



Council of the Town of Fort Smith
Tuesday, March 18th, 2025 @ 7 PM

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Confirmation of Quorum
- b. Acknowledgment of First Nations

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

3. DELEGATIONS

- a. Policing Report – February 2025

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of Council February 18th, 2025

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTEREST

- a. Statement of Disclosure Interest.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

- a. Standing Committee Meeting Minutes
 - i. Protective Services Standing Committee March 4th, 2025
 - ii. Corporate Services Standing Committee March 4th, 2025
 - iii. Community Services Standing Committee March 11th, 2025
 - iv. Municipal Services Standing Committee March 11th, 2025
- b. Bylaws and Policies
 - i. Second Reading of Bylaw 1060, cited as the Town of Fort Smith Community Plan
- c. Appointments
- d. Administration
 - i. Briefing Note – Update* Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference and Tradeshow 2025
 - ii. Briefing Note – Establishment of Working Group
- e. Mayor and Council / Board Representatives

8. PROCLAMATIONS

9. ABSENCE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

10. DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Regular Meeting of Council is on April 18th, 2025

11. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

12. ADJOURNMENT



Council of the Town of Fort Smith
Tuesday, March 18th, 2025 @ 7 PM

13. QUESTION PERIOD



MINUTES

The Regular meeting of the Council 02-25 was held on Tuesday, February 18th, 2025 @ 7 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present: Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette
Regrets: Cr. Benwell
Staff Present: Emily Colucci, Director of Community Services (Acting SAO)
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Mayor Fergusson confirmed the quorum and read the acknowledgment of First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

25-024 **Moved by: Cr. Couvrette**
Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey
That the agenda be adopted as presented. **PASSED**

3. DELEGATIONS

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting of Council 01-25

25-025 **Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk**
Seconded by: Cr. Cox
That the minutes from the Regular Meeting 01-25 on January 21st, 2025, be adopted as presented. **PASSED**

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTEREST

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

a. Council Business

i. Protective Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 4th, 2025

PROTECTIVE **# 25-026** **Moved by: Cr. Cox**
Seconded by: D/M Keizer
That the Protective Services Standing Committee minutes from February 4th, 2025, be adopted as presented. **PASSED**



Regular Meeting of Council 02-25

PROTECTIVE

25-027

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey
Seconded by: Cr. Cox

That DPA-001-25, submitted by Wisdom Eji, to operate a personal device repair business, ThatGuy-Tech Solutions, from Lot 1644, Plan 2922, 7-24 Wood Bison Ave., Fort Smith be approved.

PASSED

i. Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 4th, 2025

CORPORATE

25-028

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the minutes from the Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 4th, 2025, be adopted as presented.

PASSED

CORPORATE

25-029

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey
Seconded by: Cr. Cox

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

PASSED

ii. Community Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 11th, 2025

COMMUNITY

25-030

Moved by: Cr. Cox
Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

That the Community Services Standing Committee minutes from February 11th, 2025 be adopted as presented.

PASSED

COMMUNITY

25-031

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the public meeting regarding the Community Plan be scheduled for Monday, March 10th, at 6:30 PM, and that Council proceed with final edits and a second reading thereafter.

PASSED

COMMUNITY

25-032

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk
Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

That Council approve the following road closure;

That Marine Drive, between Mills Street and Wapiti Street, be closed to vehicle traffic from 12:00 pm to 5:30 pm March 14, and 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on March 15 and 16, 2025 for the Big Fun and Frolics events.

PASSED



Regular Meeting of Council 02-25

COMMUNITY	# 25-033	Moved by: Cr. Tuckey Seconded by: Cr. Cox
	That Council approve the 2025 Operations & Maintenance Budget, including a 6.5% increase in the property tax revenue to ensure fiscal sustainability.	
	In Favour: Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette	
	Opposed: Cr. Heaton	
PASSED		

Cr. Couvrette expressed his disappointment with the 6.5% increase, stating that it was higher than he had anticipated.

Cr. Cox stated that the current adjustment primarily serves to catch up with inflation and align with rising costs. He expressed support for the measure but emphasized the importance of maintaining a more consistent approach in the future. Looking ahead to next year, he hopes any adjustments will be more in line with a 1% or 2% increase or whatever is necessary to keep pace with inflation.

COMMUNITY	# 25-034	Moved by: Cr. Tuckey Seconded by: Cr. Cox
	That Council accept the variance request submitted by John Lepine for a manufactured home to be used as a caretaker's unit on 58 Highway 5, Lot 1044, Plan 1397 Sundog Maintenance Services.	
	PASSED	

iii. Municipal Services Standing Committee Meeting February 11th, 2025

MUNICIPAL	# 25-035	Moved by: Cr. Cox Seconded by: D/M Keizer
	The minutes from the Municipal Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 11 th , 2025, be adopted as presented.	
	PASSED	

MUNICIPAL	# 25-036	MOTION TABLED
	Recommendation:	
	That Mayor and Council provide direction on how to proceed with the proposed trade of Town-owned lands in the Westgrove subdivision and adjacent to the Arena with the Fort Smith Métis Council for the properties adjacent to the Town of Fort Smith Water Treatment Plant, supporting future municipal drinking water infrastructure expansion.	
	Status:	
Motion #25-036 was tabled pending further information on the impacts of timing changes.		

b. Bylaws and Policies

Cr. Karasiuk sought clarification to the timeline when they are actually going to start the Bylaw and policy review process.

Mayor Fergusson stated that the proposal for which funding was secured would move forward with a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Someone will be hired to take charge of the initiative and oversee its progress. She emphasized that once this individual is in place,



Regular Meeting of Council 02-25

they should be brought before the council to ensure that the process advances more efficiently. This would facilitate a timely discussion on the bylaw and policy that has been tabled.

Cr. Couvrette supported the progress on hiring a contractor for the bylaw review but stressed the urgency of addressing time-sensitive bylaws. He was particularly concerned about the delayed review of an employment-related bylaw that should have been updated after the 2021 collective agreement. He called the delay disrespectful to excluded employees and urged council to address it immediately rather than waiting for the contractor's process, which may not begin until June.

Mayor Fergusson informed council that she will follow up and that it will be brought up during the next meeting.

c. Appointments

d. Administration

i. Briefing Note – Briefing Note – Confirming the date for the Wood Buffalo Frolics Half Day Civic Holiday – March 14th, 2025

#25-037 **Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk**
 Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

That Council pass the following motion:

Confirm Friday, March 14, 2025, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. (Mountain Time) as the half-day civic holiday for the Wood Buffalo Frolics, in accordance with Bylaw 1004.

PASSED

Cr. Couvrette acknowledged the significant efforts of volunteers in supporting community events and emphasized the crucial role they play in their success. He noted that volunteer participation has declined over time, particularly due to the impacts of COVID-19 and changing lifestyles. He encouraged residents to reflect on the value these events bring to the community, including cultural celebration and overall well-being. He urged people to move away from a self-focused mindset and instead embrace volunteerism and community cooperation, as these organizations rely on public support to thrive.

Cr. Karasiuk thanked volunteers for their contributions to community events and suggested that the local newsletter could include a section listing volunteer opportunities. This would provide free advertising for organizations in need of support.

ii. Briefing Note – Draft Municipal Service Agreement with Salt River First Nation

#25-038 **Moved by: Cr. Cox**
 Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

That Council approve the formation of an MSA Review Committee with at least two Council representatives to participate in the review process with the SMC.

PASSED

D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Bathe volunteered to be Council representatives and participate in the MSA review committee working group.

e. Mayor and Council/Board Representative

- i. Cr. Tuckey - extended condolences on behalf of the council to families who lost loved ones this month. He provided an update from the HR Committee, stating that while they had identified a promising candidate for the Director of Corporate Services position, the interview did not take place. As a result, the hiring process will need to be restarted, and the position will be re-advertised.



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- ii. Cr. Cox -provided updates on upcoming events and local conditions. He noted that work on the Thebacha Loppet and trail is progressing well and should be in good shape if the weather cooperates. He also mentioned an upcoming fire meeting at Roaring Rapids Hall and encouraged community participation. Additionally, he commented on improving road conditions, highlighting the clear roads, clean multi-use trails, and emptying ditches, which indicate good preparation for spring.
- iii. Cr. Couvrette - extended condolences to families who have recently lost loved ones and encouraged anyone in need of support to reach out to available mental health resources. He also noted the absence of the RCMP delegation at the meeting but reiterated their frequent message about community safety. He emphasized that ongoing concerns in town often stem from individuals not following laws and urged residents to report suspicious activities to the RCMP. Providing credible information, he stressed, is essential for law enforcement to take action and address threats to the community
- iv. Cr. Benwell - excused
- v. Cr. Heaton - expressed condolences to the families of Shane Manderville and Pat Abraham, acknowledging the deep impact of their losses on the community. She emphasized the need for leadership discussions on the future of local youth, questioning whether they have hope and the necessary support to succeed. She highlighted the importance of addressing barriers they face within the community. Additionally, she reflected on the January 2024 plane crash and shared her personal grief over the loss of Howie, while also looking forward to the upcoming Joel Tetso Memorial Hockey Tournament.
- vi. Cr. Karasiuk welcomed Cr. Heaton back and echoed Cr. Cox's praise for the town's snow removal efforts, noting significant improvements at major intersections. He also addressed concerns about youth mental health, highlighting his involvement through the school board. Additionally, he has requested that the regional wellness committee discuss the removal of youth counselors from schools. A meeting on this topic is scheduled for Wednesday, the 26th, at 2 PM at the health center, where he encouraged community members to hold health services accountable for their commitments.
- vii. Cr. Bathe
- viii. Deputy Mayor Keizer highlighted two key updates. First, he addressed the NWT tourism plan, noting that Fort Smith was initially missing from the list but has now been included for a meeting on May 6. He credited Mayor Fergusson for initiating the discussion and ensuring Fort Smith's inclusion, emphasizing the importance of attending to promote local tourism and integrate it into the strategic plan. Secondly, he mentioned the upcoming NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC) Annual General Meeting, noting that he has shared relevant information with council members. He encouraged the community to visit the NWTAC website to learn about longstanding and new resolutions addressing major northern issues. He assured that efforts are being made to bring important local concerns to the organization, which represents communities across the North.
- ix. Mayor Fergusson highlighted key updates, including economic opportunities from the Pine Point Mining Company, ongoing advocacy efforts through a letter campaign on community concerns, and strategic planning sessions to set long-term priorities. She noted the approval of the operating budget with a 6.5% tax



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increase, emphasizing the need to address aging infrastructure. Upcoming events in March include the Loppet, territorial snowboarding trials, dog races, the Wood Buffalo Frolics, and a fishing derby. She also provided a positive update on the pool's maintenance progress.

8. PROCLAMATIONS

None.

9. ABSENCE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

PROTECTIVE

25-039

Moved by: Cr. Cox
Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

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

PASSED

CORPORATE

25-040

Moved by: D/M Keizer
Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

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

PASSED

COMMUNITY

25-041

Moved by: Cr. Cox
Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

That Cr. Heaton be excused from the Community Services Standing Committee meeting on February 11th, 2025.

PASSED

MUNICIPAL

25-042

Moved by: Cr. Cox
Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That Cr. Heaton be excused from the Municipal Services Standing Committee meeting on February 11th, 2025.

PASSED

25-043

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Cox

That Cr. Benwell be excused from the Regular Meeting of Council on February 18th, 2025.

PASSED

10. DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Protective Services Standing Committee	March 4 th , 2025, at 6:30 pm
Corporate Services Standing Committee	March 4 th , 2025, to follow the Protective Services Meeting with a 5-minute break
Community Services Standing Committee	March 11 th , 2025, at 6:30 pm
Municipal Services Standing Committee	March 11 th , 2025, to follow the Community Services Meeting with a 5-minute break
Regular Meeting of Council	March 18 th , 2025, at 7 pm

11. ADJOURNMENT



Regular Meeting of Council 02-25

25-044

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk

Seconded by:

That the meeting be adjourned at 7:41 pm.

PASSED

12. QUESTION PERIOD

A question period was offered in accordance with policy.



Protective Services Standing Committee Meeting February 4th, 2025

MINUTES

The Protective Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, February 4th, 2025 @ 6:30 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
Staff Present: Tracy Thomas, Senior Administrative Officer
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary
Adam McNab, Director of Protective Services

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, confirmed quorum and handed the Chair to Cr. Couvrette. Cr. Couvrette read the acknowledgment of First Nations.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

PASSED

b. Minutes

Moved by: Mayor Fergusson
Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

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

PASSED

- c. Vision and Values – reviewed
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest - none

C. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. The Protective Services Report for December

Mayor Fergusson praised the reporting style for its clarity and visual breakdown of bylaw enforcement, lands and development, and health and safety. She inquired about Taxi Livery enforcement, confirming if it pertained to operating a taxi without a license, and sought clarification on occupational health and safety, including whether it covered all job-site incidents.

Director McNab acknowledged the feedback, explaining that the report layout had changed while maintaining historical data. He clarified that two Taxi Livery cases were under review to ensure compliance. Regarding health and safety, he noted that while all incidents are reported, they do not always involve employees directly, with many stemming from public interactions at recreational facilities. He emphasized the importance of reporting near misses as a proactive safety measure.

Cr. Karasiuk asked about angle parking enforcement on Simpson Street. Director McNab stated he would bring a briefing note to Council with SAO support, outlining the issue and



Protective Services Standing Committee Meeting February 4th, 2025

potential solutions. He explained that while the area was initially approved for angle parking, the decision was later rescinded, leading to ongoing enforcement challenges.

Cr. Benwell inquired about Taxi Livery permits, which Director McNab explained are required for operating taxis under the bylaw, ensuring consistency with regulations. Mayor Fergusson referenced the Transportation Master Plan's past suggestion to turn Simpson Street into a one-way road to address parking issues. Director McNab agreed, planning to incorporate solutions from the plan into his briefing note.

Cr. Couvrette expressed concern that the Transportation Master Plan was underutilized despite its potential value for active transportation and community planning. SAO Thomas responded that elements of the plan, such as crosswalks and signage, were being implemented as budget allowed.

D. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Briefing Note – DPA-001-25 Home Occupation Development Permit – ThatGuy-Tech Solutions

Moved by: Mayor Fergusson
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That DPA-001-25, submitted by Wisdom Eji, to operate a personal device repair business, ThatGuy-Tech Solutions, from Lot 1644, Plan 2922, 7-24 Wood Bison Ave., Fort Smith be approved.

PASSED

b. OTHER BUSINESS

c. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

Moved by: Mayor Fergusson
Seconded by: Cr. Karasiuk

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

PASSED

d. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That next Protective Services Standing Committee Meeting will be on March 4th, 2025.

e. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk
Seconded by: Mayor Fergusson

That the meeting be adjourned at 6:48 pm.

PASSED



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4th, 2025

MINUTES

The Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 4th, 2025 @ 7:20 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

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

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm, confirmed quorum.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That the agenda be amended to add an in-camera session under (F) Other Business.

PASSED

b. Minutes

Moved by: Cr. Bathe
Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

That the minutes from the Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 4th 2025, be adopted as presented.

PASSED

Cr. Couvrette followed up on the amended minutes, referencing the motion that was passed regarding a letter to be written for the Minister of ITI concerning the 2030 tourism strategy consultations and the lack of a dedicated session for Fort Smith. Since then, ITI has decided to offer a session in Fort Smith, scheduled for Thursday at 6 PM.

Upon reviewing the GNWT website, Cr. Couvrette noted that most communities were provided with two separate sessions—an afternoon meeting with the tourism industry sector and an evening public session. However, in Fort Smith, these were combined into a single public session from 6 to 8 PM. Cr. Couvrette questioned why ITI did not arrange an in-person discussion downtown and instead opted for a virtual session, suggesting this approach makes Fort Smith appear as a secondary priority in the tourism strategy.

Given Fort Smith's status as a key tourism hub in the NWT, with significant natural attractions and a role as a host community for festivals and events, Cr. Couvrette expressed frustration with ITI's approach. He urged the Mayor to follow up with the Minister to advocate for equitable treatment, similar to what is afforded to Hay River, Yellowknife, and Inuvik, ensuring Fort Smith is given appropriate recognition and engagement in tourism discussions.

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Benwell

To have the Mayor follow up with ITI and the Minister about the level and degree of consultation with the community of Fort Smith, regarding the 2030 tourism strategy.

PASSED



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4th, 2025

- c. Vision and Values
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest – none at this time

C. DELEGATIONS

D. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. The Corporate Services Director's Report for February

Director Hood noted that the auditors will be here between March 27th and April 3rd.

- b. Accounts Payable Report
- c. Correspondence

Council discussed a request from Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre to adjust lottery licensing rates. Mayor Fergusson noted that similar concerns had been raised in the past and believed prior bylaw amendments aimed at equity were not fully implemented. She emphasized that this issue should be prioritized in the ongoing bylaw review, given its impact on community organizations.

Cr. Heaton highlighted the Friendship Centre's vital role in supporting children facing food insecurity through its lunch and snack programs. She noted that structural issues and insufficient core funding pose significant challenges. With many families struggling, she stressed the urgency of reassessing bingo regulations for NGOs and charities to ensure these essential services continue, warning that without action, many children could go without meals.

E. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Briefing Note- CAMA Board Meeting – Ottawa February 2025 – **For Information Only**

- i. Briefing Note – Approval of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

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.

PASSED

- ii. Briefing Note – 2025 Mill Rate Calculations

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Heaton

That Council select, from the above scenarios, the Mill Rate calculation to be used in the preparation of the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw.

I move that Council select Scenario Two in which the weighting factor used for Residential and Country Residential properties is unchanged, and the weighting factor for Industrial, Institutional and Telecommunications is increased by 5%. This scenario is to be used for the calculation to be used in the preparation of the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw.



**Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting
March 4th, 2025**

PT on average assessed value					
PT CLASSES	WEIGHTING	AVERAGE ASSESSED VALUE OF TAXABLE AND GRANTABLE PROPERTIES	PROPOSED MILL RATE 2025	MILL RATE 2024	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE
Residential	0.4350	\$ 144,596	14.61	13.87	\$ 107
Residential - Undeveloped	0.4475	\$ 16,323	15.03	14.18	\$ 14
Commercial	0.8250	\$ 338,894	27.71	26.31	\$ 474
Commercial - Undeveloped	0.8750	\$ 23,571	29.39	27.90	\$ 35
Industrial	0.8670	\$ 240,385	29.12	26.32	\$ 673
Industrial - Undeveloped	0.9290	\$ 13,335	31.20	28.22	\$ 40
Institutional	1.1870	\$ 1,910,141	39.87	36.03	\$ 7,333
Institutional - Undeveloped	1.2390	\$ 55,159	41.62	37.63	\$ 220
Recreation	0.5000	\$ 113,783	16.79	15.94	\$ 97
Telecommunications	1.1660	\$ 514,367	39.16	35.39	\$ 1,941
Country - Residential	0.3866	\$ 158,547	12.99	12.33	\$ 104
Country - Undeveloped	0.3890	\$ 10,067	13.07	12.40	\$ 7
Country - Mixed	0.4500	\$ -	15.11	14.35	\$ -

PASSED

iii. Briefing Note – Status Update – NLMCC Co-Stewardship Agreement in Principle

Moved by: Cr. Benwell

Seconded by: D/M Keizer

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.

I move that Council approve the recommendations outlined in the briefing note and direct Administration to take the necessary steps to implement them.

PASSED

*Cr. Couvrette excused himself from this discussion

F. OTHER BUSINESS

a. In Camera Session

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Council move in-camera in accordance with the Cities, Towns, and Villages Act, Section 23(3)(e) a matter still under consideration and on which Council has not yet publicly announced a decision if discussion in public would likely prejudice the municipal corporation’s ability to carry out its activities or negotiations.

PASSED

*Cr. Benwell removed herself from the in-camera due to conflict of interest.

Moved by: D/M Keizer

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4th, 2025

That Council reaffirms its commitment to working collaboratively with Salt River First Nation to develop a fair, equitable, and sustainable Municipal Services Agreement that benefits both parties. Council remains dedicated to fostering a strong partnership and ensuring that a mutually beneficial agreement is reached as a priority.

PASSED

Moved by: Cr. Heaton
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Council move out of in-camera at 9 pm.

PASSED

G. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: DM Keizer

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

PASSED

H. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That next Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting be on April 1st, 2025.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Cr. Bathe
Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the meeting be adjourned at 9:05 pm.

PASSED



Community Services Standing Committee Meeting

MINUTES

The Community Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 11th, 2025 @ 6:30 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present: Cr. Benwell, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette

Regrets:

Staff Present: Tracy Thomas, Senior Administrative Officer
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary
Emily Colucci, Director of Community Services

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm and read the acknowledgment of First Nations.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey

Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the agenda be adopted as amended to add a briefing note - Community Plan – Second Reading and Submission to Minister under D. Administration.

PASSED

b. Minutes

Moved by: Cr. Bathe

Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

That the minutes from the Community Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 11th, 2025, be adopted as presented.

PASSED

c. Vision and Values

d. Declaration of Financial Interest

C. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. The Community Services Report for January

Mayor Fergusson expressed enthusiasm about the town receiving a \$12,000 award for youth programming, describing it as a significant achievement. She also shared her anticipation for Melanie Jewell's upcoming work on the new mural at the library, praising her artistic talent and noting that it will be a valuable addition to the CRC.

Mayor Fergusson acknowledged that rising costs are becoming a factor, making financial planning more challenging moving forward. She commended the report, highlighting the wealth of related information it provided, and extended her appreciation to staff for their efforts.

Director Colucci confirmed that Melanie Jewell will begin work on the library mural tomorrow, starting with the initial sketches. She noted that a community announcement will be made to celebrate this exciting project while also ensuring that Jewell has the



Community Services Standing Committee Meeting

necessary space to work over the coming weeks. Director Colucci added that the goal is to hold an unveiling event once the mural is completed and thanked everyone for their support.

Deputy Mayor Keizer shared that a family member is involved in the books and cooks program. He encouraged community members who have not yet signed up to reach out to the library, noting that the program has received positive feedback.

Additionally, Deputy Mayor Keizer spoke about the library's support in facilitating a digital grandparenting initiative with Finland. He commended the librarians for their efforts in sourcing the necessary books and expressed appreciation for their ongoing support. He noted that while these initiatives may not appear in the Director's report, they are valuable contributions from the library that he has observed over the past month.

Director Colucci expressed appreciation for the positive feedback on the library's services. She added that, since it occurred after the Director's report, she wanted to inform the Mayor and Council of a current vacancy. A position for the Program Coordinator for the Aquatics Program within the Community Services Department has been posted. The job posting was released that morning and will also be shared across Canada to attract applicants.

D. ADMINISTRATION

i. Briefing Note – Donation Policy

Cr. Couvrette emphasized the need for greater accountability from groups receiving funding, noting that the money comes from taxpayers and should be transparently managed. He suggested that organizations should report to Council at least every other year, beyond simply providing financial statements, to demonstrate how their programs benefit the broader community.

He also raised concerns about accessibility, pointing out that while membership fees for some organizations may be affordable for affluent residents, they can be a significant barrier for disadvantaged individuals. He questioned what steps these groups are taking to promote inclusivity and ensure their programs are accessible to all. Cr. Couvrette reiterated that as guardians of taxpayer money, Council must ensure funds are being spent appropriately, particularly given the substantial amounts allocated to these organizations.

Deputy Mayor Keizer referenced a clause in the briefing note stating that community groups must be based within the geographic boundaries of the Town of Fort Smith to receive support. He questioned whether this requirement is too restrictive, given that events such as the ski loppet, golf club, fishing derby, and Paddlefest take place outside town limits but still involve Fort Smith residents.

He noted that while the clause does not specify that activities must be held within town limits, it does require organizations to be based there. He pointed out that some clubs, like the golf club, are based in Alberta but still serve Fort Smith residents. Given the town's location on a jurisdictional border, he suggested that the wording should be revised to allow reasonable support for such events without overextending beyond Fort Smith.

SAO Thomas acknowledged that this concern will be addressed in the upcoming bylaw and policy review, with a commitment to making it a priority for revision.



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Cr. Cox expressed enthusiasm about the briefing note, stating that it addresses many of the concerns raised by the previous Council. He noted that it provides much-needed clarity, though some minor wording adjustments and clarifications may still be necessary, as Deputy Mayor Keizer mentioned.

Cr. Cox inquired about the \$4,200 in remaining funds available for allocation. He asked whether it would be possible to obtain a breakdown of how this amount was distributed over the past few years. This information, he explained, would help Council determine how best to prioritize the funds for the current year.

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

Council Directs Administration to provide a breakdown of how the Ad hoc Donation Budget has been utilized in the previous two fiscal years

PASSED

- ii. Briefing Note – Request for Support – Sweetgrass Healing Centre Inc. South Slave Community Engagement Tour

Moved by: Cr. Heaton

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Council **acknowledge SHC Inc.'s presence** in Fort Smith and consider providing **in-kind support** for the community engagement session scheduled for **March 17-19, 2025.**

DEFEATED

D/M Keizer provided notes on the proposal, stating that it is an interesting initiative. However, he inquired whether the TLC had been approached, as there appears to be a leadership aspect involved. Given that the program is intended for the entire community, they questioned whether the Town would be the sole supporter or if there were other partners involved.

Additionally, D/M Keizer expressed concern about the quality of the programs being offered, as he is not familiar with the individual behind the proposal. He asked whether there is a way to assess the program's credibility, emphasizing the need to ensure the Town is not endorsing something without sufficient knowledge. While acknowledging that the program may be beneficial, he noted the difficulty of making a judgment without more information and raised concerns about committing financial support without a clear understanding of its value.

Cr. Tuckey expressed uncertainty about the request, aside from serving as a point of contact. He noted that if the only action required is responding to the email to acknowledge and welcome Sweet Grass into the community for the community engagement presentation, then that seems straightforward.

Mayor Fergusson explained that the request involves in-kind support from the Town, specifically providing a space for the session. She stated that the Town would be the primary supporter by offering a venue and refreshments. Additionally, she noted that the individual is asking the Town to organize the event, while they would come to present and facilitate the session.

Cr. Couvrette questioned whether the initiative is a business venture or a social enterprise, emphasizing the need for clarification. He expressed concern that if it is strictly a business venture, supporting it could set a precedent for other businesses seeking municipal endorsement, which he views as the responsibility of the Chamber of Commerce rather



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than the Town. However, if it is a social enterprise, he noted that this would be one of the first such ventures brought before Council, warranting a more in-depth approach to how it is handled.

Cr. Heaton agreed with Deputy Mayor Keizer and Councillor Couvrette, expressing support for a business focused on mental health and addiction services coming to the community. However, she questioned whether the Town of Fort Smith should serve as the gateway for such an initiative. She suggested extending an invitation for the individual to appear before Council to address these concerns. Additionally, she noted that the GNWT has an entire department dedicated to health and social services, emphasizing that key questions should be answered before the Town commits to providing a venue, space, support, staff, or refreshments.

SAO Thomas stated that Administration will extend the invitation to become a delegate at a later date.

iii. Briefing Note – Fort Smith Ice Fishing Derby 2025 Donation Request

Moved by: Cr. Bathe

Seconded by: Cr. Benwell

That Council support the Fort Smith Ice Fishing Derby through a financial contribution of \$300.00 to help sustain this valued community event and benefit the local families who participate.

PASSED

D/M Keizer noted that while the briefing note and recommendation mention a \$300 contribution, the original request did not specify this amount. Director Colucci explained that since the request did not specify an amount, she reviewed past contributions and found that the average was \$287. Based on this, Administration included the \$300 recommendation in the absence of a specific request from the group.

iv. Briefing Note – Donation Request Fort Smith Minor Hockey Association

Moved by: D/M Keizer

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Mayor and Council approve the donation of \$1000.00 to the Fort Smith Hockey Association towards to Tournament fees for the Alberta Native Provincials.

DEFEATED

**Mayor Fergusson excused herself during this discussion and passed the chair to Cr. Tuckey @ 6:56 pm.*

Cr. Bathe expressed support for assisting the Hockey Association but acknowledged that the funding request is significant. He noted that if the Town is reviewing how financial support is allocated, it should consider whether hockey already receives a disproportionate share of benefits in the community. Speaking as a hockey parent, he recognized that the sport already receives substantial support and suggested that, when evaluating funding requests, it may be necessary to prioritize other initiatives as well.

Cr. Karasiuk expressed difficulty in supporting sports travel for teams to attend tournaments outside the community. He pointed out that the policy specifies a benefit to the community if teams are interested in hosting a tournament locally, as it brings visitors into the town. However, he felt that supporting travel for teams to go outside the community to attend tournaments could set a problematic precedent. While he



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acknowledged the value of participating in tournaments, he did not believe it was the Town's responsibility to fund such activities.

Cr. Cox expressed agreement with Cr. Karasiuk's perspective, noting two key points. First, he highlighted that the requested amount is significant, representing nearly 25% of the remaining budget for donations. Second, he emphasized that taxpayer money should be used for Town funds and events, rather than covering fees for activities in another community. While not necessarily opposed to a smaller contribution, he felt that the proposed amount was too large to allocate outside the community.

D/M Keizer questioned whether a smaller amount might be more appropriate, given that the request is a significant one. He suggested considering a reduction in the proposed funding. Additionally, he pointed out that the event is billed as the Alberta Native Provincials and asked whether the organizers had approached the TLC or other groups that support Indigenous youth in Alberta. He inquired if this was, in fact, an Indigenous competition.

Cr. Couvrette expressed concern that the lack of clarity in the Town's policy is creating an opportunity for future challenges. He noted that this is the first request the Council has received for a donation to support travel outside the community by an organization. He pointed out that several other sports organizations engage in similar types of travel, and approving this request could set a precedent for supporting similar requests from groups like figure skating, baseball, and others. He warned that approving such requests could quickly deplete the Town's donation budget of \$4,200 by the end of April and emphasized the importance of being cautious when making these decisions, as they could lead other groups to expect the same level of support.

Cr. Karasiuk reiterated that his concern is not about the amount of money, although he acknowledged that \$1,000 is a significant request, but rather about setting a precedent for supporting travel outside the community. He expressed opposition to funding travel for specific sports events outside of the community, stating that it goes against the intent of the Town's donation policy. He clarified that even if the request were for a smaller amount, such as \$200, he would still be opposed to it.

**Cr. Tuckey passed the chair back to Mayor Fergusson at 7:06 pm.*

v. Briefing Note – Council Honorarium Bylaw 1022

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette

Seconded by: Cr. Karasiuk

That Council direct administration to postpone the implementation of the Schedule A increase until the bylaw is reviewed and, if necessary, amended prior to the end of the current Council term.

PASSED

vi. Briefing Note – Award Recommendation – Bylaw and Policy Review and Development RFP

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey

Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

Recommendation:

The Bylaw Review Committee recommends awarding the contract to PlanIT North based on:

- Highest overall evaluation score under the RFP criteria
- Extensive experience in bylaw and policy development



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- Fully Northern-based presence, ensuring strong regional knowledge and alignment with local governance frameworks

While the budget is slightly above other proposals, the added value and expertise provided by PlanIT North justify the selection.

Motion:

That Council approves the awarding of the Bylaw and Policy Review and Development contract to PlanIT North for \$100,019.35, as recommended by the Bylaw Review Committee.

In Favor: Cr. Benwell, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, D/M Keizer, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox and Cr. Couvrette

Abstained: Cr. Bathe

PASSED

vii. Briefing Note - Community Plan – Second Reading and Submission to Minister

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey

Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

Recommendation:

That Council proceeds with the Second Reading of Bylaw 1060, cited as the Town of Fort Smith Community Plan, and directs Administration to submit the plan to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs upon approval. Meeting minutes from the public hearing on March 10, 2025, are provided with this briefing note.

Motion:

That Council gives Second Reading to Bylaw 1060, cited as the Town of Fort Smith Community Plan, and directs Administration to submit the plan to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs for final review and consultation with First Nation and Indigenous governments.

PASSED

Cr. Bathe inquired whether the discussed input, edits, and changes would be incorporated into the motion if approved. SAO Thomas confirmed there were no major changes, except for a recommendation to have more commercial zoning and upon review by planner and SMC, a recommendation to rezone a Town-owned lot from urban reserve to commercial. Discussions primarily focused on the zoning bylaw, fire smarting, and other bylaws. She noted that concerns about including sources of quoted materials in the community plan would be addressed through a background document, which will be posted online once finalized.

Cr. Heaton asked whether Smith Landing First Nation had been consulted on the zoning change, citing past issues with reserve boundaries near the back canal. SAO Thomas clarified that the change is only a zoning adjustment, not a development plan, and that further engagement with Indigenous groups will occur before the third reading. She also noted that the proposal was presented to the TLC Leadership Committee, but no feedback was provided.

E. OTHER BUSINESS

F. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

G. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Community Services Standing Committee Meeting will be on April 8th, 2025.



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H. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey
Seconded by: Cr. Karasiuk

That the meeting be adjourned at 7:20 pm.

PASSED



Municipal Services Standing Committee Meeting

MINUTES

The Municipal Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 11th, 2025 @ 7:30 pm within the Town Hall's Council Chambers.

Present: Cr. Benwell, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette

Regrets:

Staff Present: Tracy Thomas, Senior Administrative Officer
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary
Andrew Grenier, Director of Municipal Services

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 7:26 pm.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Tuckey

Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

PASSED

b. Minutes

Moved by: Cr. Bathe

Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

The minutes from the Municipal Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 11th, 2025, be adopted as presented.

PASSED

c. Vision and Values

d. Declaration of Financial Interest

C. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. The Municipal Services Report for February

Cr. Heaton inquired about the plan for the garbage trucks. SAO Thomas explained that next week, the Council will begin its capital plan workshops, where the garbage truck replacement will be discussed as part of the plan. The goal is to replace the garbage trucks within the current fiscal year, as soon as possible, with the team working towards this objective.

Cr. Cox expressed satisfaction with the demolition of the old fire hall, noting that it is a positive step in the Town's efforts to address derelict properties. He believes the Town is setting a good example for other landowners, such as the GNWT, encouraging them to take action on similar properties.

SAO Thomas noted that the team has been working diligently on project substantiation documents for each capital project. These documents will include as much information as possible about the projects and their associated capital requests, including details on their lifecycle costs.

D. ADMINISTRATION

a. Briefing Note – update Metis Proposed Land Swap – March 11, 2025



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Moved By: Cr. Tuckey

Seconded By: Cr. Bathe

THAT Council defer the decision on the proposed land trade between the Town of Fort Smith and the Fort Smith Métis Council until critical information becomes available, including formal confirmation from the Government of the Northwest Territories on the land withdrawal status and the completion of additional data collection on long-term municipal infrastructure needs and alternatives.

FURTHER THAT Administration continue monitoring relevant developments and provide updates to Council as necessary.

PASSED

SAO Thomas provided an update on a briefing note that was brought to Council on February 11, where additional information was requested. The two specific requests were: first, whether a delay on the Town's part, while waiting for water and sewer assessment results, would impact the Fort Smith Metis Council's progress on their own claims; and second, for maps of the lots in question. Thomas confirmed that she reached out directly to the Fort Smith Metis Council CEO, who assured her that the Town's delay would not affect their progress. Additionally, the requested maps for the specified lots are included in the updated briefing note.

Cr. Couvrette inquired about the previous motion being tabled, asking if there is still a need for a new motion. He noted that the motion was deferred until further information or a change in conditions, but since there has been no change, he questioned whether a new motion is necessary or if the previous motion should simply remain tabled until there is an actual change in conditions.

SAO Thomas explained that there is a motion from the previous Council to advance the project. She is now seeking direction from the current Council to pause the project until the water and sewer assessment is completed.

E. OTHER BUSINESS

F. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

G. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Municipal Services Standing Committee Meeting will be on April 8th, 2025.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk

Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the meeting be adjourned at 7:36 pm.

PASSED



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: March 18, 2025
Subject: UPDATE: Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference and Trade Show 2025

PURPOSE:

This briefing note provides updated information regarding the 2025 FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show and recommends Council representation at the event.

BACKGROUND:

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is hosting its Annual Conference and Trade Show, Canada's largest gathering of elected officials, in Ottawa, Ontario, at the Rogers Centre. This event brings together municipal leaders from across the country to network, engage with federal representatives, and access tools and insights to address municipal challenges and opportunities.

The conference will be held from **May 29 to June 1, 2025**, and includes a variety of activities and programming designed to enhance municipal governance and foster collaboration among peers.

ANALYSIS:

Participation in FCM's Annual Conference provides Council members with opportunities to:

- Network with elected officials and municipal leaders across Canada.
- Engage with federal representatives to advocate for local priorities.
- Learn about best practices, innovative solutions, and funding opportunities that could benefit the Town of Fort Smith.

The estimated cost for each Council member to attend is approximately \$6,792, including:

- Hotels: \$2,000
- Travel (flights, taxis): \$2,500
- Registration (early bird): \$1,200
- Per diems: \$1,092

Funds are available in the Council Travel Budget line. Given the importance of municipal representation at this event, it is recommended that two Council members attend. If desired, the SAO could also attend, as they will already be in Quebec for the CAMA Conference, which ends the day before FCM begins. The additional cost for the SAO to attend FCM is approximately \$3,345, covering accommodation, four days of per diems, and registration. The SAO's travel to Quebec for CAMA is already budgeted under the SAO Training budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve the attendance of two Council members at the FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show, with the option for the SAO to attend if deemed beneficial.