

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

MEETING NO. 17
November 4, 2025

ATTENDANCE

Lauren Hanchar – Mayor
Thomas Slager – Councillor
Norma Puckett – Councillor
William Whimp – Councillor
Denina Paquette – Councillor

Administration

Cam Lockwood – CAO
Tiffany Lund – Municipal Clerk

Public

P. Agana	J. Madera *	C. Ellis
D. Saini	J. Carlson *	P. McLeod *
C. Irvin *	D. Burdes *	C. Craft *

*Electronic attendance **

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

AGENDA

MOTION 025-017-146

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Puckett THAT:

The draft agenda be adopted as presented.

- CARRIED -

MINUTES

MOTION 025-017-147

Moved by Councillor Puckett, seconded by Councillor Slager THAT:

The draft minutes from the Council Meeting of October 21, 2025, be adopted as presented.

- CARRIED -

PAYABLES

MOTION 025-017-148

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Puckett THAT:

The Open Payables in the amount of \$391,481.75 be approved.

- CARRIED -

Administration explained the reason for several corrected transactions listed on the cheque register. Council sought clarification on payables to Central Square Software Canada, Terus Construction Ltd., Union Tractor Ltd., CIBC, and CATT Pension Plan.

CORRESPONDENCE

Donation Request – Mt. Maichen Ski Hill Auction

Council received correspondence from the Watson Lake Ski Club, seeking a donation for their annual Ski Hill Auction. Administration provided that a cash donation of \$500.00 was given the previous year. Councillor Slager proposed that, due to the service that the Watson Lake Ski Club provides to the community, a cash donation of \$500.00 plus a waiver of hall rental fees be extended.

MOTION 025-017-149

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Whimp THAT:

Council provide a cash donation of \$500.00 to the Watson Lake Ski Club and that Hall rental fees be waived for the Ski Hill Auction event.

- CARRIED -

CORRESPONDENCE

AYC Donation Request – Festival of Trees

Council received correspondence from the Association of Yukon Communities, seeking a donation for an AYC tree sponsorship, on behalf of all municipalities, for the Festival of Trees fundraiser. Administration provided that a donation of Mt. Maichen ski passes, meals and accommodation was donated the previous year. Council was in favour of donating a similar experience this year.

MOTION 025-017-150

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Slager THAT:

Council donate a Winter Wonderland Weekend Getaway, to include a weekend pass at Mt. Maichen, accommodations, dinner for two, and Watson Lake swag.

- CARRIED -

REPORTS

Q3 Department Reports

Department Reports for Q3 (July – September) were before Council for review and adoption. Questions and discussions ensued regarding the format for which department reports would be presented moving forward, the progress of filling the Water Treatment Operator II position and the oversight in place until the position is filled, waterline leak detection and water consumption data, enforcement of the General Maintenance Bylaw and cleanup orders, and the activities planned by the Parks and Recreation Department.

MOTION 025-017-151

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

Council accept the Q3 Department Reports.

- CARRIED -

**Admin Report – HAF Service
Standards Manual Contract**

Council was provided with an Admin Report and comprehensive evaluation breakdown for the two proposals submitted for the development and supply of a Municipal Service Standards Manual. The Write Direction did not meet seven of the requirements, whereas WSP Engineering met or exceeded all. Although WSP Engineering's proposal bid was higher, Administration made the recommendation to award the contract to WSP as the outcome of the manual will provide greater value to the Town.

MOTION 025-017-152

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Whimp THAT:

Council accept the proposal from WSP Engineers in the amount of \$130,919.00 plus gst for the development and supply of a Municipal Service Standards Manual.

- CARRIED -

**Admin Report – Business
Grant Bylaw**

Administration provided an Admin Report with background information on the Business Grant Bylaw and financial implications over the past five years, as requested by Council. Council asked for clarification on grant qualification requirements. Upon review, Council determined that there were no amendments needed to the Business Grant Bylaw at this time.

**Admin Report – Water and
Sewer Fees**

Council was in receipt of an Admin Report with the recommendation that the Town's fees be reviewed. Administration did a preliminary review of seven northern municipalities and found that the Town's rates are significantly lower than most.

MOTION 025-017-153

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Paquette THAT:

Council direct Administration to conduct a comprehensive review of water and sewer rates and provide a full report to Council for further consideration.

- CARRIED -

BYLAWS
2026 Capital Budget
Bylaw 2025-09

The 2026 Capital Budget Bylaw was before Council for review and First Reading. Administration provided a breakdown of current cash account balances, a capital budget tracker for past and current expenditures, as well as current Gas Tax funding available with previously approved expenditures excluded from the balance. The draft Bylaw will be made public on the Town's website after first reading and will be a topic of discussion at the December 10, 2025, Town Hall Meeting.

MOTION 025-017-154

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Puckett THAT:

The draft 2026 Capital Budget Bylaw 2025-09 be introduced for First Reading.

- CARRIED -

2026 O&M Budget
Bylaw 2025-010

The 2026 O&M Budget Bylaw was before Council for review and First Reading. The budget presented was a balanced budget with no increase to property taxes. Administration provided information on the business case brought forward for the hiring of a full-time firefighter under a 3-year term, as well as an increase in Fire Fighter wages as the department would like to move to a rotational on-call schedule which will increase department wage expenses. The Parks and Recreation Department would also like to increase their staff by one member, to get closer to the staffing levels that were in place prior to pandemic layoffs in 2020. The draft Bylaw will be made public on the Town's website after first reading and will be a topic of discussion at the December 10, 2025, Town Hall Meeting.

MOTION 025-017-155

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Slager THAT:

The draft 2026 O&M Budget Bylaw 2025-010 be introduced for First Reading.

- CARRIED -

2026 Property Tax Levy
Bylaw 2025-011

The 2026 Property Tax Levy Bylaw was before Council for review and First Reading. Council was provided with figures reflective of a 1%, 1.5% and 2% increase in the property tax mill-rate. Council expressed hesitancy in increasing property tax rates without a plan for the use of the surplus revenue. Councillor Slager suggested that additional reserve accounts be considered to start setting aside funds for road infrastructure repairs and fire department asset replacements. Administration was

asked to draft a road infrastructure reserve account bylaw and a fire department reserve account bylaw for further consideration. Council introduced the draft 2026 Property Tax Levy Bylaw for First Reading with mill rates unchanged from 2025.

MOTION 025-017-056

Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Puckett THAT:

The 2026 Property Tax Levy Bylaw 2025-011 be introduced for First Reading.

- CARRIED -

MOTION 025-017-157

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Puckett THAT:

Council Direct Administration to create two draft bylaws for reserve accounts for road infrastructure repairs and the Fire Department.

- CARRIED -

NEW & UNFINISHED
Canadian Union of Postal Workers –
Canada Post Mandate Review

At the Council Meeting of October 21, 2025, Council discussed the adoption of a resolution, requesting that the Federal Government delays its Canada Post mandate review until there is a transparent public engagement process completed. At Council's request, a draft resolution was presented for adoption. Administration is to draft a letter to accompany the resolution.

MOTION 025-017-158

Moved by Councillor Slager, seconded by Councillor Whimp THAT:

Council adopt the draft resolution to the Federal Government requesting a delay in the Canada Post Mandate Review and direct Administration to draft an accompanying letter to Minister Lightbound.

- CARRIED -

COUNCILLOR OPEN FORUM

Councillor Slager:

- Suggested that the Town commission a local Yukon artist to create prints of the Sign Post Forest which Council could give for future donations and gifts. Administration shared that the Town holds the rights to two paintings created by Chris Caldwell, which the Town obtained from the Watson Lake Historical Society. Administration will provide the art prints for Council's consideration.

- Asked if there was an update on the Federal Budget being released. Administration and Mayor Hanchar provided a high-level overview of changes to funding streams that impact municipalities.
- Congratulated Patti McLeod for being successfully re-elected as MLA for the Watson Lake district and asked Administration to draft a letter of congratulations.

Councillor Whimp:

- Advised that LFN Chief and Council received the invitation for a leadership meeting and are considering dates.

Councillor Hanchar:

- Reminded everyone of the Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11th at 10:45am at the Recreation Centre.
- Asked if there was a plan to repurpose or sell the playground equipment removed from the Hyland Avenue park.
- Reminded everyone of the Town Hall meeting scheduled for December 10th at 6pm.

CAO Lockwood:

- Asked Council to choose a date for the annual Community Christmas Dinner. Council discussed December 11th (preferred) or 17th.

GALLERY OPEN FORUM

C. Ellis:

- Asked if the municipality had authority over Watson Lake and how one would go about installing a commercial fishing hut.
- Suggested some changes to the Remembrance Day ceremony and asked about wreath sponsorship.
- Suggested that Christmas festivities, such as the community dinner, be held closer to the holiday and advised the public that A Nicer Motel will be open Christmas Day with refreshments for those in need.

C. Irvin:

- Expressed support for the addition of funding reserves for road infrastructure and the fire department and suggested the road reserve be combined with the existing environmental reserve.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION 025-017-159

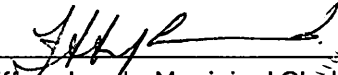
Moved by Councillor Paquette, seconded by Councillor Puckett THAT:

There being no further business to discuss that the meeting be adjourned.

- CARRIED -



Lauren Hanchar – Mayor



Tiffany Lund – Municipal Clerk

