

TOWN OF WATSON LAKE

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEETING NO. 19  
December 7, 2021

ATTENDANCE

ABSENT

CHRISTOPHER IRVIN –MAYOR  
LAUREN HANCHAR – COUNCILOR  
THOMAS SLAGER – COUNCILOR  
DENINA PAQUETTE – COUNCILOR  
DALE BURDES – COUNCILOR

PUBLIC  
L.Bruce J.Carlson  
P.McLeod J.Reams  
T.Higney J.Brown  
M.Prowse C.Jobbe  
Srgt. Bailey Cst. Hedderson

ADMINISTRATION

CAMERON LOCKWOOD – CAO  
TERRI CLOSE – Municipal Clerk

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

**AGENDA**

**MOTION 021-19-157**

Moved by Councilor Slager, seconded by Councilor Hanchar  
that:

The agenda be amended to include item #7. – Introduction of Community Services  
Advisor, Michael Prowse.

-CARRIED –

**MINUTES**

**MOTION 021-19-158**

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Burdes  
that:

The minutes from the Committee of the Whole Meeting of November 2,2021 be  
amended to correct the spelling of Michael Prowse.

-CARRIED –

**MOTION 021-19-159**

Moved by Councilor Slager, seconded by Councilor Paquette  
that:

The minutes from the Special Meeting of November 24,2021 be adopted as presented.

-CARRIED –

**ACCOUNTS**  
**PAYABLE**

**MOTION 021-19-160**

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Slager  
that:

The Open Payables in the amount of \$535,987.45 be paid.

-CARRIED-

**DELEGATION**

TESSA HIGNEY  
VACCINATION MANDATE

Ms. Tessa Higney, Justin Brown and Cedric Jobe, representing a number of citizens  
expressed concerns with the government vaccination mandate and passport system and  
how it will affect the community and services that are provided. The group questioned  
the Town Council's position and how it intends to protect the citizen's charter of rights  
and freedoms.

Mayor Irvin explained that the mandatory vaccination requirement and passport system is regulated by the Government of Yukon. Although the Town of Watson Lake understands the complexity of the situation and its many challenges, the Town has an obligation to comply with the vaccination requirements. Discussion continued regarding essential services in the community and whether the Town can deem what is an essential service. Mayor Irvin explained that the Yukon Government developed the list of essential services and functions required in Yukon communities under the Civil emergencies Act. Although there are many unknowns, the Town has no control over the situation, and has to consider the greater good of the community as a whole. Council thanked Ms. Higney and delegation for sharing their perspectives and concerns of the citizens.

## RCMP

RCMP Sergeant Bailey introduced its new member, Constable Gillian Hedderson to the Watson Lake detachment. Constable Hedderson provided a brief summary of her background with the RCMP. Sergeant Bailey advised that the detachment is now fully staffed. Sergeant Bailey reported on various situations that have occurred in the community. Councilor Slager addressed the RCMP performance plan which includes addressing community priorities. Sergeant Bailey agreed to meet with Council in March to discuss their recommendations for inclusion in the RCMP performance plan. Council welcomed Constable Gillian Hedderson to the community and thanked herself and Sergeant Bailey for attending the meeting.

COMMUNITY ADVISOR  
MICHAEL PROWSE

YG Community Advisor, Michael Prowse introduced himself as the Watson Lake Community Advisor having replaced Jordan Stackhouse. Although he is new to the position, he is looking forward to working with Mayor, Council and Administration and meeting everyone in person. Mayor Irvin welcomed Michael Prowse and anticipates considerable discussion and collaboration on ongoing municipal projects.

## REPORTS CAO REPORT

Administration provided Council with an update on various projects.

The substantial completion date for the Municipal Services building is slated for December 15<sup>th</sup> at which time the Town will take possession and begin moving into the facility.

The funding application for the inground Infrastructure projects is on the desk of the Minister awaiting signature. Administration informed Council of the various contractors that were awarded tenders for the Infrastructure projects.

YG Infrastructure Branch is looking for a letter from the Town of Watson Lake to address what projects Council is proposing for the Recreation Complex. They are looking for a priority list. The roof replacement was quoted at \$10 million as the rates have increased substantially with COVID. Council agreed more discussion is needed to prioritize what amenities are essential going forward. Council agreed to discuss this at a Town hall meeting to ascertain the opinion of the public.

The 2021 snow removal budget is being spent very quickly due to the snow load that has occurred over the last several weeks.

Staffing has not been compromised with the Civil Emergencies Act. The recreation centre has had some impact with the reduction of certain private services that were provided from the facility, otherwise all other operations are normal.

## NEW & UNFINISHED

ASSISTED GARBAGE  
COLLECTION POLICY

Council discussed the policy to establish guidelines with respect to assisted garbage collection for residents who have temporary or chronic mobility challenges that limit their ability to have their garbage container place at the curbside on collection day.

Councilor Hanchar suggested changes to the wording of Section 5.1. Council requested clarification on properties that are zoned Commercial, but the primary use is residential. Administration advised that Commercial properties that are assessed as residential will qualify under this policy.

Mayor Irvin suggested that although there is a 2-bag limit, that smaller bags in excess of the two-bag limit be acceptable. Mayor Irvin wants to ensure the policy works as intended, and not have residents take advantage of the situation. Councilor Slager addressed the application process and what is required to be eligible. Administration advised there is a process in place for residents requiring handicap permits approved by a physician. This will prove beneficial in the processing of applications.

2022 PROVISIONAL  
O/M BUDGET

Council was in receipt of the draft 2022 Provisional O/M Budget. Council discussed various lines items in the budget. Administration advised that this is a provisional budget and must be passed by resolution of Council on or before December 31<sup>st</sup>. Changes can be made afterwards, and Council shall by Bylaw adopt the annual operating budget for 2022 on or before April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Councilor Hanchar addressed the Operational reserve and suggested a possible tax increase or researching other funding avenues as opposed to using funds from the Operational reserve. Councilor Slager discussed whether this reserve can be used as a contingency for unexpected expenses that occur from time to time. Councilor Hanchar requested that the budget be provided to the public at the Town Hall meeting. Administration advised it will be available on the Town website.

RESERVE  
FUNDING

Council addressed a report from Administration recommending transferring \$449,375.00 from the Operational account into the Town's three reserve accounts. Each reserve would receive 33.33% of this amount of \$149,791.67 each. Councilor Paquette requested clarification on the reserves and the purpose of each reserve. Administration advised that Reserves are established for the purpose of setting money aside for ensuring sufficient funds are available for operation and maintenance requirements.

BORROWING  
RESOLUTION

Council discussed information from Administration requesting approval to increase the credit limit on the Town Corporate visa account to \$60,000 from the current limit of \$40,000. As the credit card is used by all Town departments, there have been situations where larger purchases could not be made as the visa had reached its limit. Council requested a break down of items purchased with the visa card to be presented in conjunction with the Open Payables.

ZONING BYLAW

Council reviewed the draft Zoning Bylaw with proposed changes. Administration provided clarification that with the adoption of the revised Official Community Plan, Council must adopt a Zoning By-law that is consistent with implementing the goals and objectives of the Official Community Plan.

Mayor Irvin identified the specific changes that have been made to the Zoning Bylaw. Mayor Irvin discussed the changes to the Commercial Highway and Commercial Local designations, and suggested more discussion is needed on this topic.

Council discussed the regulations regarding shipping containers and what is allowable under the zoning bylaw. Council expressed concerns with the appearance of the containers and agreed this item requires more discussion as it is a matter which needs to be enforced.

The Zoning Bylaw will be introduced at the December 14<sup>th</sup> Council meeting and presented at the Town Hall meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE  
JOHNSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Council was in receipt of a letter from Johnson Elementary School that was forwarded to several departments of Yukon Government encouraging further discussion on how to handle the government vaccination mandate or allowing each community the option to decide what is best for the needs of the students and community.

CLEAN ENERGY  
ACT

Council acknowledged that Yukon Government is conducting an engagement on the proposed Clean Energy Act and is an opportunity for Yukon Municipalities to provide input on the proposed legislation.

**COUNCILOR**  
**OPEN FORUM**

Mayor Irvin read aloud a letter that the Town had sent to Premier Silver regarding the COVID 19 vaccination mandate and capacity concerns. The letter requested more information on how the government is working with various stakeholders to ensure that employment gaps are identified, and contingency plans are in place to manage the challenges ahead.

Councilor Hanchar suggested a letter be sent to YG and MP requesting more resources be available for COVID money, as the Town did not meet its proposed revenue due to government regulations that were put in place, and she does not want to see taxes raised to compensate for the revenue loss.

**MOTION 21-19-161**

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Burdes  
that:

Letters be sent to request financial support.

-CARRIED-

Councilor Slager question if there was a COVID vaccination mandate for staff? Administration advised that there is no mandate for staff to be vaccinated. The majority of the staff are fully vaccinated. The Recreation Centre has been impacted with the vaccine passport regulations that are mandated by YG.

Council discussed proposed dates for a Town Hall meeting and agreed to January 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm to present both the 2022 O/M Budget and Zoning Bylaw.

**GALLERY**  
**OPEN FORUM**

Ms. Lelah Bruce enquired about shipping containers that currently exist on properties in the community, and whether the new zoning regulations will apply. Administration advised that any non-conforming building or structure that is pre-existing at the time the Bylaw is approved may continue. Any new development will be required to meet the regulations of the revised Zoning Bylaw once it is passed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION 21-19-162**

Moved by Councilor Hanchar, seconded by Councilor Paquette  
that:

There being no further business the meeting be adjourned.

-CARRIED –

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Chris Irvin – Mayor

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Terri Close – Municipal Clerk

