

TOWN OF WATSON LAKE

SPECIAL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEETING NO. 7
March 14, 2019

ATTENDANCE

ABSENT

CHERYL O'BRIEN - MAYOR
ERIN LABONTE - COUNCILOR
THOMAS SLAGER - COUNCILOR
LAUREN HANCHAR - COUNCILOR

C.Irvin

ADMINISTRATION

CAM LOCKWOOD - CAO
TERRI CLOSE - MUNICIPAL CLERK

PUBLIC
G.Bruce
C.Craft
R.Harder
L.Bruce
L.Cole
N.Jukosky
A.Durante

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor O'Brien.

AGENDA

MOTION 019-07-59

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Labonte
that:

Council adopt the agenda as presented.

- CARRIED -

PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION 019-07-60

Moved by Councilor Labonte, seconded by Councilor Hanchar
that:

The Public hearing for By-Law 19-07, being a bylaw to amend Zoning By-Law
15-07 be opened.

-CARRIED -

Mayor O'Brien opened the Public Hearing for By-Law 19-07, being a By-Law to
control the use and location for the private retail of cannabis and commercial
cannabis grow operations.

Mayor O'Brien provided the public with documentation from Dr. Brendan
Hanley, Chief Medical Officer of Health Yukon regarding Cannabis retail zoning.
Points for consideration

- Yukon use of cannabis, alcohol and tobacco is at much higher rate than the national average.
- Setting minimum distances that cannabis retailers may operate from schools and other locations that children and youth access is important.
- Co-use of both alcohol and cannabis increases the impairment and negative health outcomes.
- By limiting the overall number of cannabis retail stores that are able to exist within the Town of Watson Lake, including the hours that allows the sale of cannabis will help to protect our youth and vulnerable populations residing in Watson Lake.

The following are comments from those in attendance.

There was general consensus from those present expressing concern with protecting youth and considering the distance between retail outlets and locations that are frequented by children including schools, the LFN band office, parks, playgrounds, daycares, etc.

Not allowing cannabis and alcohol outlets in the same location.

Youth need to be educated on the health effects of using cannabis and providing accurate information and advice about the products being sold, and their potential risks and harms of use.

Limiting the number of cannabis retail stores that are able to exist in the community.

There was opposition to cannabis being sold at Watson Lake Tags as youth congregate there and it is too close to the Watson Lake Secondary School.

Some members of the public were supportive of the Town implementing a bylaw for the retail sale of cannabis. Although it is illegal for a person younger than 19 years of age to purchase non-medical cannabis, access to illicit cannabis continues to be distributed on the street by those who are not allowed to do so.

- Mayor O'Brien provided the following in response to the public's concerns that were presented:

Providing education to any customer is part of the cannabis retail licence application process. Retail outlets are to be staffed with knowledgeable employees who have been trained through a formal training program

Under a regulated system, consumers shall be able to access cannabis in a safe manner that minimizes potential risks to consumers and the community and reduces the involvement of the illicit market.

The Town of Watson Lake has restricted the retail sale of cannabis within 150 metres from both the Elementary & Secondary schools, building to building. Council did not follow Territorial legislation on this matter, as the lots in WL are larger, and municipalities have the authority to implement its own regulations.

Council has the ability to deny retail outlets, however Council is open to business and do not want to limit business opportunities within the community. Council cannot discriminate against business that are in compliance with Town By-Laws. Council will be reviewing the business licence bylaw and licence fees will be considered.

Council will consider the comments from the Chief Medical officer for the Yukon. Although protecting youth from the potential health effects of cannabis use is not the sole responsibility of the Town of Watson Lake, Council will take this under careful consideration.

Mayor O'Brien ended the Public Hearing by informing the public that Council will take into consideration the verbal comments that were presented, and thanked the members for the opportunity to meet to discuss the By-Law and present their concerns.

MOTION 019-07-61

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Labonte that:

The Public Hearing be closed.

-CARRIED-

BY-LAWS

MOTION 019-07-62

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Labonte
that:

By-Law 19-07, being a bylaw to amend Zoning By-Law 15-07, to control the use & location for the private retail of cannabis and commercial cannabis grow operations be introduced for Second Reading.

-CARRIED-

NEW & UNFINISHED

Council was presented with the draft lease agreement for the YG Visitor Information Centre. Administration informed Council that two quotes have been obtained to address the electrical issues that surfaced at the time of the door installation. All renovations that are being done will be billed to YG. The Visitor Information Centre is expected to open on schedule April 15th.

MOTION 019-07-63

Moved by Councilor Labonte, seconded by Councilor Hanchar
that:

Council accept the draft lease agreement and allow Administration to sign the document on behalf of the Town of Watson Lake.

-CARRIED-

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION 019-07-64

Moved by Councilor Labonte, seconded by Councilor Hanchar
that:

There being no further business the meeting be adjourned at 7:15 pm.

- CARRIED -


Cheryl O'Brien – Mayor


Terri Close – Municipal Clerk