

TOWN OF WATSON LAKE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS 6:00 PM

MEETING NO. 01
January 9, 2024

ATTENDANCE

*Electronic attendance **

Christopher Irvin – Mayor
Lauren Hanchar – Councillor
Dale Burdes – Councillor
Denina Paquette – Councillor
Thomas Slager – Councillor

Administration
Cam Lockwood – Chief Administrative Officer
Tiffany Lund – Municipal Clerk

Delegation

Sgt. Cropper – RCMP
Cst. Russell

Public

J. Carlson*	B. Walters*	L. Dicknoether
P. McLeod*	A. Miller*	G. Potts*
P. Agana		

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Irvin.

AGENDA

MOTION 024-01-001

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

The Agenda be adopted with the amendment to add #7. Admin Report 23-23 Contract Award for the Purchase of Submersible Pump.

- CARRIED -

MINUTES

MOTION 024-01-002

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Burdes THAT:

The draft minutes from the Regular Council meeting of December 19, 2023, be adopted as presented.

- CARRIED -

PAYABLES

MOTION 024-01-003

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

The Open Payables in the amount of \$132,445.18 be approved and paid.

- CARRIED -

DELEGATION
Sgt. Cropper - RCMP

Sgt. Cropper was in attendance with new Member, Cst. Derek Russell, who provided an introduction to Council. Russell expressed excitement to be in Watson Lake and already has initiatives planned in the community.

Council was in receipt of the December 2023 policing report, which Sgt. Cropper spoke to. There was an over-all increase in calls in 2023 with an increase to thefts and public disturbances, a high number of traffic related offences, but a decrease in violent crimes. Council asked questions related to Member capacity, retention, and recruitment practices and expressed interest in participating in the setting of annual policing priorities in the spring.

REPORTS
CAO Report

CAO Lockwood provided the following updates to Council:

- Based on the high number of large-scale projects proceeding in 2024, Administration provided Council with updates on each capital budget project and shared anticipated timelines and project leads. Administration assured Council that the Town is in a good position to complete all projects slated for 2024.
- Representatives from YG Infrastructure Branch, accompanied by engineers and architects, are coming to Watson Lake to scope the Recreation Centre retrofit project to ensure that initial groundwork is completed and to be better prepared for future funding applications. There has been initial concern expressed with the structural integrity of the Arena, due to its age. Administration is proceeding with a full recreation review to investigate if the facility still meets community needs.
- Minister Mostyn has requested a meeting with Council on February 27th or 28th. The date February 28th was decided upon. Administration to finalize meeting arrangements.
- Administration sought direction from Council on what project to apply on for the Tourism Destination Fund, as two different projects had been discussed in the past; the urban visitor sign project or the installation of a new sani-dump station. After discussion Council decided the sani-dump project was more critical for the community and asked Administration to investigate alternative funding for the sign project.
- Administration shared that Director of Protective Services, Joey Cherpin, and his partner welcomed a new baby this week.

Property Tax Accounts in Arrears

Council was in receipt of a report listing property tax accounts in arrears, for acknowledgement prior to the list being published. Administration explained that payment received prior to the publishing deadline will be reflected in the list.

MOTION 024-01-004

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Burdes THAT:

Council approve the Property Tax Lien Summary for publishing.

- CARRIED -

TENDERS

Council was in receipt of an Administrative Report with recommendations for the contract award for the purchase of a backup submersible pump at the lift station. Council sought clarification on the type of pump being purchased and the budgeted amount in the 2023 Capital Budget. The contract award will be brought back to Council at the January 16, 2024 Council meeting.

BYLAWS

**General Maintenance & Nuisance
Bylaw 2023-011**

Council was in receipt of an Administrative Report outlining further amendments made to the draft General Maintenance and Nuisance Bylaw for Council's consideration. Council was happy with most of the changes made but asked Administration to further investigate solutions for snow removal in the downtown core. There was also a discussion about the section addressing snow being placed onto someone else's property and if this should be enforced. The draft bylaw will be brought back to Council for second reading once the legal review is complete.

**Property Tax Levy
Bylaw 2023-016**

Council was in receipt of an Administrative Report outlining the financial impacts of potential property tax rate increases in the 2024 fiscal year. Council discussed the financial impacts of Yukon government assessments increasing in 2024 and explained that Administration is investigating increases further to ensure it was done in an equitable way. On average, property assessments increased by 5%, which Council will take into consideration when setting the new tax levy. The bylaw will be brought back to Council at the January 16, 2024, Council meeting.

**2024 O&M Budget
Bylaw 2023-015**

O&M Budget Bylaw 2023-015 was before Council for further consideration. Administration reminded Council that the property tax levy rate will affect the O&M budget. The O&M Budget Bylaw will be brought back to Council at the January 16, 2024, Council meeting.

**Feeding of Wild Birds and
Animals Bylaw 2024-02**

Council was in receipt of a draft bylaw to address the feeding of wild birds and animals within the municipality. Council made minor editing suggestions, but overall, was happy with the draft bylaw and asked that it be brought forward to the January 16, 2024, Council meeting for First Reading.

**Watson Lake Fire Department
Bylaw 2024-01**

Council was in receipt of an Administrative Report recommending the amalgamation of the Watson Lake Volunteer Fire Department Bylaw and Life Safety Bylaw. The Director of Protective Services made several other amendment recommendations, recommended some things be moved to the Standard Operating Guidelines as opposed to being in a bylaw. Council expressed support for the recommended amalgamation and amendments and asked that the new draft bylaw be presented to Council at the February 20, 2024, Council meeting.

**NEW & UNFINISHED
Fire Department Renumeration Policy**

Council was presented with a new draft Fire Department Renumeration Policy for consideration. The amendments made came on the recommendation of the Director of Protective Services, who presented proposed changes to Council at a past meeting. Council asked Administration to provide a final draft copy of the policy at the February 20, 2024, Council meeting.

COUNCILLOR OPEN FORUM

Mayor Irvin:

- Noted that Morrison and Hershfield was purchased by Stantec and an amalgamation of the companies may happen in the future.
- Thanked Administration for the work put into the 2024 Capital Budget asked that road repairs be a continued conversation. Although the Town has a long term plan for infrastructure and road repairs, Mayor Irvin believes there needs to be a short term solution to address poor road conditions in the meantime. Council discussed the possibility of an assessment as a first step in addressing the issue.

Councillor Paquette:

- Acknowledged the Public Works department has been short staffed and the work they have accomplished.

Councillor Hanchar:

- Inquired what the minimum house size allowable was, as per the Zoning Bylaw and questioned if a property in town complied. Administration confirmed that the property in question is in compliance with the Zoning Bylaw.
- Asked Administration when the phase one inground infrastructure work will continue. Administration shared that work will continue once the ground can be dug in the spring.

GALLERY OPEN FORUM

A. Miller:

- Sought clarification on the increase to property assessment values and if Yukon Housing Corp. properties were affected. Administration could not answer at the time as further investigation is needed to determine which properties were affected.

- Asked for clarification on the draft General Maintenance and Nuisance Bylaw section that addresses permits and accumulations prohibited. Administration explained that past issued permits would be honoured and there will be discretion used to determine what can be on a property as an 'ornament', based on the risk to public safety.
- Asked for clarification on the road replacement plan and if Wye Drive was a part of that plan. Miller asked to be kept informed so to provide input.

B. Walters:

- Expressed support for prohibiting property owners from moving snow onto another property in the General Maintenance and Nuisance Bylaw.
- Explained that the fire break near Tintina Way was where many people in that neighborhood move excess snow but it has been blocked by a barricade since the infrastructure upgrades in the fall. Walters worries about the barrier being a safety risk as snowmobilers also use the fire break.
- Would like garbage fee removed from property tax bill.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION 024-01-005

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

There being no further business the meeting be adjourned.

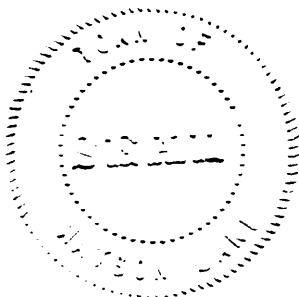
- CARRIED -



Lauren Hanchar – Deputy Mayor



Tiffany Lund – Municipal Clerk



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