



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4, 2025

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM

B. REVIEW

- a. Agenda
- b. Minutes
- c. Visions and Values
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest

C. DELEGATIONS

D. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. Corporate Services Director's Report
- b. Accounts Payable Report
- c. Correspondence

E. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Briefing Note – CAMA Board Meeting – Ottawa February 2025
- b. Briefing Note – Approval of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan
- c. Briefing Note – 2025 Mill Rate Calculation
- d. Briefing Note - Status Update – NLMCC Co-Stewardship Agreement in Principle

F. OTHER BUSINESS

G. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

H. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

I. ADJOURNMENT



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting February 4th, 2025

MINUTES

The Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on
Tuesday, February 4th, 2025 @ 6:55 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present: Cr. Benwell, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Tuckey,
Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette
Regrets: Cr. Heaton and Director Hood
Staff Present: Tracy Thomas, Senior Administrative Officer
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 6:55 pm, confirmed quorum, and handed the Chair to Cr. Tuckey.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk
Seconded by: Couvrette

That the agenda be adopted as amended to add under section F. Other Business – GNWT Tourism Strategy.

PASSED

b. Minutes

Moved by: Cr. Bathe
Seconded by: Mayor Fergusson

That the minutes from the Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting on January 7th, 2025, be adopted as presented.

PASSED

- c. Vision and Values - Review
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest – None

C. DELEGATIONS

D. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. The Corporate Services Director's Report for December

Cr. Karasiuk inquired as to whether the Council was waiting on the museum presentations to the other three organizations before taking next steps.

SAO Thomas mentioned that she was aware a meeting took place while she was away, but she had not yet had the opportunity to debrief. She explained that the next steps involved forming a working group composed of leaders and administration after all four councils had been presented to. This group would then continue the next phase of discussions.

Mayor Fergusson explained that the leadership did not meet again with TLC, but an agreement in principle would be created. While all parties agreed in principle, there were several conditions that needed to be met before moving forward, such as conducting assessments, environmental impact studies, and evaluating the condition of the building. Once these outcomes were addressed, the next steps would be determined, and further follow-up would occur.



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SAO Thomas responded that that was not quite in alignment with the direction provided by Council previously, and that perhaps further discussion would be required before an agreement in principle should be signed.

Cr. Benwell inquired as to whether there is a timeline for the pool closure.

SAO Thomas discussed that some parts were on backorder until at least April, delaying the repairs . These parts had been damaged from the power fluctuations during the brownouts.

Cr. Couvrette raised concerns related to the pool closure and the impact of brownouts. He referenced a letter from the Power Corporation stating they were willing to consider reimbursing costs, though he was uncertain of the specifics. He inquired whether the Town planned to seek additional compensation, given the significant disruption to the community caused by the closure of a critical facility. He highlighted the financial strain, including loss of revenue, efforts to source alternative power solutions, and the cost of reimbursing memberships. Beyond financial implications, he also emphasized the broader community and lifestyle impacts. He asked whether the administration was considering pursuing compensation to address these additional costs.

SAO Thomas clarified that the Town had been tracking all associated expenses, including HR costs and loss of revenue and would seek reimbursement for as much as possible.

b. Accounts Payable Report

c. Correspondence

E. ADMINISTRATION

d. Briefing Note- NACC Annual Donation Request

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette

Seconded by: Mayor Fergusson

That Council formally approve the amount of \$5000.00 as a donation to the Northern Arts and Culture Centre.

PASSED

F. OTHER BUSINESS

G. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk

Seconded by: Mayor Fergusson

That Cr. Heaton be excused from the Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting on February 4th, 2025.

PASSED

H. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That next Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting be on March 4th, 2025.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Mayor Fergusson



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Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That the meeting be adjourned at 7:26 pm.

PASSED

Vision

The vision statement outlines what our community wants to be. Our vision statement provides a basis for future decision-making and activities.

The Town of Fort Smith will work with our partners to enhance our excellent quality of life by respecting values, traditions, and healthy lifestyles. We will continue to advance as a unified, active and prosperous community.

Values

The mission defines how the Town will operate; it represents what is fundamentally important to us in how we work with each other and represent the citizens of Fort Smith.

- **Welcoming** – we are a friendly community which embraces our visitors, students and residents alike.
- **Innovative** – we take on new challenges in the pursuit of excellence.
- **Sustainable** – we are committed to sustainability in our Town's operations and development.
- **Unified** – we work with Indigenous governments and our partners to implement our plans and achieve our goals.
- **Committed** – we operate professionally and to the highest ethical standards.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Corporate Services
Corporate Services Monthly Report

Date: February 26, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH ACCEPTS THE CORPORATE SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT AS PRESENTED.

BACKGROUND

Corporate Services currently has two vacant positions. The Director of Corporate Services position is still vacant but is being temporarily filled by Jim Hood. Attempts to staff this position have been unsuccessful so far so the services of a recruiter are currently being used to assist in finding a suitable candidate. The Accounts Receivable Clerk position has been filled by Mahalia Villebrun through an internal competition. Mahalia began in the position on January 17. Unfortunately, this has left a vacancy in the Receptionist position. This position will be advertised through an internal and external competition to run concurrently over the next two weeks.

The January utility billing was delayed due to the staff vacancy. Bills went out on February 26, 2025. Efforts will be made to ensure the next billing will be completed closer to mid-month.

Accounting entries for 2024 are now complete and all subsystems are now closed. The reconciliation of accounts in preparation for the audit is now the top priority. The goal is to have all accounts balanced in preparation for the annual audit so minimal assistance from the auditors is required and that the final audit is complete by April 30. The auditors are currently scheduled to be onsite March 17th.

The Operations and Maintenance Budgets for the General Operating Fund, Utility Operating Fund and Environmental Fund are now complete and approved. Preparation of the Capital Budget is now underway. The SAO and Directors will be providing their input and that information will be compiled into a working document. This document will be reviewed and presented to council for input and eventually for approval.

Prepared by:
Jim Hood
Director of Corporate Services
Date: February 26, 2025

Reviewed by:
Tracy Thomas
Senior Administrative Officer
Date: February 27, 2025



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Senior Administrative Officer
Date: February 2025
Subject: CAMA Board Meeting – Ottawa, February 2025

PURPOSE:

For information only.

BACKGROUND:

The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Board consists of 11 representatives from across Canada, including one from each province and the three territories. Additionally, there are two members-at-large representing municipalities with populations under and over 100,000. The Board meets four times a year, with three in-person meetings and one virtual meeting. The last in-person meeting was held in Yellowknife in October 2024, with this meeting taking place in Ottawa. The next in-person meeting will be in Quebec during the Annual General Meeting and Conference, followed by a meeting in British Columbia in October. CAMA covers all board meeting expenses, except for the conference, where municipalities traditionally cover the CAO/SAO attendance, though CAMA covers the additional hotel night required for the Board meeting.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM FEBRUARY 2025 MEETING:

1) Collaboration & Networking

The CAMA Board meeting provided an opportunity to engage with other municipal administrators to discuss areas of common interest, best practices, new initiatives, resource development and sharing, and strengthening the national municipal network.

2) Climate Toolkit for Housing & Infrastructure

A briefing was provided on Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities Canada's (HICC) efforts to support municipalities in making climate-informed decisions. The session was attended by CAMA Board members and federal representatives, including Assistant Deputy Minister Matt de Vlieger. Key components of the Climate Toolkit include:

- **Climate Help Desk:** Direct technical support and guidance for municipalities on climate-smart solutions.
- **Online Climate Platform:** A publicly accessible hub with data, tools, guidance, and case studies.
- **Roster of Climate and Infrastructure Experts:** A pool of pre-qualified experts available to support municipal infrastructure projects.
- **Impact:** Aimed at improving municipal resilience and reducing greenhouse gas emissions while enhancing cost efficiencies.

3) FCM Presentation & Federal Advocacy

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) presented on advocacy efforts, election preparations, and U.S. political impacts. The session was attended by Mathieu Bélanger, Executive Director of Policy and Public Affairs, and Matt Gemmel, Director of Policy. Key points included:

- **Municipal Growth Framework:** Advocating for increased infrastructure investment to support Canada's growing population and prevent infrastructure deficits.



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- **Federal Budget Concerns:** The CHIF fund remains unfunded, and the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) contains language allowing funding withdrawal if procurement policies change.
- **Future Federal Priorities:** A potential shift from housing to economic development due to U.S. political trends.
- **Municipal Procurement Guide:** FCM is developing a guide prioritizing Canadian and non-U.S. suppliers.

4) **Presentation to Deputy Minister, Infrastructure, Housing & Communities**
CAMA continues to advocate for improvements to federal infrastructure funding and housing affordability programs. The presentation was attended by senior officials from Infrastructure Canada, including Deputy Minister. Key recommendations included:

- **Infrastructure Funding:** Streamlining funding approvals, ensuring small community access, and reducing administrative burdens.
- **Housing Affordability:** Aligning housing starts with immigration, transferring surplus government land to municipalities, and expanding federal support for affordable housing.

CONCLUSION:

The CAMA Board meeting in Ottawa provided valuable opportunities for municipal administrators to engage with federal representatives, discuss pressing municipal challenges, and advocate for improved infrastructure funding and housing policies. The next in-person Board meeting will be held in Quebec during the Annual General Meeting and Conference, followed by a meeting in British Columbia in October 2025.



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: March 4th, 2025
Subject: Approval of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

PURPOSE:

To seek Council’s approval of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan: *Foundations for the Future: Our Strategic Path 2025-2029*, following the strategic planning session held on February 7-9, 2025, which engaged both Council and the Senior Management Committee alongside the consultant.

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Fort Smith conducted a comprehensive strategic planning session to establish clear priorities and guide municipal efforts over the next five years. The Strategic Plan reflects the collaborative input of Council and senior administration, ensuring alignment with community needs and available resources.

ANALYSIS:

The 2025-2029 Strategic Plan is built around five key pillars:

1. **Organizational Development and Capacity Building**
 - Ensuring staff capacity aligns with service levels.
 - Investing in people, strengthening leadership, and enhancing internal capacity.
2. **Sustainable Service Delivery**
 - Providing reliable infrastructure and optimizing resources for long-term service sustainability.
3. **Modernization**
 - Enhancing operational efficiency through IT improvements, workflow refinement, and records management.
4. **Land Use Planning**
 - Managing sustainable growth through proactive planning.
5. **Recreation**
 - Enhancing recreational opportunities to support active living.

SUMMARY:

This Strategic Plan serves as a foundational document guiding municipal decision-making and resource allocation over the next five years. Approval will enable Administration to move forward with implementation while ensuring alignment with Council’s priorities and fiscal realities.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council approve the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan: *Foundations for the Future: Our Strategic Path 2025-2029*, as presented, and direct Administration to proceed with implementation.



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: March 4th, 2025
Subject: Status Update – NLMCC Co-Stewardship Agreement in Principle

PURPOSE:

To provide Council with an update on the status of the Draft Agreement in Principle (AIP) for the proposed co-stewardship of the Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre (NLMCC) and to seek direction on clarifying the Town's position with TLC partners.

BACKGROUND:

On January 15, 2025, Council directed the Mayor and Administration to engage with TLC partners and, if sufficient support existed, form a working group to assess legal, financial, operational, and governance considerations related to the proposed co-stewardship of the NLMCC. A Draft AIP has since been circulated among the TLC partners, but it is important to note that a formal working group has not yet been established. Instead, a member of the NLMCC Board took the initiative to arrange meetings with the TLC partners, which led to the development of the Draft AIP outside of the expected process.

It may also be helpful to clarify that, as originally envisioned by Council, the working group was intended to include only Chiefs/Mayors and key Administration personnel from the Town of Fort Smith and TLC partners. This approach was designed to ensure a focused and strategic process for assessing the co-stewardship proposal, without the inclusion of representatives from the NLMCC at this stage.

Council's directive on January 15, 2025, outlined the following steps:

1. **Engage with TLC Partners:** A meeting with TLC leadership and administrative representatives was to be scheduled after all councils had been briefed to gauge support for the transfer of assets and governance.
2. **Form a Working Group (if support exists):** If there was support from TLC partners, a working group consisting only of Chiefs/Mayors and key Administration personnel from the Town of Fort Smith and TLC partners would be created to conduct due diligence on legal, financial, and operational considerations. The working group's findings would be brought back to all councils for final approval before any commitments were made.

ANALYSIS:

Administration has reviewed the Draft AIP (dated February 18, 2025) with the following observations:

- **Working Group Process:** The AIP was developed through meetings initiated by a member of the NLMCC Board, rather than through the formal working group that Council had outlined. While these meetings were helpful, the process has not yet followed the full structure Council envisioned.
- **Commitments to Proceed:** The AIP states that it "serves as a commitment to investigate and address key concerns before moving forward with a more formal partnership agreement." However, Council's direction only authorized discussions and a working group to assess the situation—not a formal commitment to proceed.
- **Commitment of Funds:** The Draft AIP references financial commitments, such as contributions for acquisition, renovation, and operations, which Council has not



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authorized at this stage. Current direction only calls for an assessment of the potential financial implications.

- **Responsibility for Next Steps:** The AIP does not clarify who will be responsible for funding necessary next steps, such as legal and environmental assessments. Council has not yet assigned financial responsibility for these actions.

Timeline Considerations: The AIP sets a goal of finalizing an agreement by December 31, 2025, but Council's direction requires only a report on findings before making any decisions

NEXT STEPS:

- At Council's direction, Administration will reach out to TLC partners to gauge interest in establishing a working group, consisting of Chiefs/Mayors and relevant Administration personnel, to discuss the co-stewardship proposal.
- Any revisions to the Draft AIP will be presented to Council for review prior to further engagement with TLC partners.
- The working group will only be formed if there is clear support from TLC partners, and will consist of only Chiefs/Mayors and key Administration personnel, as originally intended.
- The Mayor and Administration will ensure that no commitments beyond the investigation phase are made without formal Council approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

To ensure the process stays in line with Council's direction, Administration recommends:

1. Clarifying with TLC partners that the Town's participation in the AIP is strictly for due diligence and investigation, and that there is no commitment to proceed at this stage.
2. Requesting SRFN, SLFN, and FSMC to form a working group consisting of only Chiefs/Mayors and key Administration personnel.
3. Delaying the review of the Draft AIP until after the working group has been created and the Draft has been revised to clearly state that no party, including the Town of Fort Smith, is obligated to move beyond investigation without formal Council approval.
4. Ensuring that any financial commitments are clearly defined before proceeding further, including identifying who will cover costs associated with the next steps (e.g., legal and environmental assessments).
5. Bringing the matter back to Council before any further action is taken beyond engagement and investigation.

PROPOSED MOTION:

That Council direct Administration to engage with TLC partners to clarify the Town's position, ensure alignment with Council's original directive regarding the working group, and bring any proposed revisions to the Draft AIP back to Council for review prior to further engagement.