

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, January 8, 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

Council Members Absent: Councillor Dusty Smith
Councillor Zachary Wells

Staff Present: John Fortoloczky, Chief Administrative Officer
Donna Bellingham, Director of Corporate Services
Branden Morgan, Deputy Corporate Officer

Others in attendance: 1 member 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 8, 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 December 11, 2023 be adopted, as presented.
CARRIED.

4. DELEGATIONS

There were no Delegations.

5. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Report dated December 21, 2023 from the Chief Administrative Officer Re: Funding Request – Hope and District Arts Council (HDAC)

Council inquired as to whether the HDAC applied for the most recent round of Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest (CLCCF) disbursements. The CAO advised that he will look into this request and provide the information to Council. Council inquired as to whether there are other sponsors for the Concerts in the Park. The Director of Corporate Services advised that other local organizations also sponsor the event. Council inquired as to how many times the police have been contacted to deal with issues at the event in prior years. The CAO advised that one individual was mentioned specifically, with the police being contacted multiple times. He added that the HDAC is worried that the situation could get worse.

Council noted that this request falls outside of the normal process for applications to the CLCCF disbursements and added that they do not want to set a precedent for events and organizations to apply for funding outside of the regular process. As such, Council denied the request for funding and suggested that the HDAC look into alternative fundraising options in the short term.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He noted that 2023 was a year of change on Council, with one Councillor stepping down and being replaced by Councillor Smith following the 2023 By-Election.
- He noted that the District is strengthening ties with local Indigenous communities, municipalities, and provincial ministries through a partnership in the ongoing Lower Coquihalla Flood Table.
- He noted that Council and major organizations in the District have met regarding the Downtown Revitalization Action Plan, and that Council is looking forward to 2024 as these projects start to take shape.
- He noted that Council and Staff worked together to move the budget ahead another two months, allowing it to be completed closer to the start of the year and enabling the District to reduce costs, timelines, and increase efficiency.
- He noted that Councillor Newbigging and Councillor Skoglund have begun working on the Accessibility Advisory Committee and associated plan to inform future District policies and development.
- He met with Minister Ma from the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness to discuss gravel removal and installation of riprap to prevent erosion along the Coquihalla River.
- He noted that Councillor Medlock has been working hard on the Station House move, which will see the building sitting on Water Avenue. He thanked Councillor Medlock for his dedication to the project.
- He noted that Council and Staff are continuing to improve communication with the community with the addition of Gurvinder Sodhi as Communications and Systems Analysis Advisor.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She wished everyone a Happy New Year.
- She announced that there will be a Hope Inclusion Project meeting on January 9th.
- She inquired as to where the public can see a copy of the Downtown Revitalization Plan. The CAO advised that he will confirm the availability of the document and pass it on to Councillor Stewin.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She took part in reading at the library on December 13th, noting that the kids enjoyed the event and green screen pictures were taken and sent home by email. She added that the sword in the stone carving was also unveiled at the reading.

- She attended the Rotary Skate on December 24th, noting that Santa was unable to attend but there was a great turnout and lots of hot chocolate and candy canes.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He noted that the basement level of the Station House has been emptied in preparation for the move, with the moving company on site next week for further preparation.
- He announced that Richard Halbe has been hired as the Marketing Manager for AdvantageHOPE, and his work began on January 4th.
- He noted that he has received concerns regarding construction being done at 65741 Gardner Drive. He advised that this individual is concerned about the road that is being put in ending in gravel and not being paved. He noted that Staff, at the May 23, 2023 Public Hearing, assured residents that their concerns would be addressed before the development commenced. He asked that Staff investigate and respond to this individual's concerns.

Councillor Skoglund Reported:

- She noted that some applications have been received for the Accessibility Committee but more are needed before the deadline on January 31st. She added that they are looking for four people to support the committee in advocating for those with disabilities, and one additional Indigenous member.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

**(a) Report dated January 2, 2024 from the Director of Finance
Re: Five Year Financial Plan**

The CAO advised that an Integrated Official Community Plan Redesign and Housing Study grant was received late last year that has been blended into the 2024 budget. He added that as a result, the property tax increase has been reduced to 3.9% from the original 5.51%.

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope 2024-2028 Financial Plan Bylaw No. 1570, 2023* be read a first, second and third time this 8th day of January, 2024.

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

(a) For Information Correspondence

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated January 8, 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 22, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

13. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 7:24 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held January 8, 2024 in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services