



Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held in the Municipal Chambers on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 5:30 pm

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Mayor S. Storey presided. Councillors present were C. LePoidevin, K. Watt-Senner, A. Fennema and J. Jenkinson.

Staff present were CAO R. J. Holland and Economic Development Officer D. Christie

**Meeting Called to Order  
At 5:30 pm.**

**Agenda:**

Mayor Storey called for a motion to adopt the agenda and asked for the declaration of new business.

MOVED/SECONDED to adopt the agenda.

Resolution 02-10-38

Carried.

**Delegations & Guests:**

None

**Regular Council Minutes,  
January 27, 2020**

MOVED/SECONDED that the Regular Council Minutes of January 27, 2021 be adopted as read on this day and that such Minutes as read set out all the business before Council that day and fully and properly record all the resolutions and bylaws passed and adopted by Council at that meeting.

Resolution 02-10-39

Carried

MOVED/SECONDED to adopt the Minutes of the In Camera Meeting held January 27, 2021.

Resolution 02-10-40

Carried.

**Business arising from  
the Minutes:**

VFL/Hourly Employee Benefits/Work Conditions  
Vacation/Sick/Parental/Bereavement Leave Policy

Mayor Storey called for discussion of the policy. She asked for clarification on Section 2.2 – Bridging Days.

CAO Holland advised this policy is modeled from the example used by another community. The policy compiles existing Village of Fraser Lake policies. Relative to Bridging Days, the policy proposal reflects existing Village policy. The new policy proposal is not intended to take anything away from existing employee benefits. However, they are intended to tighten up some process such as the length of time before an employee is required to obtain a doctor's note during any period of sick leave.

CAO Holland noted the existing policies were supplied in the Council Package. Relative to Sick Leave, the existing policy does not require a doctor's note until the 6<sup>th</sup> day away from work. That period has been shortened to two (2) days. CAO Holland noted the impacts of COVID-19 precautions may have made that short timeline impractical as it is taking more time to get an appointment to see a doctor at the clinic.

The last significant aspect of this policy addresses the regulatory obligation for each employee to take a minimum of two weeks of vacation per year. The policy sets the date of November 1 of each year for employees to use at least two weeks of vacation time. If the mandatory two weeks is not taken, the vacation time will be assigned by the supervisor.

A discussion followed about sick leave and sick leave accumulations. Council is concerned about the accumulation of sick days.

CAO Holland advised sick days are accumulated at a rate of 1.5 days per month to a maximum of 100 days. This accumulation is set at 100 days to provide employees coverage should they experience an injury or illness that requires them to go to Long Term Disability.

Councillor Jenkinson stated he does not want to take anything away from existing employees.

Mayor Storey agreed. If the changes are contemplated for the policy, the changes would be for new employees, not existing employees. Mayor Storey feels these policies should be reviewed by a lawyer or HR person.

Mayor Storey commented on section 8.1. She wonders why the Director of Public Works is not authorized to hire or fire his employees. Mayor Storey commented on her experience when she worked for the District of Vanderhoof. The Director of Public Works was responsible for hiring, managing, and dismissing his own employees. She feels involving Administration creates conflict and she would prefer not to see that conflict.

CAO Holland explained the Director of Public Works is not tasked with HR duties. Typically, if the Director of Public Works has a personnel issue, he or she would prepare a report, accompanied by any relevant documentation. That would be presented to the CAO. In some cases, that might be presented to Council by way of an In Camera meeting.

Mayor Storey states she has asked questions of other mayors and it is her understanding, the Director of Public Works typically does their own hiring and firing of Public Works employees.

CAO Holland advised that does not happen at the Village of Fraser Lake.

Mayor Storey stated she would like to see the employment contracts of the CAO and the Director of Public Works.

Councillor Jenkinson asked to discuss sick days. He is concerned if several employees were to take sick days all at once, the Village would be on the hook for quite a bit of overtime. He added sick days are there to bridge the gap to long term disability or medical employment insurance. They should not be a bonus if the employee is laid off or fired. Councillor Jenkinson feels there should not be a pay out.

As for hiring and firing, Councillor Jenkinson agreed the Director of Public Works should be able to hire his own employees, however, for firing, that should involve the CAO.

Mayor Storey stated the CAO manages the staff. That includes the Director of Public Works. The Director of Public Works manages his crew. Mayor Storey want to ensure those lines are clearly set out.

CAO Holland agreed the accumulation of sick leave does create a liability for the Village. That said, there has not been a significant problem with abuse of these benefits. In the existing 2011 policy, sick days are paid out at 5 percent if the employee is terminated and 20 percent if an employee retires.

Councillor Watt-Senner asked if sick leave benefits could be accumulated through the year and then they are done.

Mayor Storey referred to comments of Councillor Jenkinson about not wanting to take benefits away from employees currently working at the Village. Changes to these benefits would begin with new employees beginning 2021.

CAO Holland confirmed the Village employees do not have short term disability. Where an employee has been injured or fall sick, they need to go 120 days before eligibility for long term disability kicks in.

Councillor Jenkinson noted Council can change these policies. He would like to see employees able to accumulate 100 or 115 days but there is no payout.

Councillor LePoidevin asked how Public Works employee manage vacation? Are employees required to identify their two weeks early in the year.

Councillor Jenkinson stated most progressive companies have mandatory vacation. Employees are required to take all their vacation within the calendar year because they want employees to have their time off for their mental and physical health. Councillor Jenkinson would like to see Village employees book all annual vacation by February 28<sup>th</sup> of each year or the supervisor will have the right to book the vacation days for the employee. He agreed there should be a level of flexibility. He feels this approach will reduce the stress on our employees.

Councillor Fennema agreed. The current approach is putting supervisors and fellow employees in a bind.

Mayor Storey does not feel November 1<sup>st</sup> works. She is concerned that if a bunch of employees haven't taken their time off, the Village could be in a bind. She would like a model similar to the practices at Centerra where all employees must declare their holiday by March of each year.

CAO Holland stated that for the most part, the system is not broken. The Village has a very small number of employees we are trying to manage. Employment standards requires each employee to take two weeks off. Anything beyond that is simply a company policy. Most of the Village employees like their holidays. Most employees are happy to take holidays and they do not create a problem for the supervisor. CAO Holland recommends against being too prescriptive about how employees will book their vacation time. However, the supervisor needs to have enough time in the year to ensure the required two weeks are being met. Right now, the flexibility around scheduling vacation time is appreciated by the employees.

EDO Christie commented about an earlier suggestion of use your vacation days or lose them. During a previous place of

employment, the company attempted that approach, and it was crippling to the company.

CAO Holland added, vacation time is part of the compensation package. It cannot be simply discarded because it has value.

Councillor Jenkinson asked the dollar value of vacation payout for 2020?

CAO Holland noted when he arrived in 2015 there was no formal process for employees to bank the equivalent of overtime. According to the Employment Standards Act, employees have the right to receive either payment or time off in lieu of overtime. The employer has the right to regulate that so, the policy proposal suggests limiting an employee's lieu time bank to a maximum of 80 hours per year.

MOVED/SECONDED to remove the Retirement Allowance section 9.0 from the policy proposal.

Resolution 02-10-41

Carried

VFL/Exempt Employee Benefits/Work Conditions  
Vacation/Sick/Parental/Bereavement Leave Policy

A discussion of the policy proposal followed.

Councillor Jenkinson feels it is important for every employee to book their two weeks of holidays by February 28 each year. He feels the proposed date of November 1<sup>st</sup> is too late in the year.

MOVED/SECONDED to remove the Retirement Allowance Section 12.0 and all information relating to sick leave from the policy proposal.

Resolution 02-10-42

Carried

VFL/Hourly Employee Benefits/Work Conditions  
Hourly Overtime Pay Policy

A discussion followed. Mayor Storey stated she had some edits she would like to see included. She will provide her edits to Administration to amend the policy.

VFL/Hourly Employee Benefits/Work Conditions  
Pay Premium

MOVED/SECONDED to adopt the Premium Pay Policy as  
presented.

Resolution 02-10-43

Carried

**Reports on Council**

**Activities:**

**Councillor LePoidevin**

Nothing to report.

**Councillor Watt-Senner**

Nothing to report.

**Councillor Jenkinson**

Met with James Simpson of Northern Health on Friday January  
29, 2021.

**Councillor Fennema**

Met with James Simpson of Northern Health. She felt it was  
valuable to be able to discuss concerns about local issues and to  
hear about planned upgrades to the clinic.

Councillor Fennema also attended the Budget Meeting on  
December 5, 2021.

**Mayor Storey**

Reports an awesome meeting with Minister Jodie Osborne and  
the Board at the RDBN Meeting. Mayor Storey was able to have  
a conversation about connectivity. She feels people are happy  
with the Direction of the Province and the Ministry of Municipal  
Affairs.

Mayor Storey participated in a call with Coastal Gaslink.

Mayor Storey attended the Local Government Leadership  
Academy symposium. She enjoyed the presentations and  
participated in a seminar titled "Coming out of Crisis".

Mayor Storey attended the Resource Forum.

Mayor Storey attended a Wilderness Committee Meeting. The  
committee is trying to find ways to help local governments get  
to zero emissions.

On February 9, 2021, Mayor Storey participated in a “food security” meeting with the Senior’s Advocate.

MOVED/SECONDED to receive Councillor Reports.

Resolution 02-10-44

Carried

**Accounts payable:**

MOVED/SECONDED to adopt Accounts Payable and payroll in the amount of \$636,281.16.

Resolution 02-10-45

Carried

**Correspondence List:**

None

**Business from the CAO:**

Vaccination Clinics

MOVED/SECONDED to provide free access to the arena for the purpose of holding a vaccination clinic with an alternative location of the Professional Building.

Resolution 02-10-46

Carried

**Asset Retirement Obligation**

CAO Holland provided an update. Administration and Public Works had a meeting with representatives of Urban Systems. Their understanding of the Asset Retirement Obligation relates to how we manage costs associated with infrastructure that is retired. The example used was Asbestos Pipe. If the Village is required to spend money to dispose of the pipe, we would need to identify those costs separately. Typically, this is dealt with by way of a new policy.

Administration has contacted the Auditor to confirm this assessment of this obligation. The Auditor will get back to Administration on next steps. For this year, Administration is not expecting significant costs associated with this new requirement.

The GFOA is offering a series of educational webinars on this new process. The Director of Finance has registered for this series of webinars. The four-session program will be completed in the Fall 2021.

MOVED/SECONDED to received CAO reports.

Resolution 02-10-47

Carried

**Staff Reports:**

Mud Mountain Haulers.

EDO Christie commented on this television production. The public are interested in these types of industrial activities. It would be interesting to see if the producers of this program would be interested in a similar production in the community forest. It would highlight what we are doing in the community forest.

MOVED/SECONDED to support approaching the producers of the Mud Mountain Haulers production for the purpose of filming in the community forest.

Resolution 02-10-48

Professional Building – Monthly Rental

An opportunity to rent the northern half of the Professional Building has surfaced. EDO Christie noted the current policy has rental rate for individual spaces but not for the entire half of the building. The potential tenant would provide workforce training for persons working on the CGL pipeline. There may also be potential for a Public Works Training school. Staff have explored similar rentals and the going rate appears to be \$2,600.00 per month.

MOVED/SECONDED to approve a monthly rent for the north end of the Professional Building for \$2,600.00 per month.

Resolution 02-10-49

Carried

**Reading List:**

None

**New Business:**

None

**Bylaws:**

None

**In Camera:**

MOVED/SECONDED to move the Regular Meeting of Council in Camera at 7:00 pm under Section 90(1)(k) of the Community Charter which states a part of a council meeting may be



closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at the preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.

Resolution 02-10-50

Carried

Return to the Regular Meeting at 7:25 pm.

MOVED/SECONDED to apply to the NDIIT for funding under the Northern Healthy Communities Fund for up to \$300,000.00 toward the purchase of a new Fire Truck and to fund the remaining \$350,000.00 from Village funds.

Resolution 02-10-54

Carried

MOVED/SECONDED to deny TELUS' request for a Letter of Support for their application to the Universal Broadband Fund.

Resolution 02-10-55

Carried

**Next Regular Meeting of Council:**

February 24, 2021 at 5:30 pm

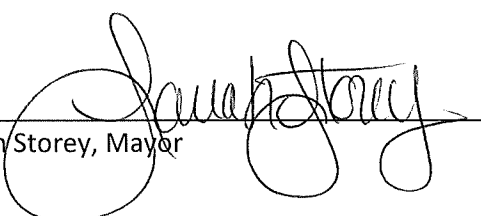
**Adjournment:**

MOVED/SECONDED that the February 10, 2021 Regular Meeting of Council be now adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Resolution 02-10-56

Carried

Certified Correct:

  
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Sarah Storey, Mayor

  
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Rodney J. Holland, Chief Administrative Officer