

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

MEETING NO. 05  
March 5, 2024

**ATTENDANCE**

*Electronic attendance \**

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

**Delegation**

Sgt. Jordan Cropper – RCMP  
Cst. Zachary Bertucca – RCMP

**Administration**

Shannon Bergeron – A/Chief Administrative Officer  
Tiffany Lund – Municipal Clerk  
Joey Cherpin\* – Director of Protective Services

**Public**

R. Wilkinson	P. McLeod	R. Harder
R. Mitton	J. Stackhouse*	A. Miller*
B. Walters*	K. Ristau	M. Palmer*
C. Craft*	J. Skelton*	A. Miller*
P. Agana*		

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

**AGENDA**

**MOTION 024-05-042**

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

The Agenda be adopted as presented.

- CARRIED -

**MINUTES**

**MOTION 024-05-043**

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

The draft minutes from the Regular meeting of February 20, 2024 be adopted as presented.

- CARRIED -

**PAYABLES**

**MOTION 024-05-044**

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Burdes THAT:

The Open Payables in the amount of \$300,406.15 be approved and paid.

- CARRIED -

Council sought clarification about three of the payments listed on the cheque register and asked why there were multiple cancelled cheques listed.

**DELEGATION**  
**RCMP Policing Priorities**

Sgt. Cropper attended the meeting to introduce the new detachment member, Cst. Zachary Bertucca, and to provide a general update to Council. Watson Lake is Cst. Bertucca's first posting and excitement was expressed about being posted in the Yukon. Sgt. Cropper informed Council that the Corporal position is not expected to be filled until early summer and that there would be two soft vacancies during the summer; requests for coverage have been submitted.

Sgt. Cropper confirmed that fiscal policing priorities would be crime reduction, community relations, and drug enforcement and education, which Council expressed support for with the recommendation that the top priority be drug enforcement.

**REPORTS**  
**CAO Report**

Administration read aloud the CAO Report (attached).

**BYLAWS**  
**Fire Protection and  
Life Safety Bylaw 2024-01**

The draft Fire Protection and Life Safety Bylaw 2024-01 was before Council for discussion. Chief Cherpin provided clarification on the process for the development and approval of future policies and standard operating procedures and confirmed that the draft bylaw had been shared with the Fire Department members for comment. Councillor Slager asked Administration to investigate if Fire Department members were technically volunteers or Town employees and if they could qualify for certain employee benefits.

**Fees and Charges**  
**Amendment Bylaw 2024-04**

Council was in receipt of draft Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw 2024-04 with an accompanying Admin Report from the Recreation Department, outlining recommended fee amendments. Council expressed support for most of the fee amendments brought forward, except for those that affected non-profit groups. Administration explained that currently, the non-profit rates do not give a global discount and the fees are randomly discounted from the regular rate. The Rec Department would like there to be a set discount amount for non-profits and for the purpose of this review, used a twenty percent discount. Council was receptive to a global discount but would like it to be set to a percentage which will not change rates for non-profit users. Council also asked Administration to provide some alternative fee options for the use of Wi-Fi at the Rec Centre.

**NEW & UNFINISHED**  
**Watson Lake Fire Department  
Remuneration Policy 2024-01**

A Conflict of Interest declared by Councillor Paquette.

The draft Watson Lake Fire Department Remuneration policy was before Council for discussion. Fire Chief Cherpín explained the changes made since the last review and how the annual budget would be affected, based on the new proposed member pay scale. Council asked questions about on-call/radio pay, which Chief Cherpín explained was a section added to the policy for future needs, as the Department is not yet ready to implement.

**Urban Visitor Sign  
Policy 2024-02**

Council was in receipt of draft Urban Visitor Sign Policy 2024-02 for administering commercial highway signs. Council was in support of the proposed fees which would be in place for cost recovery. There were past discussions about applying to the Tourism Destination Fund to help kickstart the program, however Administration reminded Council that a decision was made to pivot the funding application to a different project. Council hopes to have an adopted policy in place for the upcoming tourism season.

**COUNCILLOR OPEN FORUM**

Councillor Hanchar expressed interest in attending the FCM Conference June 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and sought Council's support to cover travel and conference expenses. The FCM Conference had been attended in the past by Town Councillors however it has been several years since an elected official has attended. Mayor Irvin asked if there was anyone opposed to Councillor Hanchar attending and if there was interest from any other Council members. There was no other interest from Council.

**MOTION 024-04-045**

Moved by Councillor Burdes, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

Council pay for travel and conference expenses for Councillor Hanchar to attend the 2024 FCM Conference.

- CARRIED -

**GALLERY OPEN  
FORUM**

Rick Harder

- Sought clarification on who would be installing the Urban Visitor Signs.
- Asked if the draft Feeding of Wild Birds and Animals Bylaw would be discussed in a Town Hall forum and commended Council for tackling the issue.

Patti McLeod

- Commented that the Urban Visitor Signs are hard to see in the dark and would like the sign standards to include reflective lettering. McLeod also recommended that there be solar lights installed at the top of the signposts.
- Asked how many structural fires the Watson Lake Fire Department attended. Mayor Irvin read aloud the statistics in the 2023 Fire Department Annual Report.

- Asked the Town to conduct a review of the signs that are hung along the Alaska Highway as many are in bad condition and should be replaced.

Ruth Wilkinson

- Suggested the Rec Centre provide free Wi-Fi to those who spend money elsewhere in the Rec Centre or Bistro.
- Suggested that a discount on annual business licences be given to businesses that advertise on the Urban Visitor Sign posts.
- Advised Council of the youth hockey camp taking place in the community on the weekend.

Kevin Ristau

- Asked Council to engage with Yukon government to come up with a solution to tackle the dust issues on Frank Trail and Adela Trail. Ristau spoke about health and safety concerns that the dust causes, including poor air quality and visibility issues for drivers and pedestrians. Council explained that the roadways mentioned are owned by Yukon government but there have been discussions about the municipality taking over ownership, however more discussions are needed around this. Ristau left an information package for Council to review.

Randy Mitton

- Provided an introduction to Council and will be a delegation at the March 19, 2024, Council Meeting to provide a Yukon Wildland Fire department update and a 2024 seasonal outlook.

Colleen Craft

- Asked if a decision was made on the employment/volunteer status of Watson Lake Fire Department members, or if more discussion was going to take place.
- Asked Council to consider removing flags from the Alaska Highway that are not world flags and flying them elsewhere.

Button Walters

- Advised Council that the Visitor Information Centre provides free Wi-Fi from May until September.

**IN-CAMERA**

#### **MOTION 024-04-046**

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Burdes THAT:

Council move to an In-Camera meeting.

- CARRIED -

#### **MOTION 024-04-047**

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Burdes THAT:

Council revert back to an open meeting.

- CARRIED -

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION 024-04-048**

Moved by Councillor Hanchar, seconded by Councillor Burdes THAT:

Being there no further business to discuss that the meeting be adjourned.

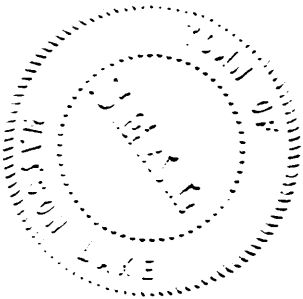
- CARRIED -



Lauren Hanchar – Deputy Mayor



Tiffany Lund – Municipal Clerk



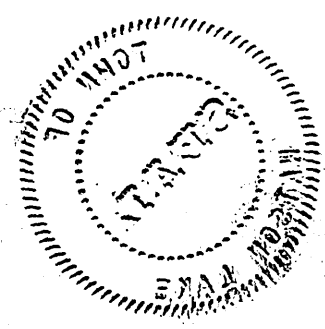
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PREPARED BY: Cam Lockwood  
REPORT DATE: 2024-03-01

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### Project Updates:

**Infrastructure:** The inground infrastructure work is scheduled to resume as soon as the weather permits in the spring. Norcope will have two crews in town to start the year, with one completing the Tintina Way work and the other working on Adela, Frank and Stikini with work slated to be completed by freeze up.

Currently Ottawa has not committed to any future funding streams, however it appears that they are waiting for the new budget in the spring.

**Rec Centre Scoping:** Work has been ongoing with the building assessment scoping project with engineers and consultants in town completing their work. We will have additional consultants in town on Monday and Tuesday doing further follow up. When the work is completed, a report will be coming to council. This work is funded by YG.

**Community Hall Renos:** Northern Front Studios and their engineering staff where in town, this week completing their assessments and scoping. The plan is to have work tender documents ready to be put out for tender early May. Our CCBF funding has been approved.

**HVAC:** We have been working with YG on a proposal to have all our HVAC systems at the Rec Centre, NLC and Admin building replaced. Our application for COVID HVAC funding was submitted to YG Management Board, who have approved it and now an application has been submitted by YG to Ottawa for the final approval as this is a federal funding pot.

**Dry Hydrants:** The dry hydrant scoping project has wrapped up with 10 locations evaluated for potential dry hydrant installations. Only three locations were found to be suitable. Administration has received the final report and is in the process of reviewing it and will be presenting council with an administrative report soon.

**Frances Avenue:** We have been meeting with Lands Branch to ensure that work is ready to proceed in the spring. Progressive Ventures, the lift station contractor has already mobilized some of their equipment to town and the wet well is scheduled to arrive in the next month. First Kaska has started production of the gravel material which will be in place for when Sidhu Contracting arrives in the spring.