



## Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### MINUTES

The Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 @ 6:00 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present: D/M Keizer, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Kox, Cr. Benwell, Cr. Couvrette, and Cr. Karasiuk  
Regrets: Mayor Fergusson and Cr. Bathe  
Staff Present: Tracy Thomas, Senior Administrative Officer  
Daniel Wiltzen, Economic and Tourism Development Officer  
Jim Hood, Director of Corporate Services

#### A. CALL TO ORDER

D/M Keizer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, confirmed quorum and handed the Chair to Cr. Tuckey. Cr. Tuckey read the acknowledgment of First Nations.

#### B. REVIEW

##### a. Agenda

**Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk**  
**Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette**

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

**PASSED**

##### b. Minutes

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

That the minutes from the Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, be adopted as presented.

**PASSED**

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

#### C. DELEGATIONS

##### a. Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre - Michael Miltenberger

Michael Miltenberger and Isaiah Wiltzen delivered a presentation highlighting the historical significance and challenges facing the NLMCC. They emphasized the importance of the Thebacha Leadership Council (TLC) and the recently signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) as a framework for reconciliation, economic opportunity, and ensuring the museum's long-term viability.

The Board of NLMCC proposed the following:

- Transfer all NLMCC assets, property, and equipment to the governments that are signatories to the MOA in equal 25% shares of ownership.
- Implement a co-governance model to ensure the museum's success.
- Retain the existing Board to manage the collection, programs, and strategic direction, leveraging the opportunities provided by this transfer.



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Proposed next steps include:

- Sharing the proposal with MOA signatories and conducting presentations.
- Seeking interest and agreement from all governments.
- Passing necessary motions and amendments to NLMCC's constitution and bylaws.
- Drafting legal transfer documents if the proposal is approved.

**Moved by: D/M Keizer**

**Seconded by: Cr. Benwell**

That Council Direct Administration to provide a briefing note on the implications and considerations regarding the TLC assuming ownership of the NLMCC.

**In Favour: D/M Keizer, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Cox, Cr. Benwell, and Cr. Karasiuk**

**Opposed:**

**Abstained: Cr. Couvrette**

**PASSED**

### D. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

#### a. The Corporate Services Director's Report for December

Director Hood reported on the current state of the Corporate Services department, highlighting key updates and challenges. The Director of Corporate Services position remains vacant but is being filled on an interim basis by Director Hood until a new hire is made or the end of April. The position is advertised nationally via platforms like CivicJobs.ca, Indeed, and the town's website. Additionally, an Accounts Receivable Clerk position has recently become vacant and is currently posted internally. If no qualified internal candidates are found within the seven-day posting period, external recruitment will be pursued. In the meantime, existing staff are working collaboratively to cover the vacancy, though some delays, such as the issuance of December utility bills, are anticipated.

The department is also focused on year-end preparations and budget development. The year-end process includes completing financial reports for the annual audit, which is expected to be finalized by the end of April as required by the Cities, Towns, and Villages Act. Budget preparation is ongoing, involving collaboration between the SAO and department directors before discussions with the committee. Director Hood emphasized that the department is committed to meeting these obligations while minimizing the budgetary impact compared to previous years.

Cr. Heaton inquired about the possibility of seeking community input before formal budget discussions. She referenced a past initiative by Cr. Benwell, who used a Facebook platform before the election to gather public feedback on desired changes and priorities. The approach provided valuable insights that informed discussions, such as those held previously at the recreation center. Cr. Heaton questioned whether involving the community in budgetary planning is a standard practice and suggested it could be a beneficial step in the current process.

SAO Thomas explained that she has not previously engaged in soliciting public input for budget discussions but has shared information through presentations and informational packages. These materials typically outline the budget allocation, detailing spending on administration and other areas. She emphasized that the operational budget is heavily focused on maintaining service levels, which will be a key point in upcoming council



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discussions. Thomas noted that decisions about budget adjustments would directly affect service levels, highlighting areas where potential cost-saving measures may be necessary.

Cr. Tuckey suggested a more proactive approach to budget planning by involving council early in discussions to determine which services should be prioritized or introduced. He emphasized the need to identify gaps in current services and reevaluate budget allocations accordingly. Tuckey proposed redirecting focus to essential community needs, such as fixing roads and parks, rather than continuing significant spending on initiatives like walking trails without addressing practical concerns. He highlighted the lack of benches and garbage receptacles along trails, noting that these omissions make the assets less accessible, particularly for senior citizens.

Cr. Couvrette, drawing on his extensive experience with budgeting, expressed support for Councillor Heaton's suggestion to consult the public. He emphasized the importance of first establishing the budget framework, including whether it will be balanced, in surplus, or operating with a deficit. Couvrette noted that any proposed tax increase, such as a hypothetical 5%, should prompt discussions about its implications. The council must determine whether the public is willing to accept higher taxes to maintain current service levels or, alternatively, identify which services could be scaled back to reduce costs. He stressed that these considerations should be part of the public consultation process once a draft budget and projected deficit are available for review.

Director Hood acknowledged the importance of public consultation in the budgeting process, as highlighted by Cr. Heaton and Cr. Couvrette. However, he suggested that, given the number of new council members and the tight timelines, the current budget cycle should focus on simplifying the process and serving as a learning experience. Hood recommended that councillors use their experience and the information they gathered prior to the election to determine the necessary service levels for this budget and aim to refine the approach for the next cycle. By the subsequent budget period, beginning in August or September, the council would have a clearer understanding of operations and limitations, enabling meaningful public engagement and more impactful decisions on both the operating and capital budgets. This phased approach would allow for more comprehensive public involvement and stronger community impact in future budgets.

- b. Licencing Report
- c. Accounts Payable Report
- d. Correspondence

### E. ADMINISTRATION

### F. OTHER BUSINESS

### G. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

**Moved by: Cr. Cox**

**Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette**

That Mayor Fergusson and Cr. Bathe be excused from the Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**PASSED**

### H. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That next Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting be on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.



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**I. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by: Cr. Benwell**

**Seconded by: Cr. Cox**

That the meeting be adjourned at 7:16 pm.

**PASSED**