing your dad with 157,000 people. I will try to make it worth it. To Liv in Austria, I miss you and we will see you at Christmas.

I also want to thank a couple of important friends in the room tonight. Lou and Chris, you have been here by my side since the beginning, so I appreciate that. Whistlers' Mayor Jack Crompton is here tonight. I met Jack when I was in highschool, and he was a youth leader at that time. We formed a friendship 32 years ago and he has always been an incredible mentor in my life, I appreciate you Jack.

E. MAYOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

I also want to thank my girls' basketball team that are probably watching online, for being patient with me during this process, it has been a bit busier than normal, and for coming up with a great nickname "Jer".

To the Langley Strong team and the support team, thank you for everything you've done. To the candidates who stood beside me, those who are seated at this table tonight and Shumail, who gave so much to help all of us across the line, and to the trustees who will take their seats at the school board. To the organizers who built a winning campaign from nothing. To the volunteers who helped us knock on more than 40,000 doors, in the rain, after work, on their days off, and who were met with more kindness than any of us expected. You did not do that for me. You did it for your community. Thank you.

To all of those who put their names forward, we appreciate you and your commitment to this community. And to the voters. To everyone who voted, whoever you voted for. More people voted in this election than any prior, and that is the best news of the night. You showed up. You asked hard questions at the doors and at the forums. You read the platform, and you offered your ideas and dreams for our home. Thank you for that too. A community that argues and talks and discusses its future is a community that cares about it.

I heard one thing at those doors more than any other. Not a policy. Not a project. One word. Change.

People told me they wanted change at Township Hall. Not change for its own sake. Change because something had gone wrong with the way this place was being run, and the way people were being treated when they asked about it. I came to articulate it as our Township carrying two debts.

The first is money. We have borrowed, started and approved close to $800 million. More than any municipality in British Columbia. I am not going to stand here tonight and pretend that debt is a surprise, or that it belongs to one person. The majority of the previous council voted for it. Residents now bare it. Our job is to deal with it honestly: open the books, understand every dollar, put the debt on a public plan to pay it down, and finish what is already under way without burying another generation under the bill. That work starts this week, at this table.

The second debt is harder to count. It is the debt of respect.

For four years, too many people in this Township learned that the door at Township Hall only opened for those who already agreed. Residents who came to this chamber with a worry about their street went home feeling they had been ignored. Community groups that had served Langley for decades found themselves on the outside. Staff learned to keep their heads down. Neighbouring councils, the School Board, the Province, TransLink: too many bridges, burned.

E. MAYOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

I want to be careful here, because this is not about any one person, and it's not about settling scores. It is about a habit. And habits can change.

So let me be clear about what this council owes you.

You should not have to agree with the Mayor to be treated with respect by your own Township. If you come to this chamber, you will be heard, and you will get your turn, not a deferral to next month. If you ask a question, you will get an answer, in plain language, and you will be able to see what every major decision costs. We will hold closed meetings when the law requires it and not a minute longer. We will treat Township staff as the professionals they are, and ask them for their best advice, not the advice we want to hear. And we will go back to the tables where this region makes its decisions, and sit down, and listen, and bring Langley's share home.

Here is why I believe we can do it.

Because of what this place is. Langley Township is a river village and a farm town and a new city, all at once. It is Fort Langley on a Saturday morning and Aldergrove on a fair weekend and Willoughby on the first day of school. It is a farm family in Glen Valley who has worked the same ground for three generations and a couple in Brookswood who arrived last spring and now call it home. It is firefighters and nurses and tradespeople and teachers and the people who coach our kids for free. Seven months ago I thought I knew this Township, but I have learned so much since then. I know it now, one door at a time, and I have never been prouder to live anywhere.

We have a growing economy, young families choosing us on purpose, farmland that still feeds people, streams that still hold salmon, and in three years, SkyTrain. We have problems, too. But I would not trade our problems for anyone else's. Every one of them is the problem of a place people want to be.

To the six councillors elected with me with Langley Strong, and to Councillors Ferguson and Pratt: this is one council. Nine of us, elected by the same people, serving the same Township. There will be votes we lose and votes we win and votes where we surprise each other. I will ask only one thing of every person at this table, and I will hold myself to it first: disagree with the idea, never the person. That is how a council earns back what was lost.

A campaign is several months. A term is four years. But Langley Township is forever.

Tonight we took an oath. Tomorrow we take the first step: open the books, open the doors, and start paying down both debts, the one on the balance sheet and the one owed to every resident who stopped believing their Township would listen.

E. MAYOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

I cannot promise you every answer will be yes. I can promise you will be heard, you will get an answer, and that you will be treated the way a neighbour should be treated by the people who work for them.

The people of Langley Township asked for change. It's here. The respect starts now.

Thank you.

F. TERMINATE

https://youtu.be/TLFlV-n29Y4?list=PLcsR1gaLwRUig_Xdr6l_81D5pKbyMDJHO&t=4036

Moved by Councillor Martens,
Seconded by Councillor Kunst,
That the meeting terminate at 8:00pm.
CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

_____
Mayor

_____
Township Clerk