

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, January 22, 2024
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

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

Staff Present: John Fortoloczky, Chief Administrative Officer
Donna Bellingham, Director of Corporate Services
Mike Olson, Director of Finance
Thomas Cameron, Fire Chief
Branden Morgan, Deputy Corporate Officer
Gurvinder Sodhi, Communications and Network Analysis Advisor

Others Present: 12 members of the public and 1 media

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved / Seconded

THAT the January 22, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Agenda be adopted, as presented.
CARRIED.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

(a) Regular Council Meeting

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held January 8, 2024 be adopted, as presented.
CARRIED.

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) Hope Pride Committee

Representatives from the Hope Pride Committee were in attendance to present to Council regarding highlights from 2023 and to submit a request to display the Pride Flag for June 2024. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Pride 2023 Events
 - 6 events were held
 - 370+ total attendees
 - 20+ volunteers
 - Historic flag raising at Hope RCMP
 - 165+ Pride Flags sold

- Queer Oppression
 - Since 2020, hate crimes targeting the Queer community have risen 64%.
 - Of the 423 reported hate crimes targeting the Queer community in 2021, 77% targeted people identifying as gay or lesbian, 2% targeted bisexuals, 11% targeting other orientations, and 10% had an unreported sexual orientation targeted.
 - Gender-based hate crimes are not recording accurate data for gender identities outside the binary.
 - Amnesty International has specifically called out the rise in hate towards Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- Pride 2024 Event Plans
 - Plans include film, music, food and a Queer market to take place on June 22, 2024.

Council inquired as to the importance of the Pride Flag being flown, in the delegation's opinion. The delegation explained that for those who have moved into the District, who have historically heard that Hope was not a safe place for the Queer community, the flag shows that it is a place where they can socialize and be safe. Discussion ensued regarding the need to create a flag policy to govern the display of community flags on District own buildings and other facilities in the future.

Council inquired as to the location that the flag would be flown from on District Hall. The CAO advised that the flag mount would likely be located on the south or west side for visibility.

Moved / Seconded

THAT the District of Hope purchase a removeable flag pole to be mounted on District Hall to display the Pride Flag for the month of June, 2024;

AND THAT Staff be directed to bring back a Flag Flying Policy for discussion at a Committee of the Whole meeting.

CARRIED.

OPPOSED: Councillor Smith, Councillor Wells

(b) Spuzzum First Nation

Representatives from Spuzzum First Nation were in attendance to present to Council regarding the proposed South Anderson Mountain Resort. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Project Information
 - Spuzzum First Nation has undertaken over \$800,000 in initial feasibility and planning work to date, including:
 - Market/financial analysis
 - Environmental studies
 - Archaeological studies
 - Transportation access analysis
 - Mapping and site servicing
 - Traditional use study
 - Mountain village planning
 - Ski hill planning
 - Eco-tourism opportunities
 - Employment opportunities

- The ski area has a base elevation of 1000m extending to 1700m with a build-out of 11 lifts utilizing 700m of vertical.
- The resort plan can accommodate up to 11,000 bed units and includes hotels, condos, single family, townhouses, RV campground and employee lodging.
- The majority of resort visitors will come from the Lower Mainland and Metro Seattle, with a joint population of over 7 million and growing at approximately 100,000 people a year.
- Skier visits are projected to increase from 150,000 in year one to 400,000 in year ten.
- The Abbotsford International Airport is expected to be a significant conduit for Western Canada and American visitors.
- What Spuzzum First Nation offers Hope and BC
 - A major tourism and economic development initiative opportunity for B.C.
 - Hope will be the primary service centre.
 - The project has been planned with environmental and sustainable practices.
 - The creation of 800 plus jobs.
 - Summer activities including mountain biking, golf, hiking and sightseeing.
 - Many First Nations are supportive in principle with no competing land use conflicts.
- What Spuzzum wants from Hope
 - Written support for the planning and feasibility process currently underway with the BC Mountain Resorts Branch.

Council inquired as to whether there will be issues with competition from other applications for recreation projects that are in the area around Hope. The delegation advised that as this project is Indigenous led, features year-round recreational activities, and the elevation necessary to support the necessary amount of snow, it is viewed as a different project than the others. They added that competition is not a concern as the location is so close to a large population base.

Council inquired as to whether something will be put in place to direct travelers up Highway 1 as opposed to Highway 5, which is more frequently travelled. The delegation advised that they have hired Wedler Engineering to review the route options, with the final decision based on both environmental and financial costs. The CAO inquired as to how the capitalization of phase one will take place with regards to where the money will come from. The delegation advised that Spuzzum First Nation resources have funded the feasibility studies so far, and that land development will take place through a partner when the permitting is in place.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council issues a letter of support for Spuzzum First Nation for the planning and feasibility process that is currently underway with the BC Mountain Resort Branch for the proposed mountain resort in the South Anderson Valley. **CARRIED.**

(c) Hope Mountain Centre

Representatives from the Hope Mountain Centre were in attendance to present to Council regarding 2023 highlights, 2024 trail plans, and to submit a 2024 funding request. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Education
 - School programs
 - Public programs and events
 - Indigenous Youth Outdoors
 - Manning Park Interpretive Programs
 - Infusion of trail signage and conservation projects
- Conservation
 - Grizzly Bear Monitoring
 - Black Bear Committee
 - Water quality monitoring
 - Leave No Trace
 - World Rivers Day
 - Friends of the Skagit
- 2023 Summer Trail Crew
 - Trails improved:
 - HBC Trail
 - Hope Bike Park
 - Tikwalus Trail
 - Dragon's Back Trail
 - Hope Lookout
 - Thacker Mountain
 - Landstrom Ridge
 - Spirit Caves
 - Mount Hope Summit
 - Wells Peak
 - Flood Falls Trail
 - Range of work included clearing brush, logs, staircase and foot bridge repair, installation of benches, toilets, and water bars, trail tread repair, signage, painting, raking, and garbage removal.
- 2023 Financial Contributions
 - A total of \$120,756 in contributions were received, much of which was leveraged from the initial \$37,500 in funding from the District of Hope.
- 2023 Volunteer Contributions
 - 543 total volunteer hours
 - 117 total volunteers
 - \$9,231 cash value of volunteer efforts
- Trails of Hope brochure
 - 10,000 copies printed in both March and August
 - Widely distributed by local businesses, visitor centres, trade shows, outdoor

stores and during special events.

- Goals for 2024
 - Continue maintaining local trails.
 - Complete repairs to the HBC trail.
 - Complete the interpretive signs for the Dragon's Back.
 - Build a new trail connecting Flood Falls to the Dragon's Back.
- \$37,500 in funding is being requested from the District of Hope for the 2024 season.

Council inquired as to whether the District can fulfill the request due to the ongoing budget process. The CAO advised that there are sources of funding available to use that can later be blended in as a budget amendment. He added that Council could pass a resolution asking that Staff source the funds from prior year's surplus or reserves. The Director of Finance advised that these funds have typically been given through the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest grant.

Council inquired as to whether these projects assist the community with FireSmart and other awareness initiatives. The delegation advised that the trails make for easier access to remote areas, promote the maintenance of access roads which can be an egress and entry point for fighting fires, and get people out looking for hazards around the community. Council inquired as to whether any funding is allocated from other groups for maintenance of the HBC trail that ends near Princeton. The delegation advised that they have received approximately \$20,000 from other groups to fund work on the eastern end of trail.

Following discussion, Council elected to allocate an additional \$2,500 above the requested funding amount for a total of \$40,000 for the 2024 calendar year.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council approves funding in the amount of \$40,000 from prior year's surplus for the Hope Mountain Centre for the 2024 calendar year. **CARRIED.**

(d) District of Hope Fire Chief

The District of Hope Fire Chief, Thomas Cameron, was in attendance to present to Council regarding item 5(a), Emergency Management Plan Update, and item 5(b), Emergency & Disaster Management Act. In his presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Emergency & Disaster Management Act (EDMA)
 - Given royal assent on November 8, 2023, replacing the previous Emergency Program Act.
 - Emphasizes the importance of consultation, collaboration and cooperation in emergency management, mandating consultation with Indigenous peoples and all levels of government.
 - Mandates the conduct of risk assessments to identify and evaluate potential hazards, vulnerabilities, and potential impacts.
 - Local Authorities will be responsible for developing plans within their jurisdictional boundaries, including any Crown land residing within.
 - Local Authorities and critical infrastructure owners must have business continuity plans to ensure essential services will be provided during an emergency or disaster.
 - Local governments may form and join Multi-jurisdictional Emergency

Management Organizations with other regional districts, local governments, Indigenous governing bodies, and the province.

- The 7-day State of Local Emergency period has now been increased to 14 days, and the power to declare can now be delegated by bylaw.
- Grant Opportunities in 2023
 - CEPF - Emergency Operations Centre's & Training - \$10,170.36
 - Funding brought in new communications equipment and added emergency food ration and hygiene kit capacity.
 - CEPF - Volunteer and Composite Fire Department Training and Equipment - \$30,000.
 - Funding will build capacity with structural and wildland equipment as well as specific training (Emergency Vehicle Operator, Engine Boss, ICS 200, etc.).
- Tasks and Planning in 2023
 - Fraser River Freshet Coordination Calls – May 12th, 15th, 17th, and 19th.
 - Update and maintain First Nation contact lists for consultation, collaboration and cooperation.
 - Update and maintain training records for Emergency Operation Centre personnel, sharing quarterly course offerings through the Province and Justice Institute of BC.
 - 683 total calls received, with 99 of these events being reportable fires where an investigation took place and reports were submitted to the Office of the Fire Commissioner.
 - Structure Protection Coordination
 - 5 deployments totaling 32 days
 - Over \$140,000 invoiced to the BC Wildfire Service
 - 2023 volunteer firefighter recruitment brought six new recruits into training, of which one has moved to a full time position with Langley Fire.
- Grant Opportunities for 2024
 - CEPF – Emergency Support Services Equipment and Training - \$30,000
 - Funding will be used for equipment such as administration and first aid kits for reception centres and group lodging, as well as identification vests, stationary supplies, computers, ESS team jackets and t-shirts, hygiene kits, and survival support kits.
 - CEPF – Emergency Operation Centre's & Training - \$30,000
 - Consideration for training and equipment is currently taking place.
- Tasks and Planning for 2024
 - Creation of the new Hope Volunteer Emergency Support Services Response Plan.
 - Development of a District of Hope Volunteer Emergency Support Services Team.
 - Collaboration with the Office of the Fire Commissioner to implement their FireSafe Program Phase 1 for educational programs and smoke alarm campaigns.

Council inquired as to whether the District will have their own Emergency Support Services team. The Fire Chief advised that in the past these services have been

performed by internal staff, but a volunteer team and plan are being implemented. He added that the funding opportunities will ensure that the items and training are in place to run the program. Council inquired as to how many members the Fire Department currently has, the Fire Chief advised that there are currently nineteen members.

Council inquired as to what plan is in place for the District to respond to emergency events such as the atmospheric river event, and how community members are able to offer their assistance and contribute to response efforts. The Fire Chief advised that members of the Emergency Operations Centre, as noted on the organizational chart, are responsible for managing the response to events and that community efforts should go through the proper channels. The CAO advised that in the case of an emergency, the District is responsible for the emergency response in their jurisdiction. He added that the plan is a framework that does not anticipate every risk and solution but provides staff with the ability to develop an action plan for the issue at hand. It was also noted that emergency planning happens on an ongoing basis to anticipate issues, such as the planning of various warming centers during the recent widespread power outages.

5. STAFF REPORTS

- (a) **Report dated January 9, 2024 from the Fire Chief**
Re: Emergency Management Plan Update

Moved / Seconded

THAT the report dated January 16, 2024 from the Fire Chief regarding the Emergency Management Plan update, be received for information. **CARRIED.**

- (b) **Report dated January 12, 2024 from the Fire Chief**
Re: Emergency & Disaster Management Act

Moved / Seconded

THAT the report dated January 12, 2024 from the Fire Chief regarding the new *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*, be received for information. **CARRIED.**

- (c) **Report dated January 8, 2024 from the Fire Chief**
Re: 2024 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council supports the District of Hope application to the 2024 UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for grant funding up to the amount of \$30,000 to improve the efficiency of the District of Hope Emergency Support Services through the provision of equipment required for training and implementation of a new District of Hope Emergency Support Services Plan; and

FURTHER THAT Council commit the District of Hope to provide overall grant management. **CARRIED.**

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He announced that the generator has been installed at the Golden Agers building, noting that the project was completed with funding from United Way and a grant opportunity with the help of Community Futures Sun Country. He added that the grant

also provided upgrades to the electrical panel and surge protectors for their electrical appliances.

- He attended the Golden Agers meeting where Fire Chief Thomas Cameron and Deputy Fire Chief Joshua Wescott provided a training session on fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide alarms, and emergency kits. He noted that Councillor Smith has been appointed as the new Golden Agers Council liaison, and that a letter of appreciation was received for Councillor Stewin’s work over the last nine years.
- He announced that the Fraser Valley Regional District is continuing to work proactively on invasive plants, highlighting a project to remove knotweed on Highway 7 in collaboration with the District and CN Rail.
- He met with the Hope & District Chamber of Commerce, AdvantageHOPE, and the Black Press to collaborate on the advertising of local events posted in the Hope Cascade & Canyon Visitor Guide. He noted that it is important for the people of Hope to know of upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He attended an AdvantageHOPE meeting on January 18th, noting that the new Marketing Manager presented a marketing plan to the board for the first quarter of 2024, as well as a plan for 2025-2029.
- He noted that the recent cold snap has delayed the Station House move but advised that contractors will be on-site on February 6th to begin preparations.
- He announced that he will be attending the upcoming Fraser Valley Regional District Board meetings on behalf of the Mayor, as he will be away.

Councillors Smith, Stewin, Wells, Newbigging and Skoglund had nothing to report.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

(a) District of Hope 2024-2028 Financial Plan Bylaw No. 1570, 2023

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope 2024-2028 Financial Plan Bylaw No. 1570, 2023* be adopted this 22nd day of January, 2024.

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

(a) For Information Correspondence

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated January 22, 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 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

13. RESOLUTION TO PROCEED TO CLOSED MEETING AT 8:57 P.M.

Moved / Seconded

THAT the meeting be closed to the public to consider matters pursuant to Section 90(1)(k) [negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public] and 90(1)(e) [the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality] of the *Community Charter* re: draft First Nation Protocol Agreement, land acquisition, and adopting closed meeting minutes.

CARRIED.

14. RETURN TO OPEN MEETING AT 9:15 P.M.

15. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 9:16 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held January 22, 2024 in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith
Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham
Director of Corporate Services