Inaugural Address by Mayor Beil

The following is the inaugural address provided by Mayor Mary Beil at the City of Parksville Council meeting on November 2. The Inaugural Council meeting may be viewed from the City's website.

Upon receiving the Chain of Office:
Is this what the weight of responsibility feels like?

As this Chain of Office rests on my shoulders, I'm reminded what it stands for: your trust, my responsibility to listen, and my duty to serve. I accept that responsibility with humility, and gratitude. And I hope to wear it well, for our community.

We are fortunate to call Parksville home. We have a community people are proud of, a place surrounded by natural beauty, and shaped by people who care deeply about its future. Our responsibility as Council is not simply to manage what we have today, it is to protect what makes Parksville special while preparing thoughtfully for the community we are becoming.

There's real weight to this office. The decisions we make around the Council table shape people's everyday lives They influence the neighbourhoods we live in, the roads and services we rely on, the businesses that help our community thrive, and how Parksville grows and changes in the years ahead. The choices we make today will help shape the Parksville we leave to the next generation.

Today, I feel something else too; I feel lifted up by this community. Looking around this room, I feel your encouragement and your kindness. You make the work ahead feel possible. You remind me why it matters, and that none of us are doing it alone.

Responsibility feels lighter when we share it. I'm glad to share it with my fellow members of Council, each bringing different perspectives, experience, and a commitment to this community. We won't always agree but we can listen to each other, disagree respectfully, and keep our shared purpose in view. Because ultimately, success won't be measured by how often we agree; it will be measured by whether the decisions we make move Parksville forward.

And that work reaches well beyond Council. It includes the people who keep our roads, parks, water systems, and community services running. It includes local businesses, community organizations, volunteers, and neighbours who give their time, and it includes every resident who speaks up, shares an idea, or lends a hand. A strong Parksville isn't built by Council alone; it's built by all of us.

An engaged community isn't one that always agrees with us. It's one that cares enough to ask questions, challenge us thoughtfully, and help us find a way forward. Your questions keep us accountable. Your ideas help us see things we might otherwise miss. Whether you talk with us in person, give us a call, send an email, or take part in a community discussion, your voice matters. We'll make room for those conversations.

The City of Parksville is located on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish Nations, home to the Snaw-Naw-As First Nation and the Qualicum First Nation.

And while we may not always arrive at the outcome everyone hoped for, you deserve to know that you were heard, that your perspective was considered, and that we can explain the decisions we make.

There will be days when this responsibility feels heavier than it does today. When that happens, I'll remind myself that none of us has all the answers, and that brings me to our wonderful City staff. City staff bring the professional knowledge and experience that help turn Council's direction into real results for our community. They keep this city working every day, often in ways most people never see. We rely on their advice, their expertise, and their support. Thank you for all you do.

My commitment is simple: to try and listen without judging, to make decisions with care, and to be honest about what we can do and what will be difficult. I want everyone to feel welcome in the conversation. Not just those who find it easy to speak up, but those who aren't sure they'll be heard. When people feel safe, comfortable, and welcome, it's easier to share what's on their minds.

So, let's make room for one another. Let's be patient when conversations get difficult, and generous when we see things differently.

The years ahead will bring challenges, but they will also bring opportunities. We will make decisions about how Parksville grows, how we invest in the infrastructure our community depends on, how we support a strong local economy, and how we protect the qualities that make this such a special place to live. We won't solve everything in one term. But we can make thoughtful choices today that leave Parksville stronger, more resilient, and better prepared for tomorrow.

This chain reminds me of my duty, but it also reminds me that I don't have to carry that responsibility alone. I'll wear it with respect for what it represents, and with gratitude for the community that helps me carry it.

To my fellow members of Council, to City staff, and to everyone who calls Parksville home: we have important work ahead of us. Let's approach it with optimism, respect, and a willingness to listen. Let's make decisions not only for the Parksville of today, but for the community we want to leave to those who come next.

Thank you for your trust, your encouragement, and your willingness to share in the work ahead. With your support, I begin this term not weighed, down but lifted up. I'm proud of the community we serve, hopeful about what we can accomplish together, and ready to get to work.

Thank you.

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Contact the Mayor:
Mayor Mary Beil
Mayor@parksville.ca; 250-954-4661

Media Contact:
Matt Bell, Manager of Communications
Communications@parksville.ca; 250-954-3073

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