

**Village of Haines Junction
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2025**

Present:

Absent:

Mayor Strand
Councillor Busche (on Zoom)
Councillor Mackinnon
Councillor McPhie
Councillor Sundbo

CAO Fairbank, Recorder Ogden

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Oaths of Office and Allegiance – Councillor Sundbo

- Councillor Sundbo read and signed the Oaths of Office and Allegiance which were affirmed by CAO Fairbank, the Designated Municipal Officer.

Acknowledgement of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Traditional Territory

Mayor Strand acknowledged that we are on the traditional territory of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

Adoption of Agenda

#110-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the agenda be adopted as amended:

- Add Review of March 11, 2025 Committee of the Whole minutes.

Motion #110-25 was **CARRIED**.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

Adoption of Minutes of Regular and Special Council Meetings

Committee of the Whole Minutes March 11, 2025

#111-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the March 11, 2025 Committee of the Whole be adopted as amended:

- Signatory be changed to Mayor Diane Strand.

Motion #111-25 was **CARRIED**.

Council Meeting Minutes March 11, 2025

#112-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the regular Council meeting of March 11, 2025 be adopted as amended:

- Add clarification of what it means to read the bylaw to the first bullet under discussion on Page 5

Motion #112-25 was **CARRIED**.

Proclamations

Delegations

Boys and Girls Club Yukon (BGC Yukon)

Presentation: Lindsay Cornell (BGC Yukon), Danielle Ray (BGC Yukon), Emily Ann Harris (BGC Yukon), and Shannon Maloney (CAFN)

- BGC Yukon is seeking budget approval for summer camp programming for youth in Haines Junction, noting provisional approval was provided by the previous Council.
- BGC Yukon is requesting funding from VHJ to support the junior camp (ages 6-12); CAFN, supports the senior camp through the Youth Centre.
- This year BGC Yukon is incorporating elders, traditional teaching and knowledge, and pace-based programming into the summer camp. Pace-based programming gives youth access to different levels of activity to suit individual preferences.
- Programming will include swimming skills workshops in Whitehorse – a shift from the previous application where BGC Yukon applied for funding to provide a lifeguard at pine lake which hasn't worked out.
- Weekly programming to include hiking or canoe and dugout canoe days, as well as day of activities in Whitehorse.
- BGC Yukon and CAFN have been collaborating for many years on this programming. CAFN indicated that this programming would not be possible without the partnership with BGC Yukon

Discussion:

- It was clarified that previous Council had not provided provisional approval. Minutes from meetings that BCGY attended as a delegation in 2023 and 2024 were reviewed; prior Council had indicated that funding would need to be reviewed every year and that future decisions would be the prerogative of the future Council.
- Council recognized the benefits that the camp provides for youth in town. The importance of childcare in the community was also recognized, as is the value of this service to community wellness.
- It was questioned whether funding for this programming is a core responsibility of the Village of Haines Junction, noting that last year the Village was the principal contributor. Core responsibilities must be met first before discretionary expenses are made.

- Concerns were raised over the waivers included in the Council package. The waivers list CAFN and BGC Yukon but not the Village of Haines Junction. This raises questions as to the liability to the Village and may require the Village to seek a legal opinion.
 - BGC Yukon indicated it can add VHJ as an additional insured under its liability insurance.
- Clarification was sought on the lifeguard and swim skills program.
 - The current proposal does not seek funding for a lifeguard, this has been removed. Instead, the proposal includes trips to Whitehorse for swim lessons (as was done last year).
- Has the Canada Games Centre set time aside for swim lessons?
 - The City of Whitehorse has indicated they will work with BGC Yukon to ensure space is made available. The City is also working on staffing a lifeguard at long lake and providing swim lessons there.
- In one report it says there were 65 participants in the camp last year, and another says there were 52 participants in two different locations. How many attended the camp?
 - The camp has 65 spaces. In total, 50 attended the camp of which 42 were in the junior camp.
- How is evaluation carried out?
 - Both parents and youth are involved.
- How does BGC Canada support BGC Yukon? Have heard that BGC Canada has a large surplus and has lots of funds set aside.
 - BGC Canada did not get its grant from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) this year, which is one of its major grants, and so funds are much tighter than usual. Will check into this further.
 - BGC Canada is a federation of independent boards. It distributes funds through granting. BGC Yukon does apply for grants which usually range from \$5-10k.
- What other program funds does BGC Yukon seek?
 - BGC Yukon applies to the Kids Youth Recreation fund, which provides \$2,000
 - The greatest challenge BGC Yukon faces is finding funds to cover wages.
 - BGC Yukon does have a number of different larger grants that provide multi-year support including a grant from ESDC that will cover some of the staff's wages into next year. Have not heard back on Justice/Mental Health/Mental Wellness grant.
- The Village initially supported this project in order to provide recreational opportunities for youth. Initially this was a capacity building project -- BGC Yukon was providing a service on behalf of the Village that the Village did not have the capacity to provide. The idea at the time was that the Village would eventually take over providing this programming.
- What progress has been made on reconciliation?
 - This question was previously raised by Council and BGC Yukon continues to work on this. The youth have chosen to call this a Stronger Together Plan. What the team will be able to do this year is somewhat dependent on funding.
- Who initially asked BGC Yukon to come to Haines Junction?
 - Shannon Maloney at CAFN and the Elijah Smith School (4 Principals ago).

- Is there a model where the parents could offset some of the costs?
 - It is not feasible for BGC Yukon to have a parent - volunteer model as this creates challenges around consistency; the camp requires a staff:youth ratio that is hard to maintain with volunteers.
 - BGC Yukon has been told to strive to not charge fees in the communities.
- Council has to consider all taxpayers in town; there may be senior or others that don't have kids that are wondering why their tax dollars are being spent to this degree.
- Council was urged to support the programming as planned for this summer; however, if this Council has different priorities, meetings could be set up in the fall to explore other pathways to sustain this programming.

Elbows Up

Presentation: Kari Johnston

- This proposal is a response to community frustration about President Trump's ongoing assertions about making Canada the 51st State.
- There is tension between threats to our sovereignty, and our community's long and strong relationships with Alaskans.
- Suggest hanging banners through town that show Canadian pride. Could be designed in a way that these banners could be used in the future and not just in response to the current political climate.

Discussion:

- Have you looked into costs?
 - Estimate this could be done for \$3,000 to \$5,000
 - Prior council ordered 12 Pride flags which cost \$550, plus cost for Public Works to install. There are a total of 40 spots for hanging flags through town.
 - AYC is ordering flags for the 50th anniversary later this month. Could combine the order and have flags ready for the AYC 50th.
- Have you considered approaching the Chamber of Commerce for support?
 - The Chamber doesn't have the infrastructure or the budget for this but may be interested to do this as a partner.
- Concerned that Elbows up is a Liberal strategy and not everyone in the community is a liberal supporter.
 - Elbows Up originated from Gordie Howe. The Liberal campaign is Canada Strong. Hanging banners that show us as proud Canadians wouldn't be playing into any political party.
 - Suggestion to remove Elbows Up from campaign if that is an issue.
- Don't want to erode good feelings and friendships with people that travel through town including the close friendship we have with the Mayor of Haines.
 - Think that our neighbours would join us in celebrating Canada instead of taking offense.
 - Mayor Tom Morphet has been very understanding and supportive and apologetic for the situation.

- Many Border Mayors are taking down US flags in their communities and partners in adjacent US communities are supportive and understanding of this.
 - Suggestion to bring this forward to Border Mayors Alliance for advice.

Swallows

Presentation: Julie Bauer

- Last spring pipe was put up on the Convention Centre to discourage the swallows from nesting.
- Following requests from the community, the pipe was removed from south side of building later in the spring but was not removed from east side of building.
- Swallows have nested on the building for twenty years – would like to see remaining pipe removed.
- Nesting platforms need to be tall and there is no guarantee that birds will use these platforms. Moving nesting locations may take time. Need to supply water and mud.
- A biologist from the Canadian Wildlife Service recommended letting the swallows nest on the Convention Centre.
- Last summer swallows were nesting over the front door of the convention centre for the first time – putting up piping effectively created a new problem.
- Nesting platforms by the Dezadeash need maintenance. Tacking up a rope was suggested as a simple fix.
- A decision to remove the remaining pipe from the building is required by end of April, before the nesting season begins.

Discussion:

- Have the swallows not learned that they won't be successful here and moved elsewhere?
 - Swallows have high nesting fidelity.
 - Last year the swallows were still attempting to nest by the pipes that were put up
 - Believe they will try to nest here again this year.
- Would like to discourage nesting above the front entrance.
- May want to consider some signage where nesting is allowed.
- Appreciation was extended to Julie for her dedication to the swallows and the work that needs to be done.

#113-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the swallows be encouraged to nest on the two sides of the building that are not associated with the main entrances to the building, that maintenance of houses at the Dezadeash River be completed, and signage be erected where the birds are encouraged to nest.

Motion #113-25 was **CARRIED**.

Public Hearings and Public Input Sessions

Old Business

New Business

Accounts Payable to March 26, 2025

Materials provided: Municipal Accounts Payable to March 26, 2025

Discussion

- Visa bill included a \$94.18 interest charge?
 - Will need to look into this, usually bills are paid on time.
- Capital project for \$2,841 – shelving, wireless driveway alarm and concrete?
 - This was for the new gatehouse at the landfill
- Assessment services for \$17,528?
 - This is for property assessments
- Can we not utilize the campus here for First Aid training and travel instead of sending people to Whitehorse?
 - We do have a First Aid course scheduled for the end of April for those on staff who will need it.

#114-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the Municipal Accounts Payable to March 26, 2025 be approved as presented.

Motion #114-25 was **CARRIED**.

Land Development in Yukon

Land Development Branch Presentation:

- Presentation was deferred to when the Land Development Branch is available

Bylaws – Reports, Readings and Adoption

RTC 2025 Property Taxation Levy

CAO Presentation:

- Council directed staff to not make any changes to taxation policy this year.
- Yukon government has completed property assessments – there are newly developed properties on the taxation roll
- The increase in taxable assessment values is \$1,126,840.
- The mil rate is applied to the assessed rate.
- The mil tax rate of 1.15% (same as last year) will result in an estimated increase of \$12,611 over 2024 revenues.

Discussion:

- What is meant by a non-taxable increase?
 - Staff will follow up on this.
- How is council exercising its oversight role as the taxing authority of the municipality by reading this report that was presented for information?
 - Council exercises its oversight by passing the bylaw
 - Council also passes a motion to receive and file the report prior to passing the bylaw – by passing a motion Council is saying it has read the report and understands what it is saying.
- Why is first and second reading recommended for this evening?
 - No changes are proposed to the bylaw from last year, so more time to deliberate was not seen as being needed.

#115-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the Report to Council on the 2025 Property Taxation Levy Bylaw be received and filed as information

Motion #115-25 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #424-25 2025 Property Taxation Levy – for First and Second Reading

#116-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Bylaw #424-25 2025 Property Taxation Levy be deemed read for a first time on March 26, 2025

Motion #166-25 was **CARRIED**.

#117-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Bylaw #424-25 2025 Property Taxation Levy be deemed read for a second time on March 26, 2025

Motion #117-25 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #423-25 2025 Operating and Capital/Projects Budget – for First and Second Reading

CAO Presentation:

- This is a continuation budget from the provisional budget, which was a continuation budget from the 2024 annual budget.
- A surplus of ~\$1,000,000 is projected.
- Council may decide to make changes following their Strategic Planning exercise.

Discussion:

- What is the status of the sustainability report?
 - The auditor anticipated completing this report in late May
- What does loss on land sales refer to?
 - Shakwak lots were purchased by the village for more than they were sold for. This reflects the difference between the purchase and the sale price.
- Floor drainage at fire department (\$15k) and public works shop (\$8k)?
 - This has been in the budget since 2023 and relates to trucks being parked inside in the winter and snow melting off the vehicles.
 - In the fire department building the drain is presently higher than the floor.
- O&M expenses – water and sewer contract services?
 - This cost fluctuates -- in 2021 this expense was ~\$56k, and this went down to ~\$25k in 2022 and 2023 and jumped back up to ~\$52k in 2024.
 - This relates to vacation oversight. In the past we have needed to hire a circuit rider to cover for our Public Works Manager when they go on vacation because we didn't have staff at the level of certification required to run the water treatment plant. We now have a lead hand on staff that can act in this position.
- O&M – there is no provision for a Fire Chief Salary?
 - The budget will be updated once Council makes this decision.
 - At present the budget reflects honoraria for the volunteer roles.
- Would like page numbers on the charts to make it easier to reference.
- Revenues of \$308,000 from the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)?
 - We haven't spent any of the 2025 HAF funds yet so all the revenue is in the revenue column
 - When funds are expended against this revenue the revenue is reduced to just show amount remaining.
- Public works wages?
 - Public works wages are in several different categories – to see what the total wages are under Public Works you need to add up the wages under the various categories.
- Seismic repairs for the Convention Centre?
 - This is a large and complex file that has gone through 3-4 CAOs.
 - There is a need to bring the building into compliance with the current building code. The building was in compliance with the building code when it was built, there is some degree of liability not having it at the highest possible standard because it is a public building.
 - The price was originally \$800,000. Last year it was upped to \$1,200,000. Expect it would be \$2,000,000 today.
 - It would be a good to seek funding for this work; we have not found funding yet.
- The garbage compressor in the landfill is an old piece of equipment. At the time the secondary piece of equipment, a wire bailer, was not purchased due to the expense. At some point this may breakdown. It is so old it may not be possible to repair it. Researching a solution for when this fails and discussing the replacement of the compressor during the strategic planning system, is recommended.

- Reallocation limit for the CAO is \$25,000?
 - This is an authority that has never been used and was initiated several CAO's ago. This allows the CAO to reallocate funds between line items when the need to do so is time sensitive. It is the responsibility of the CAO to justify to Council why this was necessary.
 - A preference to notify Council in advance of any time-sensitive budget transfers was expressed.
 - A suggestion made to approach Christina Benty to see what the norm is in other municipalities.

#118-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT #423-25 2025 Operating and Capital/Projects Budget be deemed read for a first time on March 26, 2025

Motion #118-25 was **CARRIED**.

#119-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT #423-25 2025 Operating and Capital/Projects Budget be deemed read for a second time on March 26, 2025

Motion #119-25 was **CARRIED**.

#120-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be extended past 9:00 pm

Motion #120-25 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #422-25 2025 Consolidated Municipal Fees Bylaw Amendment #8 – for Third Reading

#121-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT #422-25 Consolidated Municipal Fees Bylaw #343-19 Amendment #8 be deemed read for a third time and adopted on March 26, 2025.

Motion #121-25 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #426-25 Zoning Bylaw #411-24 Amendment #1 for First and Second Reading

CAO Presentation:

- A Report to Council was presented at the last Council meeting when Council passed a motion agreeing to this amendment.

Discussion:

- A Report to Council was requested on considerations for changing the zoning of the final Tourist Commercial lot on Auriol Street to Commercial Mixed.

#122-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Bylaw #426-25 Zoning Bylaw #411-24 Amendment #1 be deemed read for a first time on March 26, 2025

Motion #122-25 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #425-25 Volunteer Fire Department Empowerment Bylaw for First and Second Reading

CAO Presentation:

- Staff recommend only doing first reading tonight as staff are doing revisions, and we are awaiting feedback from members of the HJVFD and would like to ensure they have adequate time to review.
- The old bylaw had members being appointed by Council and was quite prescriptive with regards to operational guidelines. We were advised that staffing is best done by the CAO/Fire Chief, and to have operational guidelines outside of the bylaw as this is a rapidly changing regulatory environment.
- This bylaw is a very early draft. Important for Council to read as it demonstrates actions being taken by Council to move this file forward.

Discussion:

- Bylaw needs to capture Council's oversight role for the fire department as this is a core responsibility of Council.
- Would like to see regular reports directly from the Fire Chief to Council.
- Schedule A – add direction and policy on the integration of wildfire management, while the HJVFD is directly involved with structural fires they do assist with wildfire management within Village Boundaries.
- Right to Appeal to the CAO – should this be to Mayor and Council, who would need to be involved in any policy changes?
 - Enforcement for the Village is done by the CAO
 - If not resolved by the CAO, there are mechanisms to engage Mayor and Council
- Page 6 – Designating a local assistant to Yukon Fire Marshal's Office is a requirement of the Fire Protection Act – a local assistant is the person responsible for doing inspections. In practice, the Yukon Fire Marshal's Office has been carrying out inspections at the request of the CAO.
- Does the Fire Protection Service Area reflect the CAFN service agreement?
- 6d – says that the Incident Commander may enter at any time, buildings in connection with an incident – how does this work if they are not allowed to enter buildings?

- Exterior fire fighters may not enter a burning/smoking building but may enter a building adjacent to fight a fire.
- Need to ensure that it is clear they may only enter buildings if not an IDLH environment.
- 7c – does our property tax bylaw allow us to do this?
- 9 – says the Fire Chief is an enforcement officer, do we need to update Bylaw 389-21 to include the Fire Chief as an enforcement officer?
- Does the Draft Bylaw allow a Fire Chief to designate someone to enforce the provisions of the bylaw?
- The Draft Bylaw designates the Fire Chief to be responsible for care, custody and control of equipment and assets and building – do they need to be responsible for the building?

#123-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Bylaw #425-25 Volunteer Fire Department Empowerment Bylaw be deemed read for a first time on March 26, 2025

Motion #123-25 was **CARRIED**.

Correspondence

Haines Junction Health Centre Newsletter March 2025

#124-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the Haines Junction Health Centre newsletter be received and filed.

Motion #124-25 was **CARRIED**.

Letter from Mayor of Brampton – Stand for Canada Campaign

#125-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the letter from the Mayor of Brampton – Stand for Canada Campaign be received and filed.

Motion #125-25 was **CARRIED**.

Council Reports and Notice of Motions

Councillor Busche

- No report – has been sick for 10 days.

Councillor McPhie

- Many complaints received today over the condition of the roads.
- Village of Haines Junction recently responded to a post on Facebook that raised a complaint.
 - The Village has a policy of not responding to any Facebook messages but has an obligation to respond to instances of bullying of staff on Facebook.
- Would like to invite Public Works Manager to provide a report at the next Council meeting.

Councillor Mackinnon

- Attended Yukon Hardwater Races – huge turnout of local and non-local folks.

Councillor Sundbo

- Look forward to working with Council and staff.
- There was an unfortunate accident at Pine Lake last weekend, wish the family a speedy recovery
- Met with seniors before the by-election – some find it difficult to navigate the stairs to make payments, and difficult to find someone to assist with elevator. Would like Village to install a locked drop off box at the bottom of the stairs where they could drop off their payment.
- Have heard of incidences where the Gate Attendant at the Landfill has been subject to verbal abuse by members of the public about the tipping fees. Would like to direct staff to keep an eye on this, assess incidents of this nature and keep Council apprised of this situation. A sign to indicate that verbal abuse is not accepted is needed. Would like Council to make a statement that the Village will not accept bullying of any kind, and that people will be refused service.

Deputy Mayor Strand

- Councillor Mackinnon and Mayor Strand met with Fire Department last week, along with the CAO; appreciated how receptive the members were to conversation.
- Attended first Border Mayors Alliance meeting. The Mayor of Sarnia has moved to remove all US flags from city properties. Attending roundtable meeting next week.
- Attended reconciliation training with IRP.
- Requested a tripod with a light for making the video reports to the community.

Questions from the Public

Motion to Close Meeting to the Public

#126-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be closed to the public at 9:56 pm.

Motion #126-25 was **CARRIED**.

Motion to Reopen Meeting to the Public

#127-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be reopened to the public at 11:00 pm

Motion #127-25 was **CARRIED**.

#128-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the Haines Junction February 2025 RCMP Mayors and Chiefs report be received and files

Motion #128-25 was **CARRIED**.

#129-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Staff submit a proposal to CDF to install 2 projectors in the grand hall.

Motion #129-25 was **CARRIED**.

Adjournment

#130-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 11:02 pm.

Motion #130-25 was **CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 pm.



Mayor Diane Strand



CAO David Fairbank