

## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, February 10, 2025  
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office  
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

**Council Members Present:** Mayor Victor Smith  
Councillor Scott Medlock  
Councillor Heather Stewin  
Councillor Pauline Newbigging

**Council Members Absent:** Councillor Angela Skoglund  
Councillor Dusty Smith

**Staff Present:** John Fortoloczky, Chief Administrative Officer  
Donna Bellingham, Director of Corporate Services  
Robin Beukens, Director of Community Development  
Thomas Cameron, Fire Chief  
Branden Morgan, Deputy Corporate Officer  
Danielle Laporte, Communications System Analysis Advisor

**Others Present:** 11 members of the Public and 1 Media

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:15 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 February 10, 2025, Regular Council Meeting Agenda be adopted, as amended, to include item 5(e), regarding the Museum Artefact Deaccessioning and Disposal Policy. **CARRIED.**

### 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

#### (a) Regular Council Meeting

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held January 27, 2025, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

#### (b) Special Regular Council Meeting

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the Minutes of the Special Regular Council Meeting held February 3, 2025, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

### 4. DELEGATIONS

#### (a) RCMP

Inspector Darren Pankratz, Staff Sergeant Mike Sargent, and Constable Nicole Richardson were in attendance to present to Council regarding the Annual Hope Policing Report. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Staff Sergeant Sargent introduced Constable Nicole Richardson, the newest

member of the detachment

- Current State
  - All positions are staffed with no long-term absences
    - 14 municipal members
    - 4 municipal employees
    - 1.5 Victims Services staff
    - 1 additional municipal employee position sought for 2025
  - Minimum of two members working at all times, with an average of three to four
  - Increased proactive efforts, quality of investigations, and morale
- Year in Review
  - 5,410 General Occurrences – 12% increase
  - 258 Priority 1 Calls – 27% increase
  - 285 Files per Member – 34% increase
  - The majority of crime statistics have remained at average levels over the last five years
  - Increases were noted in uttering threats, harassment, mischief to property, and neighbourly disputes
  - Domestic violence has fallen 30% since 2023
  - 79% of files originate in the District, 19% in rural areas, and 2% in Hope Reserves
- Top 5 Locations in Hope for Call for Service
  - Flying J – 63100 Flood Hope Road
  - Fraser Canyon Hospital – 1275 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue
  - Silver Hope Motel – 63961 Flood Hope Road
  - Coquihalla Motel – 724 Old Hope Princeton Way
  - McDonald's – 453 Old Hope Princeton Way
- Top 5 File Types
  - Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Occurrence
  - Check Well Being
  - Traffic – Other Moving
  - Cause a Disturbance
  - Mischief - \$5,000 or Under
- In the Community
  - Stuff the Cruiser
  - Brigade Days
  - Shredding event
  - Park patrols
  - Remembrance Day
- Proactive Initiatives

- Increased patrols and visibility
- Partnerships with other agencies
- Proactive enforcement with chronic offenders
- Traffic enforcement
- Community engagement
- Block watch initiatives
- Monitoring of homeless camps
- Targeted Enforcement Successes
  - Silver Skagit Road
    - High-risk area for violence and ongoing criminality
    - Frequent patrols lead to the recovery of stolen property, firearms, and vehicles
    - Associated individuals have either left the area or have been taken to jail
    - Opportunities to collaborate with residents
  - Travel Centre Issues
    - Silver Creek and Flying J Travel Centres have been targeted between February and September 2024
    - Thieves have been breaking into transport trailers
    - Frequent patrols lead to the identification of suspects and the recovery of property
    - Numerous charges have been laid, and the main offender has left the province after six months in jail
    - Opportunities to collaborate with business owners to prevent further issues
  - Current focus is on the Flood Hope Road camps and Silver Creek area
- Mental Health Calls
  - 260 confirmed mental health related Calls for Service in 2024, compared to 284 in 2023 and 308 in 2022
  - 571 check well-being complaints in 2024, compared to only 434 in 2023
  - Decrease is due to transient nature of individuals involved, the opioid crisis, and an increase in community supports
- UFVRD Strategic Plan Updates
  - Enhance Community Safety
    - Visibility and positive interactions with RCMP at community events and schools
    - Adult/youth probation programs
  - Strong Partnerships
    - Community Youth Groups and Youth Camp Days
    - Interactions with Indigenous communities
    - Collaboration with Fraser Health
  - Enhance Communication
    - Promoting the work of the team through local media
    - Promoting career opportunities through school events and career fairs

- Support Our People/ Organizational Excellence
  - Provide consistency with four dedicated NCO supervisors
  - Members being recognized at the OIC Awards
- Victims Services
  - Referral numbers have begun to trend up now that staff are in place
  - Referrals can stay on file for two to three years depending on the complexity of the situation
- Update Regarding the Officer in Charge
  - Davy Lee, the outgoing Superintendent of the UFVRD, has accepted a position with the RCMP FIFA 2026 Security Coordination and Operation Response team
  - The process to replace the position will take place at the beginning of the fiscal year in April
- Staffing Updates
  - The Hope Community Policing Office recently completed their managerial review, and it was noted that all categories of employees are happy to work there
  - It is anticipated that there will be a surplus of 140 members joining the RCMP in BC
  - The Lower Mainland is seen as a destination of choice for experienced police officers
  - There are currently 1,622 applicants being processed in BC
  - Number will continue to grow as the Surrey Police transition is completed
- Body Worn Cameras
  - The rollout is expected to take place in May, with the exact date to be confirmed later
  - The pilot project is currently taking place in the City of Mission
- Backcountry Initiative
  - Create a presence on forest service roads where there will be an influx of people as the weather improves
  - Key initiative that will be rolled out across the Upper Fraser Valley
- The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RCMP in the Upper Fraser Valley will take place on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**(b) Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society**

Sarah Schreier, Executive Director, was in attendance to present to Council regarding environmental stewardship. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- White Sturgeon
  - Fraser River White Sturgeon have been in the Fraser River and its tributaries since the time of the dinosaurs
  - They live in both fresh and salt water and are apex and indicator species
  - They share a habitat with salmon throughout the watershed, with five species in the Fraser River
- History

- Between 1892 and 1920, over 7.5 million pounds of White Sturgeon were landed and recorded at New Westminster
- This resulted in a clear cutting of sturgeon populations in the Fraser River
- In the early 1990's, dozens of ancient White Sturgeon were found dead in the Fraser River of unknown causes
- Founding of the Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society
  - Founded in 1997 by Rick Hansen
  - Research-based not-for-profit registered as a BC Society and a Canadian Charity
  - Current Board of Directors included First Nations, scientists, biologists, an Indigenous lawyer, leaders in industry, business, finance and the recreational sport fishery
  - In 2000, the Lower Fraser River White Sturgeon Monitoring and Assessment Program was launched to deliver unbiased annual reporting on the status of Lower Fraser River White Sturgeon
- Ongoing Monitoring and Assessment
  - Since 1997, more than 190,000 sturgeons have been sampled, including 81,000 recaptures and a mark rate of 68.3%
  - The abundance of age 7-55 White Sturgeon has been declining since 2006
  - The abundance of age 7-12 White Sturgeon has declined substantially since 2005
  - The abundance of age 23-55 White Sturgeon has increased since 2000
  - Through analysis of these trends, key threats and limiting factors include habitat loss, decreased food availability, by-catch mortalities in fisheries targeting other species, and fishing technology and techniques
- Next Steps
  - Leadership and partnerships
  - Collaboration across communities and municipalities
  - Awareness and education
  - Ongoing support for conservation efforts and credible, unbiased science
  - Habitat assessment and enhancement
  - Outreach and inspiration
- White Sturgeon Leadership Program
  - Community leadership to support environmental assessment and protection for key developments, foreshore and in-river works
  - Support for sturgeon population assessment in the Fraser River
  - Establish sturgeon as icon for community commitment to conservation and connection to related species
  - Support the creation of broad-based resource of habitat use and characteristics in FVRD jurisdictions

Council inquired as to whether there is any requirement for sport fishermen to report information or tag fish. Ms. Schreier advised that reporting and tagging is voluntary, but that they do offer training to those who are willing to assist in the study. She added that multiple sources of data that fit the study are pooled together from different organizations. Council inquired as to whether the method of catching the fish results in any injuries or lasting effects. Ms. Schreier explained that their methods were chosen to have the least

impact on the fish, and that some fish in the study have been caught upwards of 25 times without issue.

**(c) Bridal Veil Mountain Resort**

Jeff Wilson, Executive Vice-President, was in attendance to present to Council regarding the Bridal Veil Mountain Resort Project. In the presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Bridal Veil Mountain Resort (BVMR) Overview
  - All-season mountain resort
  - Owned, planned, constructed and operated with Stó:lō communities
  - Capable of housing more than 1,000,000 guests annually when complete
  - Projected as a \$4 billion investment with \$252 million annual revenues when complete
  - 16 lifts, 2 gondolas, 15,000 guests per day
- Uplands Project Overview
  - Comprehensive community development
  - Extension of the BVMR but not reliant on it
  - 1,000-acre site
  - Preliminary capability assessment indicates space for 12,000 residents
  - Developed in partnership with Stó:lō communities
  - Fraser Valley Regional District Official Community Plan identified the Bridal Falls Uplands as a Future Growth Area
- Economic Assessment & Projections
  - 20,496 job years during 20-year buildout
  - 2,230 full and part-time jobs
  - 1,100,000 annual visitors
  - \$252,000,000 in annual revenue
  - \$35,000,000 in annual taxes paid
  - \$150,000,000 investment in lifts and ski trails
  - \$162,000,000 investment in day use and destination guest space
  - \$2,184,000,000 investment in residential units
- Relationships with Stó:lō Communities
  - Signed capacity funding agreements with eight of the closest First Nations
  - Strong interest from three other communities
  - Two Stó:lō Leaders as part of the project leadership team

**5. STAFF REPORTS**

**(a) Report dated February 4, 2025 from the Chief Administrative Officer  
Re: Facilities Master Plan – Council Update and Project Restart**

Council inquired as to the method through which the questionnaire will be distributed to residents. The CAO advised that staff intend to create a survey that will be advertised on the District's website, social media, and available in print form at District Hall. Council noted that they would like to see a mailout distributed to garner more feedback from residents. The CAO advised that a mailout could be included with utility bills or another similar notice to save costs.

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT Council receives this report regarding the history and current status of the Facilities Master Plan; and

FURTHER THAT Council endorses restarting the process with another round of public consultation with updated details and changes to the District's current facilities situation.

**CARRIED.**

**(b) Report dated February 4, 2025 from the Director of Corporate Services  
Re: Appointment of Election Officials for a 2025 By-Election**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT with the official written resignation of Councillor Zachary Wells, effective February 3, 2025, pursuant to Section 58 (1) and (2) of the *Local Government Act*, Branden Morgan be appointed Chief Election Officer, effective immediately, for conducting the 2025 By-Election, with power to appoint other election officials as required for the administration and conduct of the 2025 By-Election;

AND FURTHER THAT Donna Bellingham be appointed Deputy Chief Election Officer for the 2025 By-Election.

**CARRIED.**

**(c) Report dated February 5, 2025 from the Chief Administrative Officer  
Re: Station House Archaeological Study**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the February 3, 2025 In Camera resolution be declassified:

THAT the District of Hope undertake the archeological study for the placement of the Station House on the property at 919 Water Avenue;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorizes an expenditure up to \$100,000 to cover these costs.

**CARRIED.**

**OPPOSED: Councillor Newbigging**

**(d) Report dated February 5, 2025 from the FireSmart Coordinator/Assistant Chief  
Re: FireSmart Program Update**

Council requested that the Fire Chief provide a verbal summary of his answers to questions received from the public via email.

- Who do members of the public contact with their concerns?
  - Members of the public can complete a Public Concern Form online or through reception to have their concerns assigned to the correct department.
- What, if anything, can be done to ensure safety of residents from wildfire risk?
  - Contact [FireSmart@hope.ca](mailto:FireSmart@hope.ca) to have a free home assessment done, which will provide detailed mitigation steps to be taken in order to protect your home.
  
- Comments and concerns regarding unhoused and camping populations within the District.

- BC Wildfire Service data, collected over a period of more than 20 years, has no confirmed instances of wildfire being attributed to unhoused populations. With this in mind, there is no data to support the concern of unhoused populations causing wildfires and it is not considered within the plan.

The CAO noted that outreach with stakeholder groups in the community will continue in order to implement fire prevention and FireSmart initiatives for unhoused individuals and communities.

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT Council adopt the Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP) as presented; and

THAT Council endorse the proposed project summary for FireSmart Hope to guide operational planning for the 2025 and 2026 periods. **CARRIED.**

**(e) Museum Artefact and Deaccessioning and Disposal Policy**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the Museum Artefact and Deaccessioning and Disposal Policy be adopted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2025. **CARRIED.**

**6. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no Committee Reports.

**7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS**

**Mayor Smith Reported:**

- He welcomed Danielle Laporte, the District's new Communications System Analysis Advisor.
- He was appointed as Chair of the FVRD Intergovernmental Relations Committee where he will work on recommendations to be brought forward to the Board and to Ministers at UBCM for their consideration.
- He attended the Hope & Area Healthy Communities Committee meeting where they discussed Horticulture Association work on improving food security, Micro Health Grant applications, and winter wellness reach out.
- He noted that the Hope Golden Agers Society began installing upgraded hallway lighting that was funded through Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest grant opportunity.
- He met with representatives from the University of the Fraser Valley to discuss the re-opening of the Hope campus, noting that they are working with stakeholders in the community to align the programs with their needs.
- He attended the Chawathil First Nation Open House, noting that they had a good turnout and that they reviewed plans for new housing, water system improvements, and health programs.
- He met with the Tashme Historical Society to discuss continued work on the Station House project.

**Councillors Medlock, Stewin, and Newbigging had nothing to report.**

**8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS**



**(a) Report dated January 30, 2025 from the Planner II**  
**Re: Development Variance Permit Application at 63010 Flood Hope Road**

Council inquired as to whether the 30-metre radius for public notification could be increased as the area is rural with larger properties. Following discussion, it was agreed that the public notification area would be expanded to 100 metres to include more residents.

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with notification for a Development Variance Permit for the following Zoning Bylaw variances for 63010 Flood Hope Road:

- Part 6.19.7 to reduce the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces from 40 spaces to 34 spaces.
- Part 12.2.5.1 to reduce the minimum interior lot line setback from 3.0 m to 1.2 m.
- Part 12.2.5.1 to reduce the minimum rear lot line setbacks from 6.0 m to 1.2 m.

**CARRIED.**

**(b) Report dated January 30, 2025 from the Planner II**  
**Re: Application for Zoning Bylaw Text Amendment; Light Industrial (I-2) Zone**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT *District of Hope Zoning Bylaw Amendment No.1596, 2024* be given 3rd reading to allow a dwelling unit as an accessory use within the principal building in the Light / Service Industrial (I-2) zone.

**CARRIED.**

**(c) Report dated February 4, 2025 from the Planner II**  
**Re: Development Variance Permit Application at 711 Water Avenue**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with notification for a Development Variance Permit for the following Zoning Bylaw variances for 711 Water Avenue:

- Part 6.11.1 to reduce the minimum number of off-street loading spaces provided from 1 to 0.
- Part 6.16.1 a) to reduce the minimum off-street parking or loading space setback from 1.0 m to 0.0 m.

**CARRIED.**

**9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE**

**(a) For Information Correspondence**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated February 10, 2025, be received.

**CARRIED.**

**(b) Accounts Payable Cheque Listing – December 2024**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the Accounts Payable Cheque Listing for the period of December 1-31, 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, February 24, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

**13. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**Moved / Seconded**

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 9:10 p.m.

**CARRIED.**

*Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held February 10, 2025, in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.*

*Original Signed by Victor Smith*

**Mayor**

*Original Signed by Donna Bellingham*

**Director of Corporate Services**