

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, December 9, 2024
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

Council Members Present: Mayor Victor Smith
Councillor Angela Skoglund
Councillor Scott Medlock
Councillor Heather Stewin
Councillor Dusty Smith
Councillor Pauline Newbigging

Council Members Absent: Councillor Zachary Wells

Staff Present: John Fortoloczky, Chief Administrative Officer
Donna Bellingham, Director of Corporate Services
Mike Olson, Director of Finance
Robin Beukens, Director of Community Development
Branden Morgan, Deputy Corporate Officer

Others Present: 9 members of the public and 1 media

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting is being held on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the Stó:lō people, particularly the Chawathil, Union Bar and Yale First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved / Seconded

THAT the December 9, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Agenda be adopted, as amended, to proceed to an In-Camera Meeting at the end of the Regular Council meeting. **CARRIED.**

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

(a) Regular Council Meeting

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held November 25, 2024, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) RCMP Upper Fraser Valley Regional Detachment Strategic Plan

RCMP Superintendent Davy Lee was in attendance to present to Council regarding the Upper Fraser Valley Regional Detachment 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. In his presentation, the following items were discussed:

- The Strategic Plan outlines the priorities, goals, and objectives for the next three years, and will be reviewed and updated as needed to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness
- Strategic Planning Process

- Gather input from interested parties and community members
- Conduct online surveys
- Hold community meetings
- Compile the consultation report
- Conduct a full-day workshop
- Mission
 - To preserve the peace, uphold the law, and provide quality service in partnership with our communities
- Vision
 - The RCMP is a healthy and inclusive organization trusted by employees, partners, and the public that keeps Canada safe by consistently delivering exceptional policing services and continually striving to grow and improve
- Core Values
 - Take Responsibility
 - Show Respect
 - Serve with Excellence
 - Demonstrate Compassion
 - Act with Integrity
- Community Safety
 - Increase police visibility
 - High-Quality Investigations
 - Crime Prevention
 - Key Performance Indicators:
 - Increase visibility with targeted foot patrols
 - Enhance roadblocks and enforce speeding regulations in school zones
 - Organize "Coffee with a Cop" events to foster community engagement
 - Engage with Crown Council to participate in RCMP training sessions and meetings
 - Support crime prevention education through Block Watch and Speed Watch programs
- Strong Partnerships
 - Advance Reconciliation with Indigenous Communities
 - Strengthening Partnership with Local Businesses
 - Connect with Youth
 - Key Performance Indicators:
 - Offer ongoing opportunities for members to participate in cultural awareness training
 - Meet with the business community to address concerns and enhance crime prevention education
 - Enhance police presence in schools by 10% through regular visits and educational talks
- Enhance Communication

- External Communications
- Internal Communications
- Promote Career Opportunities with the RCMP
- Key Performance Indicators:
 - Strengthen partnerships by regularly meeting with local businesses and community groups
 - Engage with recruiting sections to advise of local recruiting opportunities and support the applicant ride-along program
- Support our People & Organizational Excellence
 - Member Development
 - Consistent Leadership
 - Meaningful Employee Recognition
 - Foster a Supportive Workplace
 - Key Performance Indicators:
 - Support employees at all stages of their career
 - Promote formal and informal recognition tools and initiatives to recognize employee contributions
 - Support the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee to foster an inclusive culture
 - Develop and implement initiatives that support the physical and mental health, wellness, and resiliency of employees identified by the Health & Safety Committee
 - Pursue processes and initiatives supported by the Continuous Improvement Committee
- Accountability
 - Each objective has designated team members responsible for quarterly updates on progress, challenges, and lessons learned
 - Ongoing public engagement ensures that the plan stays relevant and addresses key public safety issues
 - The UFVRD is dedicated to working with the community to enhance their safety and quality of life

(b) Communities in Bloom

Representatives from Communities in Bloom were in attendance to present to Council regarding their 2024 highlights, the Communities in Bloom judging, and their 2025 plans. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Hope Communities in Bloom achieved a 5-bloom rating in 2024
- 2024 Highlights
 - Held litter pickups in the downtown core, Old Hope Princeton Way, and Flood Hope Road
 - Planted, weeded, and cut back vegetation on 6th Avenue and the base of Mount Hope
 - Planted daffodils at the base of the new signage at exit 170 and filled the downtown planters
 - Coordinated recycling efforts at the Earth Day event and encouraged

- participation in Trash to Treasure
- Maintained the District's chainsaw carvings
- Checked holiday lights and placed locally harvested grains in downtown planters
- Encouraged support in District initiatives including the FireSmart and Downtown Improvement meetings
- Gathered information and pictures for the Communities in Bloom Judge's Profile Book
- Cleaned up around the Recreation Centre
- Future Plans
 - Revitalize the junction area at the base of Mount Hope through the purchase of shrubs or other materials
 - Chainsaw Carving Event on August 14-17, 2025

Teresa Williams, Co-Chair of Hope Communities in Bloom, presented Council with a certificate recognizing their support for the organization and noting that together they make Hope a wonderful place to live, work, and play. The Mayor thanked Kevin Dicken, Director of Operations, and Sarah Brown, AdvantageHOPE Operations Manager and Curator, for their efforts in completing the District signage project which was a highlight of the judge's tour.

(c) Diversity Disconnect Research Project

Representatives from Free Rein Associates were in attendance to present to Council regarding the Diversity Disconnect Research Project. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Estimated Outreach
 - 5 communities
 - Princeton
 - Merritt
 - Ashcroft
 - Agassiz
 - Hope
 - 75 service providers
 - 100 employers
 - 450 individuals
- Research Methods
 - Focus groups
 - One-on-one interviews
 - Online and written surveys
- Perceptions of Diversity
 - 82% of employers agreed or strongly agreed that they adequately reflected diversity within their business
 - 49% of job seekers and 63% of employees agreed or strongly agreed
 - There is a disconnect between employers believing they are doing a good job, while employees and job seekers do not agree
- Success at Work

- 74% of employees agreed or strongly agreed that their employer can support their success
- 88% of employers agreed that they can support that success
- None of the employers felt negatively about this question
- Level of Support
 - 40% of employers felt that they struggled to balance equity, diversity, and inclusion of underrepresented groups
 - 68% of employees agree or strongly agree that employers fully support the employment of individuals with specific needs
 - Job seekers were neutral in their perception of support in this area
- Employment Task Alignment and Disconnects
 - Job seekers and employees both ranked orientation on-the-job training as something that is easy
 - Both groups ranked finding opportunities in their top three most difficult
 - Employees and employers both ranked getting or offering advancement opportunities in their top three most difficult
 - Employers ranked providing a welcoming environment in their easiest tasks, while job seekers are ranking it in their top three most difficult
 - Job seekers put career direction in their top three easiest, while employees ranked it in their top three most difficult
- Essential Skills
 - Communication is important for both finding and maintaining employment
 - Writing, digital, and creativity & innovation are ranked in the bottom three of both groups
- Success Factors
 - The top 20 success factors were pulled from interview results and ranked by number of appearances
 - Transportation was the only factor that was not mentioned by employers, while it was mentioned by almost every service provider and individual
- Connecting the Data
 - Limited awareness from employers regarding the scope and complexity of employment challenges
 - Lack of awareness and isolation issues in terms of people with access needs in communities
 - Some communities were more willing to share, while other were hesitant
 - Service providers in Princeton are very connected and share information
- Recommendations
 - Get Real
 - Foster a shared understanding through a holistic, systems-based exploration of stakeholder experiences
 - Make It Personal
 - Reflect deeply to examine your role in the disconnects between stakeholder groups, identifying a manageable and meaningful shift

- Stay Diligent
 - Continuously monitor and evaluate your efforts, inviting feedback and adapting/customizing your approach
- Work Together
 - Look around your community for opportunities to collaborate on solutions, identify and develop partnerships, and coordinate efforts
- Get Loud
 - Share stories of success, challenges, and frustrations to amplify your message and the voice of those underrepresented

Council inquired as to whether any of the data collected from the five individual communities differs greatly from the combined summary in the presentation. The delegation advised that the data does differ between communities, with Princeton having the most equal spread among respondents, Ashcroft lacking in respondents, and Merritt have only one respondent per group despite having the largest population. They added that Merritt has the largest number of service providers, but they do not communicate with each other, leading to issues for individuals locating services. The delegation noted that they would forward links to the report and an upcoming podcast series to Council and Staff.

5. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Report dated November 28, 2024 from the Chief Administrative Officer Re: Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest – Squeah Forest Road Access

Council inquired as to what options are available to rectify the access issue. The CAO advised that the two available options are having the Province resolve the access issue, or a substitute tenure being provided. He noted that with the historical lack of Provincial action it may be too difficult to provide a solution to the access issue, and that an alternate tenure is the preferred option. Council inquired as to whether the other partners have already agreed to the letter outlined in the report. The CAO advised that Chawathil First Nation and the Fraser Valley Regional District are in the process of bringing forward this item for approval.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council has reviewed the situation surrounding the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest Squeah Forest Service Road Access Issues;

AND THAT Council finds the lack of response and action by the Provincial Government unfortunate and unacceptable;

AND THAT Council acknowledges that the District of Hope is one of three shareholders in the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest;

AND THAT Council has reviewed the November 28, 2024 correspondence from the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest and fully endorses the requests being made and authorizes the Mayor to sign on behalf of Council;

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs that an official copy of this resolution be attached to the letter being sent by the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest for transmission to the Provincial Government. **CARRIED.**

(b) Report dated December 3, 2024 from the Deputy Corporate Officer

Re: Deaccession of Museum Artifacts – December 2, 2024

Council inquired as to whether the process of offering deaccessioned items to other museums has begun. Sarah Brown, Museum Curator, advised that the offering process will take place after all museum collection items have been reviewed which will likely be completed in mid-January.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council authorize Hope Business and Development Society (A.K.A. AdvantageHOPE) to deaccession the items listed in the attached December 2, 2024 – Hope Museum Artifacts for Deaccession. **CARRIED.**

- (c) **Report dated December 3, 2024 from the Director of Corporate Services**
Re: FVRD Recreation Programming Service Area Conversion & Amendment Bylaw

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council of the District of Hope consents to the adoption of *Fraser Valley Regional District Regional Recreation Programming Service Area Conversion and Amendment Bylaw No. 1752, 2024.* **CARRIED.**

- (d) **Report dated December 3, 2024 from the Director of Corporate Services**
Re: FVRD Air Quality Management Service Area Merger & Establishment Bylaw

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council of the District of Hope consents to the adoption of *Fraser Valley Regional District Regional Air Quality Management Service Area Merger & Establishment Bylaw No. 1753, 2024.* **CARRIED.**

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- (a) **Report dated November 28, 2024 from the Chief Administrative Officer & Chair of the Council Accessibility Advisory Committee**
Re: Accessibility Advisory Committee – Bench and Table Recommendations 2025/26

THAT Council receives the Council Accessibility Advisory Committee report and recommendations regarding public benches and accessible picnic tables within Hope;

AND THAT Council endorses the recommended changes for the fiscal years of 2025 and 2026;

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs Staff to achieve portions of the plan in 2025 within the existing 2025 budget and include the remainder within the 2026 Financial Plan.

CARRIED.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He received a thank you letter from the band “A Flock of Seagulls” who stopped in Hope to see the Rambo Carving. He noted that they stayed overnight in Hope before continuing their tour across Canada.
- He attended the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior Board meeting where he represented the District and Fraser Valley Regional District Areas A & B during discussions regarding project funding.
- He attended the Dent Construction 50th Anniversary celebration, noting that a total

of 172 people were in attendance and that there is an insert in the Hope Standard on the history of the company.

- He met with representatives from the University of the Fraser Valley and noted that the university location in Hope will have new leadership and new plans will be announced in the New Year.
- He acknowledged the passing of Dick Gardner, noting his outstanding volunteerism, leadership in the community, time the Hope Fire Department, the demolition derby, and the Lions Club.
- He attended the Stuff the Cruiser event at Kal Tire along with Councillor Skoglund, noting that he enjoyed breakfast and great conversation with those who came out to support the initiative.
- He noted that the Hope Library event was a success, and included green screen photo opportunities, letters to Santa, hot chocolate and candy canes, and play time. He added that many new people signed up to join the library.
- On behalf of Mayor, Council, and Staff, he wished everyone a happy and safe holiday.

Councillor Skoglund Reported:

- She attended the Hope Community Choir Christmas Concert on December 1st at the Grace Baptist Church, noting that it was standing room only and over \$1,700 in donations were raised to support a bursary for Hope Secondary School students.
- She attended the Stuff the Cruiser event at Kal Tire on December 7th, noting that three cruisers were filled with food, and \$5,774 was raised. She added that Kal Tire will be matching \$5,000 in cash donations, bringing the total raised to \$10,774.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He attended Dick Gardner's memorial service, noting that many great stories were told, and added that he did a lot for this community.
- He noted that Brian McKinney reached out regarding the District's Hope Museum Golden Moments reserve fund, currently reserved for reprinting of that book, and the possibility of using it to reprint the Forging a New Hope book. The CAO advised that if Council wishes, this reserve fund could be re-allocated by passing a resolution. The Mayor advised that the District has been unable to contact the rightsholder of the Golden Moments book which has prevented reprinting.

Councillor Smith Reported:

- He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She met with Madeleine Warkentin and Emily White from Free Rein Associates to discuss their report on Diversity Disconnect. She noted that they had a great conversation regarding their experiences in Hope and is looking forward to seeing where the information goes.
- She noted that she received several calls from community members expressing

their appreciation for District Staff.

- She wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She announced that the Skate for Santa event will be hosted by Hope Community Services, the Rotary Club, Boston Pizza, and the Fraser Valley Regional Library on December 21st from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. She noted that entry is free and will include Santa, arts & crafts, skating, hot chocolate & candy canes, and story time.
- She wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

- (a) Report dated December 4, 2024 from the Planner III**
Re: Redesignate and Rezone 61934 Estell Road – 3rd Reading

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1591, 2024* be given third reading to change the Official Community Plan land use designation from Highway Commercial to Light/Service Industry for the property at 61934 Estell Road.

CARRIED.

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1592, 2024* be given third reading to change the zoning from Rural (RU-1) to Light/Service Industrial (I-2) for the property at 61934 Estell Road.

CARRIED.

- (b) District of Hope 2025-2029 Financial Plan Bylaw No. 1594, 2024**

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope 2025-2029 Financial Plan Bylaw No. 1594, 2024*, be read a first, second, and third time this 9th day of December, 2024.

CARRIED.

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) For Information Correspondence**

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated December 9, 2024, be received.

CARRIED.

- (b) Accounts Payable Cheque Listing – November 2024**

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Accounts Payable Cheque Listing for the period of November 1-30, 2024, be received.

CARRIED.

10. OTHER PERTINENT BUSINESS

There was no other pertinent business.

11. QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions raised.

12. NOTICE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Monday, January 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

13. RESOLUTION TO PROCEED TO CLOSED MEETING at 8:05 p.m.

Moved / Seconded

THAT the meeting be closed to the public to consider matters pursuant to Section 90(1)(m) [a matter that, under another enactment, is such that the public may be excluded from the meeting] of the *Community Charter* and Section 21 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* [Disclosure harmful to business interests of a third party], and adopting closed meeting minutes. **CARRIED.**

14. RETURN TO OPEN MEETING

The Mayor reconvened the Regular Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

(a) Rise and Report out of Closed Meeting

Re: Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw Update – Contract Award

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council rise and report to declassify the resolution out of the December 9, 2024 In-Camera meeting:

THAT Council approves the awarding of a contract to Stantec Consulting Ltd as the preferred proponent to Request for Proposal COMDEV 2024-01 for the provision of professional planning services to update the District of Hope Official Community Plan and Zoning bylaws. **CARRIED.**

15. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 8:17 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held December 9, 2024 in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services