

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
COUNCIL MEETING**

Monday, September 8, 2025
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

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

Council Members Absent: Councillor Dusty Smith

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

Others Present: 4 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 September 8, 2025, Regular Council Meeting Agenda be adopted, as amended, to include item 5(d), a report from the Director of Operations/Deputy CAO regarding a District of Hope Long-Term Wastewater Infrastructure Plan. **CARRIED.**

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

(a) Regular Council Meeting

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held August 11, 2025, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

(b) Public Hearing

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Record of the Public Hearing held August 11, 2025, be received. **CARRIED.**

(c) Special Regular Council Meeting

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Minutes of the Special Regular Council Meeting held September 2, 2025, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

4. DELEGATIONS

There were no Delegations.

5. STAFF REPORTS

**(a) Report dated September 2, 2025 from the Director of Operations/Deputy CAO
Re: Pollution Control Center (PCC) Sludge Removal**

The Director of Operations provided a brief overview of the report, noting that an excess of sludge in the third and final treatment lagoon at the PCC has severely compromised the ability to effectively filter effluent before release to the Fraser River. He added that the current budget of \$300,000 to remove old, stored sludge is inadequate, and that initial estimates show probable costs between \$400,000 and \$600,000.

Council inquired as to whether this issue can be solved, or if sludge removal will be required every 7-8 years. The Director of Operations advised that this is a regular operation that the District will need to undertake, noting that sludge levels in the other lagoons are normal. Council noted that the District will need to budget based on the new lifecycle of sludge in the lagoons and inquired as to whether there are any other reserves in which the funds for sludge removal could be taken from. The Director of Operations advised that the Growing Communities Fund Reserve can be utilized for challenges based on community growth, and that the sewer and PCC reserves do not have the capacity for a project of this size.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council authorize an additional \$700,000 for the removal and disposal of sludge from the Pollution Control Center, to be funded by the Growing Communities Fund Reserve. **CARRIED.**

**(b) Report dated September 3, 2025 from the Director of Operations
Re: Othello Road Rehabilitation Project**

The Director of Operations provided a brief overview of the report, noting that TRUE Consulting, the District's engineering consultant, has advised that quantities associated with road base repairs and rock removal have exceeded original estimates by approximately \$230,000. Additionally, he advised that the removal of overburden to achieve a competent subgrade may result in \$175,000 in additional work but cannot be conclusively determined until competent subgrade has been found. It was noted that the original tender came in under budget, and that some of the overage costs will be captured by the initial estimate.

Council inquired about the timeline for the project, and whether work has stopped until further funding is approved. The Director of Operations advised that the contractor has continued working and has started the geotechnical portion but added that the District is obligated to cover any cost overages as part of the grant agreement. Council inquired as to the completion date of the project. The Director of Operations advised that works is scheduled to be completed by the end of October.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council authorize \$350,000 to cover additional Othello Road Rehabilitation Project costs, to be funded by the Growing Communities Fund Reserve. **CARRIED.**

(c) **Presentation from the Director of Finance**
Re: 2025 Mid-Year Financial Review

The Director of Finance gave a brief presentation on the 2025 Mid-Year Financial Review, noting that there are no areas of concern at this time.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council receive the 2025 Mid-Year Financial Review, for information. **CARRIED.**

(d) **Report dated September 8, 2025 from the Director of Operations/Deputy CAO**
Re: District of Hope Long-Term Wastewater Infrastructure Plan

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council support the District of Hope application to UBCM's Canada Community Building Fund Strategic Priorities Fund, Capacity Building Stream to develop a Long-Term Wastewater Infrastructure Plan for the Pollution Control Center;

AND 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

(a) **Letter of Support – Riverside Manor**

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council issue a letter of support to the Riverside Manor for their application to the New Horizons grant opportunity. **CARRIED.**

(b) **Letter of Support – Royal Canadian Legion Branch 228**

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council issue a letter of support to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 228 for their application to the New Horizons grant opportunity. **CARRIED.**

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He noted that the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) will no longer be using X (Twitter) due to lack of engagement.
- He announced that the FVRD is the fourth most efficient regional district in BC despite being the third largest, noting recent projects including the North Cultus Wastewater Treatment Plant, large greenhouse projects, and upgrades to the Hope and Area Recreation Centre heating and cooling upgrades.
- He requested that the FVRD install one of four new air quality monitoring stations at the Silver Creek Firehall, noting there are concerns regarding smoke that lingers in the Skagit Valley each year.
- He congratulated Lori and Rob Ibister, as well as the other volunteers and staff, who helped put together the Brigade Days event. He added that the event started in 1968 and evolved over time to its present form.
- He, along with Director of Corporate Services Donna Bellingham, met with Deputy Director General Peter J.Y. Chiou of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office and

his wife regarding Council's decision to restore the Republic of China (Taiwan) flag.

- He noted that the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention will be taking place from September 22nd to 26th, where members of Council and the CAO will be able to connect with other communities, meet with Provincial Cabinet Ministers, and vote on resolutions.

Councillor Graham Reported:

- She attended Brigade Days, noting that she took part in the parade and thanked the volunteers for their work in putting together a successful, well-attended event.
- She attended the final Concert in the Park of the season, noting that it was well attended and thanked all who contributed to the event.

Councillor Skoglund Reported:

- She attended the Hope and District Arts Council (HDAC) meeting on August 28th where they discussed Concerts in the Park and methods of counting attendees at events. She added that Ryan Witt, the new Program Coordinator for the Art Machine, has done a great job introducing fresh ideas and took part in the Brigade Days parade.
- She announced that the Arts Council Garage Sale will take place on September 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Studio A at the Art Machine. She added that the HDAC is accepting donations on Thursday, September 11th from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on Friday, September 12th from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- She watched the Brigade Days Parade and thanked District of Hope Staff for effectively managing road closures along the route.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He attended Brigade Days, noting that attendance was high, and thanked Brigade Days and Hope Motorsports volunteers for their hard work.
- He noted that he will be attending the upcoming UBCM Convention, adding that he is looking forward to connecting with colleagues and the opportunity to learn.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She attended Brigade Days, noting that she appreciated the presence of drumming and dancing at the opening ceremony and the statement by Chawathil First Nation Chief Aaron Pete regarding working together to partner in economic development. She also thanked the volunteers who helped make the weekend a success.
- She noted that the Hope Inclusion Project meeting scheduled for September 9th has been postponed until October.
- She announced that the kickoff for Purple Light Night will take place on October 1st at 6:00 p.m. in Memorial Park
- She expressed her appreciation for the Richmond Hill Multi-Use Pathway project, noting that she walks the route quite often and now feels safe and able to walk the route alone as a person with low vision. She added that she would like to see an audible crossing installed at the intersection of the Highway 1 off-ramp and Flood-Hope Road.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She attended Brigade Days on Friday, noting that it was well attended.
- She noted that the Hope Golf & Country Club hosted the 2025 Hope Men's Autumn Leaves Golf Tournament this past weekend, noting that Dustin Boydell scored a hole-in-one and was the Overall Low Gross Winner.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

(a) Zoning Amendment Bylaw

Re: Short-Term Rental Regulations

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1603, 2025*, to allow provisions for Short Term Rentals, be adopted this 8th day of September, 2025. **CARRIED.**

(b) Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw

Moved / Seconded

THAT *Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 1607, 2025*, be adopted this 8th day of September, 2025. **CARRIED.**

(c) Records Management Bylaw

Moved / Seconded

THAT *Records Management Bylaw No. 1605, 2025*, be adopted this 8th day of September, 2025. **CARRIED.**

(d) Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw

Re: 19623 Silver Skagit Road

Council inquired as to the delay in adopting the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Amendment Bylaws for 19623 Silver Skagit Road. The Director of Community Development advised that the District had a requirement that, should the rezoning be approved, the proponent would need to provide funds for improvements to the road in front of the subject property. As the funds have been collected from the property owner, the OCP and Zoning amendments have been brought forward for adoption.

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1598, 2025* to re-designate the property located at 19623 Silver Skagit Road from Country Residential to Light and Service Industrial, be adopted this 8th day of September, 2025. **CARRIED.**

(e) Zoning Amendment Bylaw

Re: 19623 Silver Skagit Road

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1599, 2025*, to rezone the property at 19623 Silver Skagit Road, from Country Residential (CR-1) to Light/Service Industrial (I-2), be adopted this 8th day of September, 2025. **CARRIED.**

- (f) **Report dated August 22, 2025 from the Director of Finance**
Re: 2025-2029 Permissive Tax Exemption Amendment

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope 2025 - 2029 Permissive Tax Exemption Amendment Bylaw No. 1611, 2025* be given first, second and third reading, this 8th day of September, 2025.

CARRIED.

- (g) **Report dated August 28, 2025 from the Planner III**
Re: Development Variance Permit for 733 7th Avenue

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council approve a Development Variance Permit for the following Zoning Bylaw variance for 733 7th Avenue:

- Part 10.1.5.1 (Setbacks) to reduce the minimum south-east interior lot line setback from 1.2 m to 0.3 m for a garage addition to an existing one family residence. **CARRIED.**

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) **For Information Correspondence**

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated September 8, 2025, be received.
CARRIED.

- (b) **Accounts Payable Cheque Listing – July 2025**

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Accounts Payable Cheque Listing for the period of July 1-31, 2025, be received.
CARRIED.

10. OTHER PERTINENT BUSINESS

There was no other pertinent business.

11. QUESTION PERIOD

Brian Coates, resident of 7th Avenue, had concerns regarding potential noise resulting from the Development Variance Permit approved for 733 7th Avenue. Mr. Coates inquired about the hours during which noise can be made. The Director of Corporate Services advised that under the *Good Neighbour Bylaw*, noise must not be made before 7:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m.

12. NOTICE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

13. ADJOURN

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 7:44 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held September 8, 2025, in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services