

**Village of Haines Junction  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2026**

Present:

Mayor Strand  
Councillor Busche  
Councillor Mackinnon  
Councillor Moore  
Councillor Sundbo

Absent:

None

CAO Fairbank, Recorder L. Sylvain, Sylvain Human Resource Services

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:58 p.m.

**2. 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.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

**a. Motion to Adopt the Agenda**

#51-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the agenda be adopted as amended with the following changes:

- Add item 3. b. Swearing in of the new Village of Haines Junction Councillor; and
- Defer the discussion of item 9. b. (i) RTC – Emergency Response Planning Update; (ii) Draft Municipal Emergency Plan (MEP) 2026; (iii) Draft Emergency Response Guideline (ERG) 2026.

Motion #51-26 was **CARRIED**.

**b. Swearing in Ceremony**

- New Village of Haines Junction Councillor, Robert Moore, was sworn in before Council.

**4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

- Councillor Mackinnon declared that she would be applying for the Dwelling Construction Grant.

**5. Adoption of Minutes of Regular and Special Council Meetings**

**c. February 11, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes**

*Discussion:*

- Council noted that Councillor names need to be removed from the previous meeting minutes as the record is provided at a higher level.
- The word 'island' is used on page 3 to 'island' and should be changed to 'isolated'.

#52-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the adoption of the minutes of the regular Council meetings of February 11, 2026 be deferred to the following Council Meeting.

Motion #52-26 was **CARRIED**.

**6. Proclamations**

There were no proclamations.

**7. Delegations**

There were no delegations.

**8. Public Hearings and Public Input Sessions**

None.

**9. Old Business**

**a. (i) RTC – Surplus Item Disposal Policy**

**(ii) Policy #005-93 Surplus Item Disposal Policy – amendment #1**

*CAO Presentation:*

- The community cardboard recycling trailer program, operating for over 20 years, is scheduled to be phased out in April 2026. Staff notified affected businesses several months in advance of the program's discontinuation.
- During this process, staff reviewed the existing surplus policy related to disposal of municipal assets. The current policy requires updates to reflect modern practices and technology, as it does not allow online advertising. A revised surplus policy has been drafted, allowing for the use of online surplus platforms (e.g., GovDeals). This would be used for larger or specialized equipment, where broader advertising may help obtain better value for taxpayers. Proposed maintaining flexibility, allowing staff to determine case-by-case whether items should be sold through the traditional locally advertised bid process or through an online surplus platform.

*Discussion:*

- Can the Village advertise on the Federal Government's Crown Assets Disposal website?
  - This is uncertain.
  - **Action:** Staff to research if the Village of Haines Junction may use this website.

- Council suggested discussing this topic at the Association of Yukon Communities (AYC) meeting to learn how other communities address surplus sales.
- Council expressed concern that advertising widely would impact the opportunity for local residents and businesses to purchase equipment.
  - CAO noted that the intent remains to give opportunities to locals, keeping in mind that some specialty equipment may not be of use to them.
  - Council suggested adding a policy item to protect the local person.
- What parameters or triggers would determine when surplus items would be sold through a digital platform rather than locally?
  - Not all surplus items would be listed online; if items are sold locally, the existing surplus process would remain unchanged.
- Council suggested the policy could include clearer language identifying when items may be listed on a digital platform, noting that not every item would qualify. A possible trigger was suggested, such as listing items locally for a set period (e.g., 60 days with no interest) before moving them to an online platform.
  - CAO clarified that the policy intentionally leaves the decision to staff discretion on a case-by-case basis, but emphasized that all items declared surplus must first be approved by Council. At that time, Council could direct if the item is to be sold locally or through an online platform.
  - Council suggested adding language to the policy for an additional safeguard, noting that online listings could occur when recommended by staff or directed by Council.
  - CAO proposed adding wording at the beginning of the policy, under “Declaration of Surplus Goods,” to indicate that Council may determine the disposal method, including use of an online platform.
- Does the online platform allow the municipality to set a reserve bid price?
  - Yes. Reserve bids are standard on digital platforms, though are not mandatory.
- CAO reported that the owner of a local business inquired about purchasing a cardboard recycling trailer directly from the Village. The surplus policy requires assets be sold through an open tender process, not allowing direct sales. CAO suggested Council consider making an exception to the policy to allow trailers to be sold at fair market value, noting the trailers have effectively been in the possession of the businesses for approx. 20 years. A report could be drafted outlining possible approaches, such as offering affected businesses first right of refusal to buy trailers at fair market value.
  - Council expressed support for this idea, noting the trailers would likely be most useful to the businesses using them.
  - CAO noted concerns that a public tender process could create competition among businesses, potentially creating bidding conflicts or one party buying many trailers.

#53-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Council adopt Policy #005-93 and defer the surplus Item Disposal policy to the Council’s March 25, 2026 meeting.

Motion #53-26 was **CARRIED**.

#54-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** a Report to Council be drafted on the sale of the cardboard trailers to local businesses.

Motion #54-26 was **CARRIED**.

**b. RTC – Sole Source for Water System SCADA Upgrades**

*CAO and Public Works Manager's Presentation:*

- CAO introduced a report regarding upgrades to the community's SCADA system used to monitor and control the water and sewer infrastructure. The system consists of sensors, signals, computers, and monitoring software that allow remote and on-site monitoring and operation of systems.
- The current system is aging and in significant need of replacement. The proposed upgrade would occur in two phases:
  - Phase 1: Estimated cost \$141,000, to be completed in the current fiscal year, focusing on groundwork such as hardware procurement, software configuration, and network setup.
  - Phase 2: Estimated cost \$173,000, planned for early next year, involving implementation of the upgraded software and final system integration.
- The project is a sole-source procurement request because there is only one Yukon contractor that can provide this work, and having a local provider allows for easier ongoing support.
- The existing SCADA software is approx. 20 years old and has become increasingly difficult to maintain. Modern systems provide a single integrated software platform, improving reliability, functionality, and maintenance. A system upgrade would modernize and 'future-proof' the water system control platform for 15–20 years.
- The project focuses on control system hardware and software, including the main server and human-machine interface (HMI) touchscreens.
- The upgrade would also allow system control from multiple pump house locations, improving operational flexibility and allowing staff to operate on-site without using remote VPN access.
- The upgrade is an important long-term asset management investment for the municipality's water infrastructure.
- The upgrade is proposed as a sole-source contract due to the specialized programming and configuration required. Having a local team in Whitehorse allows for faster on-site troubleshooting, particularly for hardware issues that cannot be resolved remotely.
- The work involves rebuilding the existing system in new software, programming up to thousands of control tags for valves, temperatures, and system parameters. It will be built and tested alongside the existing system, to revert to the old system if issues occur.
- Developing a detailed design for a public tender would be costly and inefficient, as much of the work must be configured and adjusted during installation.

*Discussion:*

- Why is the total project request \$350,000 when the listed equipment and software costs total approximately \$316,000?
  - The additional amount provides contingency funding to address any unforeseen hardware or system components that may need replacement during the upgrade process.
- How long is the transition period when switching from the old SCADA system to the new system? Will water service levels be affected?
  - Very short, with no expected impact on water service delivery.
- Some council members noted hesitancy with using sole sourcing due to previous negative feedback from the community, while other council members felt positive towards sole sourcing to local businesses.
- Where did the estimated 40–50% increase come from, especially if we went out to tender for the package?
  - Creating a tender package would be very difficult. Contractors would likely charge nearly the same amount just to assess the system, determine the programming requirements, and identify the necessary work.
- If this is an upgrade from one system to another, why do we need to include detailed engineering-specific design?
  - The system isn't a typical computer system. It's a specialized water system with valves and control mechanisms that differ at every location. Unlike standardized computer systems, these require detailed, site-specific design information.
- After this upgrade is complete, will we receive engineered design specifications and documentation so that we can avoid sole sourcing in the future and perform a proper tendering process?
  - Full engineered design specs won't be provided because the work is primarily programming-based. What will be supplied are as-built configuration files, tag databases, alarm configurations, screen references, licensing documentation, and warranties. Using these digital records, future upgrades or tendering processes should be feasible. Contractors need detailed current system information to provide fixed-price bids now, but the delivered files will allow future integration without requiring extensive sole-sourced engineering work.
- What are the schedule and integration risks if we attempt a future tendering process, and how does the current budget adjustment affect this project?
  - Schedule risk arises because compiling enough information for a tender would likely delay the project by at least a year, increasing risk with the aging system. Integration risk comes from relying on an external contractor for installation and ongoing support versus using a local provider. Regarding budget, the project is being adjusted to \$350,000 in one budget cycle (up from \$250,000 previously spread over three years) to align with the expected completion timeline of January–February 2027 and accommodate the WSP quote.
- Can we create a pre-prepared justification for sole sourcing, so that if needed, we have a clear rationale for choosing a local contractor over a tendering process?

- A one-page summary could outline the Council's rationale.

#55-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** staff be directed to proceed with a sole source contract for the Water System SCADA modernization, Phases 1 and 2, with the contractor that provided the quote, and that the project budget be adjusted to \$350,000 in the 2026 budget to complete the work, noting Phase 2 completion in early 2027.

Motion #55-26 was **CARRIED**.

c. RTC – Lagoon Treatment Equipment

*Public Works Manager's Presentation:*

- The objective was to explore methods to reduce the rise in pH at the lagoon, enabling longer spring discharge periods. The three options considered were:
  - Solar-powered ultrasonic device – Uses sonar-like signals at varying frequencies to interrupt algae growth, the primary cause of pH increase. No external power is required, making it cost-effective and practical.
  - Floating plastic balls – Hexagonal plastic balls cover the lagoon surface to block sunlight and inhibit algae growth. High cost and potential impacts on wildlife, including limiting birds' access to water.
  - Mechanical aeration with floating aerators – Requires electrical power at the lagoon, which is currently unavailable, making this a more expensive and logistically challenging option.
- It is recommended that we use the solar-powered ultrasonic device which is preferred for its cost-effectiveness and ease of implementation. Complementing it with a biological nutrient management program is also recommended to further control algae growth.
- Budget Clarification: The device itself costs approximately \$22,000, plus freight (~\$2–3k), which should be included in the capital budget. The ongoing biological treatment program costs around \$4,000 per year and is already included in the O&M budget, not capital.
- The combined approach of the solar-powered device and biological treatment provides the most practical, financially feasible, and environmentally sensitive solution for managing lagoon pH.

*Discussion:*

- What does the nutrient management program entail? Is it a chemical treatment?
  - The program uses an enzyme in pellet form, not chemicals. Staff manually distribute the pellets once a month over the surface of the primary cells at the lagoon, with additional weekly application at the lift station. The enzyme helps consume nutrients and slows sludge accumulation, reducing overall buildup in the lagoon.
- What is the life expectancy and maintenance requirements of the Solar Ultrasonic Unit?
  - The unit is a floating device that is anchored using existing lagoon anchors. Maintenance is minimal, mainly periodic cleaning of the transducer and

checking the battery. It is typically deployed early in spring once the ice melts and can be removed after the discharge period (early to mid-June) for storage. If left in place, it can help control algae growth throughout the summer and reduce sludge accumulation.

- Did you consider wind-driven aeration systems? They are commonly used on prairies and other lagoons?
  - Aeration would require 4–6 units for effective coverage of the lagoon cell, plus additional equipment to lift them in and out of the water. The solar ultrasonic unit is smaller, lighter (about the size of a pallet), and easier to handle manually. One unit can treat most of Cell 3 where discharge occurs, making it more practical and manageable than multiple heavy aerators.
- If the unit is deployed once the ice melts (around mid-May) and discharge usually begins in early June, is there a minimum amount of time the unit needs to operate, especially during cloudy or poor weather conditions?
  - The unit can be deployed as soon as ice leaves the lagoon, typically the second or third week of May. Discharge generally starts the first week of June and is completed by mid-June. There is no strict minimum runtime required; the unit works whenever sunlight is available, inhibiting algae growth early enough before the algae becomes active.

#56-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** staff add \$25,000 for a solar-powered ultrasonic algae-control unit and lagoon nutrient management to the 2026 budget.

Motion #56-26 was **CARRIED**.

d. (i) RTC – Dwelling Construction Grant

(ii) 46-25 Dwelling Construction Grant Policy

*CAO Presentation:*

- Report follows discussion from the February 11, 2026 Council meeting regarding potential changes to the housing grant policies. It focuses on requested changes to the two grant policies to move the program forward. The purpose is to reactivate Year 3 of the program now that funding has been approved.
- Design criteria were simplified to support affordability by replacing CMHC modest housing guidelines with maximum unit size requirements for bachelor, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. Added basic design parameters, including a maximum of a single-car garage.
- Budget update: \$308,000 in CMHC funding for the current year has been added back into the grant program; all other funding elements remain unchanged from previous years.
- Policy clarifications: New dwelling units cannot be used for short-term rentals for at least two years after completion, regardless of future short-term rental bylaw decisions. Good standing requirement means applicants must have no outstanding debts to the Village

and no active bylaw enforcement actions. Administration: Recovery of funds, if required, will follow the same process used for the municipal matching grant program.

- If approved, the program will be advertised immediately. Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Approval is time-sensitive due to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) deadline of April 15, 2026.

*Discussion:*

- Councillor Mackinnon declared a conflict of interest and recused herself from the discussion.
- Was the legal review of the policy conducted?
  - Uncertain. However, it will be conducted prior to policy completion.
- Council discussed what level of government is responsible for providing housing development grants. Some council members expressed that housing development grants should be the responsibility of territorial and federal governments. They noted that the municipality's role should focus on enabling housing through clear zoning, streamlined development processes, reliable infrastructure, and effective bylaws that encourage development. Other council members noted that the federal government has put the responsibility in the hands of municipalities by tasking them to administer grants.
- Council recommended that the next report and policy be presented after legal review and approval.
  - **Action:** Staff to send an email update with proposed language to Council before releasing the policy to the public.
- How can the policy restricting the grant program to local developers be applied or enforced if applicants live outside the municipality?
  - Residency is an eligibility requirement during the application screening phase, so applicants outside the defined area would not qualify. Also, any development within municipal boundaries must comply with municipal bylaws and taxes regardless of where the developer lives, and the policy language could be clarified if needed.

#57-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Policy 46-25 Dwelling Construction Grant is adopted as presented with the following addition: the naming of Block 30 in the catchment area.

Motion #57-26 was **CARRIED**, with Councillor Sundbo voting against.

## 10. New Business

- a. Accounts Payable to February 25, 2026
  - No discussion.
- b. Accounts Payable to March 11, 2026
  - No discussion.

## 11. Bylaws – Reports, Readings and Adoption

### a. (i) Draft 2026 O&M and Capital Budget

#### (ii) Bylaw #439-26 2026 O&M and Capital Budget – First Reading

##### *Discussion:*

- It was noted that CCBF refers to the 'Gas Tax'.
- **Action:** Under the 'Fire Department', change 'SCUBA Gear' to 'Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)'.
- **Action:** For future budgets, ensure pages are dated and version numbers are provided.
- **Action:** Look into Item 8130, under 'Equipment and Equipment Repairs' to understand what 'Lighting rental (\$7500) refers to.

#58-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** bylaw #439-26 2026 O&M and Capital Budget be read a first time on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Motion #58-26 was **CARRIED**.

### b. Bylaw #440-26 Property Taxation Levy – First Reading

#59-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** bylaw #440-26 Property Taxation Levy be read a first time on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Motion #59-26 was **CARRIED**.

### c. Bylaw #438-26 Dwelling Construction Grant Bylaw – Second and Third Reading

- Councillor Mackinnon declared a conflict of interest regarding this bylaw and recused herself from the discussion and vote.

#60-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** bylaw #438-26 Dwelling Construction Grant Bylaw be read a second time on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Motion #60-26 was **CARRIED**, with Councillor Sundbo voting against.

#61-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** bylaw #438-26 Dwelling Construction Grant Bylaw be read a third time and adopted on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Motion #61-26 was **CARRIED**, with Councillor Sundbo voting against.

## 12. Correspondence

### a. MLA Brent McDonald – Letter

#62-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the letter from MLA Brent McDonald be received and filed.

Motion #62-26 was **CARRIED**.

### b. Health Centre February Newsletter

#63-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the Health Centre February Newsletter be received and filed.

Motion #63-26 was **CARRIED**.

### c. Yukon Contractor's Association – Letter

*Discussion:*

- CAO recapped that road work originally intended as a provisional item under a Yukon Government project with Castle Rock was later contracted directly by the municipality when YG could not proceed with the provisional arrangement; the Yukon Contractors Association (YCA) raised concerns and has requested a meeting following correspondence.
- Council discussed former communication with the YCA, briefly discussing next steps.

#64-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** staff provide the correspondence in relation to the Yukon Contractor's Association via email to Council for further discussion at the March 25, 2026 regular council meeting.

Motion #64-26 was **CARRIED**.

#65-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the letter from the Yukon Contractor's Association be received and filed.

Motion #65-26 was **CARRIED**.

#66-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the meeting be extended past 9:00 p.m.

Motion #66-26 was **CARRIED**.

### d. Mandate Letter – Hon. Currie Dixon, Premier of the Yukon

*Discussion:*

- Have there been any updates to the mandate letter?

- There has been no update.
- Council discussed interest in meeting with Minister Bellmore to discuss the following items within the mandate letter: energy, electrical infrastructure, healthcare access, arctic security and defence-related considerations, land issues, and emergency management (i.e., EMO).

#67-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** staff draft a letter to Minister Bellmore to be sent in mid-April requesting a meeting to discuss issues that pertain to the Mandate letter received from Premier Currie Dixon.

Motion #67-26 was **CARRIED**.

#68-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the mandate letter from the Honourable Currie Dixon, Premier of the Yukon be received and filed.

Motion #68-26 was **CARRIED**.

### 13. Council Reports and Notice of Motions

#### Councillor Busche

- Went on a productive and informative tour with the Solid Waste Committee.
- The Solid Waste Committee had a meeting to discuss next steps. The Committee is ready to produce a report to council shortly.
- Will be travelling away from the territory near the end of March 2026 and will attend meetings by Zoom.

#### Councillor Mackinnon

- Attended the Arctic Security Conference in Whitehorse. The issue of power outages as a primary security concern in the North was mentioned. The rangers and support for rangers were noted as the most important means to be involved in Arctic security at a local level. It was uncertain how Council could best support rangers. She noticed that despite Haines Junction being between the border of two nations, that there was not much representation from the community.
- Noted that she will be attending the March 25, 2026 council meeting by zoom.

#### Councillor Moore

- Volunteered to provide support, if needed, to Councillor Sundbo on the Shakwak Hall Committee.

#### Councillor Sundbo

- Has a trip planned in the following week, which may be shorter than expected (one to two days).

- Noted that a resident had reported to him that there was garbage on the ground at the gun range pull-off. It appeared that a person had been leaving their household garbage there.
  - **Action:** Staff to reach out to Highways and Public Works and perhaps the Conservation Officers and put in a request to address the issue.

#### Mayor Strand

- Attended the Association of Yukon Communities (AYC) board meeting with Councillor Busche. Jordan Stackhouse drafted an interesting report on 'Is it Challenging to get a Mortgage in Watson Lake?'
- Reminded Councillors that the next AYC meeting is in Watson Lake on the weekend of May 7, 2026. Noted that Council could bring forward resolutions to this meeting.
- Suggested nominating Councillor McPhee for an award.
- Did the judging of Glacier Nights Festival with Haines' Mayor Tom Morphet.
- Had lunch with the Nordic Ambassadors with the Council, CAFN Council, and members of the Canadian Rangers.

#### **14. Questions from the Public**

There were no questions from the public.

#### **15. Motion to Close Meeting to the Public**

##### a. Staffing Update, Lands Discussion, CoW Scheduling

#69-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the meeting be closed to the public at 9:22 p.m.

Motion #69-26 was **CARRIED**.

#### **16. Motion to Reopen Meeting to the Public**

#70-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the meeting be reopened to the public at 10:15 p.m.

Motion #70-26 was **CARRIED**.

#71-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** a Committee of the Whole meeting be scheduled to discuss the ERP and Council priorities on April 20, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Motion #71-26 was **CARRIED**.

#72-26 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the CCARE application deadline be extended to a later date, to be determined at the March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Council meeting.

Motion #72-26 was **CARRIED**.

**17. Adjournment**

#73-26 It was moved and seconded  
**THAT** the meeting be adjourned.

Motion #73-26 was **CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

  
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Mayor Diane Strand

  
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CAO David Fairbank

