

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
COUNCIL MEETING**

Monday, February 23, 2026
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
Robin Beukens, Director of Community Development
Mike Olson, Director of Finance
Branden Morgan, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others Present: 8 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 February 23, 2026, 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 February 9, 2026, be adopted, as presented. **CARRIED.**

(b) Public Hearing

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Record of the Public Hearing held February 9, 2026, be received. **CARRIED.**

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) Fraser Canyon Hospice Society

Representatives from the Fraser Canyon Hospice Society were in attendance to present to Council. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Who We Are
 - Community-based, not-for-profit hospice since 1995

- Works in a hospital setting serving individuals and families facing serious illness, end of life, and grief
- Offers programs including:
 - Circle Bereavement Group
 - Nature Walking Group
 - Comfort calls
 - Grief Friends for Facebook
 - Camp Skylark for Children
- Service Area
 - Hope
 - Boston Bar
 - Manning Park
 - Peters Road
- What Hospice Care Looks Like
 - Emotional and compassionate support
 - Symptom and comfort support in partnership with healthcare teams
 - Support for families and caregivers
 - Grief and bereavement care
 - Volunteers supporting clients and families
 - Staff work alongside Fraser Health employees
 - High senior population in Hope increases need for hospice services
- Volunteers
 - Volunteers are central to hospice care delivery
 - Provide companionship, listening, and presence
 - Help reduce isolation for patients and caregivers
 - Extend care beyond what clinical staff can provide
 - Essential to programs such as Camp Skylark and Timeless Connections
 - Strong senior population reinforces importance of volunteer support
- The Growing Need
 - Aging population
 - Increased complexity of illness
 - More people living longer with chronic conditions
 - Growing need for grief and caregiver support
 - About 31% of residents are 65 or older
 - Average age around 49.5 years
 - Nearly 1 in 3 residents are seniors, driving hospice demand
- Challenges
 - Limited number of volunteers
 - Inconsistent, largely community-based funding
 - Difficulty expanding services or planning long-term
 - Rising demand with limited resources
- Why Hospice Matters
 - Improves quality of life
 - Enables people to remain in their local and rural community

- Reduces pressure on hospitals and emergency services
- Supports caregivers and helps prevent burnout
- 58% of Canadians who died received some form of palliative care
- Why Community Support Matters
 - Hospice fills gaps the healthcare system cannot always meet
 - Stable funding supports sustainability and growth
 - Ongoing volunteer recruitment and training are essential
 - Community awareness improves access to hospice services

Council inquired as to what expenses the Hospice Society has, and what their annual budget is. Sar Robson, Hospice Coordinator, advised that the majority of expenses are for wages, but also includes costs such as insurance. She added that Fraser Health provides approximately \$90,000 in funding, while the remainder comes from donations and fundraising.

5. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Report dated February 6, 2026 from the Chief Administrative Officer Re: Station House Archaeological Update and Final Construction Endorsement

Council inquired as to how much remains in the Infrastructure Reserve. The Director of Finance advised that the Infrastructure Reserve has a total of \$6.4 million, and that approximately \$500,000 is being contributed each year. He added that should any funds be needed from the Infrastructure Reserve for the Station House project, it would reduce the 2026 contribution. Council inquired as to how much remains in the Station House Reserve. The Director of Finance advised that approximately \$160,000 in unallocated funds remain.

Further discussion ensued, including:

- Use of Infrastructure Reserve funds for the Station House that could be utilized for other projects in the District
- The project is no longer facing a worst-case scenario related to archaeological finds
- The costs associated with constructing a new building for the Visitor Centre and Museum if the Station House project does not continue
- The District has limited options for the land until the archaeological process has been completed, and any potential sale would take that into account
- Alternatives will cost the District more and have less value to the community
- Lobbying and fundraising efforts from community groups including the Tashme Historical Society and the Japanese Canadian Legacy Society

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council endorse continuation of the Station House relocation and restoration project as presented by the Tashme Historical Society;

AND THAT Council authorize all additional archaeological costs required for the *Heritage Conservation Act* Section 12.4 (HCA 12.4) alteration permit and related archaeological monitoring during construction, to be funded from the Station House Reserve;

AND FURTHER THAT should additional funds be required beyond the Station House Reserve, they be drawn from the Infrastructure Reserve. **CARRIED.**

OPPOSED: Councillor Newbigging, Councillor Skoglund

**(b) Report dated February 18, 2026 from the Director of Finance
Re: Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel**

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council establish a Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel pursuant to Section 204 of the *Community Charter* for the purpose of authenticating the roll and considering any complaints respecting the Parcel Tax Bylaw related to the 753 Water Amalgamation Project; and

FURTHER THAT Council appoint at least three members of Council to the Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to schedule a meeting of the Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel on April 20, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct Staff to proceed with notification of the meeting in accordance with Section 94 of the *Community Charter*. **CARRIED.**

Following discussion, Council noted that they would like to appoint Councillor Bonny Graham, Councillor Scott Medlock and Councillor Heather Stewin to the Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council appoint Councillor Bonny Graham, Councillor Scott Medlock and Councillor Heather Stewin to the Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel. **CARRIED.**

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He met with Tabby McLaughlin, Operational Director of the Fraser Canyon Hospital, and John Duff, Manager at the Park Street Manor, for a tour of the Park Street Manor.
- He noted that Communities in Bloom completed a cleanup at Exit 183 Eastbound near the Silver Creek Travel Center, thanking the volunteers, and Envision Credit Union for taking part, and the Travel Centre for providing coffee and sandwiches.
- He attended a session at the Spirit of Hope Secondary School where coach Jeff Martin spoke to students regarding self-doubt and believing in one's worth.
- He attended the Emperor of Japan's 66th birthday celebration with Consul-General Takahashi Yoshiaki, his wife, and other Provincial, Federal and Local officials, noting that they paid respect to the families of Tumbler Ridge.
- He attended a tour of the Rubicon Organics facility hosted by CEO Margaret Brodie along with the AdvantageHOPE team, noting that they now employ 52 people in the community.
- He attended the opening of the Hope Shoe Cobbler across from the Envision Credit Union along with the AdvantageHOPE team.
- He attended a meeting regarding the Fraser Canyon Flood and Landslide Final Report in Boston Bar, noting that the final report will help to inform local flood reports.

- He noted that the Recreation Centre has a new electric Zamboni-type machine, furthering the green initiative that began with the CO2 ice system.
- He noted that there was a military presence in the District over the weekend as emergency exercises were completed in collaboration with the District's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and included a simulated earthquake scenario.

The CAO added that 108 reservists took part in an earthquake scenario, being assigned various tasks throughout the community and liaising with EOC's, the RCMP, First Nations, Fraser Health, and other organizations as they could in the case of an actual emergency. He added that these troops are citizen soldiers who take time off work or their studies, and that Brigadier General Ursich, Deputy Division Commander of the 3rd Canadian Division, attended.

- He noted that Communities in Bloom is working on chainsaw carving repairs and added that a post will be made on the District website when the carvings are returned to the community.

Councillor Graham Reported:

- She reminded everyone that Pink Shirt Day, or Anti-Bullying Day, is coming up on Wednesday, February 25th.
- She noted that the District now has a cobbler in town.

Councillor Skoglund Reported:

- She attended the Hope and District Arts Council meeting on February 17th, noting that they applied for the Grants-in-Aid opportunity in October but did not receive notification that their application was not approved. She added that she would like to see the District send notification to all applicants indicating whether or not they were approved.
- She noted that the Hope and District Arts Council raised concerns regarding safety issues in their rear parking lot, and that she will forward these to the CAO.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He attended an AdvantageHOPE meeting on February 19th, noting:
 - AdvantageHOPE passed their marketing and operational budgets for 2026 on February 19th, and noted that the Visitor Centre received 329 visitors in January. He added that they received 76 inquiries regarding Rambo and 13 regarding chainsaw carvings.
 - AdvantageHOPE is looking for grant funding opportunities to install a shelter at the E-Bus pick-up location adjacent to the Station House.
 - Details are being finalized for the marketing guide that is distributed to local restaurants, businesses, and hotels.
 - AdvantageHOPE is collaborating on an online events calendar project that will advertise community events.
 - The Mayor and AdvantageHOPE have taken part in grand opening events for new businesses in the District, including FreeForm Physio, SoulCycle, Hope Shoe Cobbler, and Rubicon Organics.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She attended a Hope Inclusion Project meeting, noting that a Pride Event will be held in June and that they are looking for sponsorships.
- She noted that School District No. 78 will be hosting a strategic planning consultation with the public on March 12th at the Spirit of Hope Secondary School from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. where they will welcome feedback from the community, parents, staff, and organizations. She added that they have already held a forum in Agassiz where over 50 people attended.
- She noted that Fraser Health has a calendar on their website that shows holidays for all groups and cultural backgrounds.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She attended the Fraser Valley Regional Library retreat on February 18th, noting that they are working on their strategic plan and budget.
- She attended the Hope and District Chamber of Commerce meeting on February 23rd, noting the following upcoming events:
 - Earth day on April 25th
 - Shred-It Event on May 23rd
 - Farmer's Market returns on May 22nd until September 4th
 - New events such as the Business Excellence Awards are being planned
- She noted that the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) is holding an open house on March 6th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with representatives speaking about trades, agriculture, health science, upgrading, and continuing education. She added that the Hope Campus has been updated with equipment to facilitate students taking on-line courses.
- She noted that the next Hope and District Chamber of Commerce meeting will take place on March 23rd, and that they are looking for new members.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

(a) Report dated February 18, 2026 from the Planner I

Re: Development Variance Permit Application at 21301 Lakeview Crescent

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council approve the following Zoning Bylaw variances for 21301 Lakeview Crescent to enable the preservation of the existing dwelling unit on the property:

- Part 8.9.1 e to increase the maximum floor area of a detached accessory dwelling unit from 70 m² to 135 m².

CARRIED.

(b) Report dated February 18, 2026 from the Planner I
Re: Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit Application 21301 Lakeview Crescent

Council requested clarification regarding whether the existing building will be remaining on the property, and that the intent is to build a second building on the property. The Director of Community Development confirmed that the proposed variance will allow the existing building to remain as a detached accessory dwelling unit while enabling a new home to be built on the property.

Moved / Seconded

THAT a Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit be approved for the construction of a single-family dwelling at 21301 Lakeview Crescent, subject to the District of Hope receiving a satisfactory report from a qualified professional that meets the Development Permit Area conditions; and

FURTHER THAT the Director of Community Development be authorized to endorse the Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit and required covenant documents. **CARRIED.**

(c) Report dated February 17, 2026 from the Planner III
Re: Development Variance Permit Application at 66563 Summer Road

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council direct staff to proceed with notification for a Development Variance Permit for the following Zoning Bylaw variances for 66563 Summer Road:

- Part 10.1.5.1 (Setbacks) to reduce the minimum front lot line setback from 4.0 m to 2.0 m for the relocation of a single family dwelling onto the property. **CARRIED.**

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

(a) For Information Correspondence

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated February 23, 2026, 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, March 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

13. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 7:52 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held February 23, 2026, in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services