



Protective Services Standing Committee Meeting January 7th, 2025

MINUTES

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

Present: D/M Keizer, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox, Cr. Benwell, and Cr. Couvrette,
Regrets: Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Bathe, and Director McNab
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 7:20 pm, confirmed quorum, and handed the Chair to Cr. Couvrette.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Karasiuk
Seconded by: Cr. Heaton

That the agenda be adopted as amended to include NTPC.

PASSED

- b. Minutes - Tabled
- c. Vision and Values - Review
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest - None

C. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. The Protective Services Report for December

December was a relatively quiet month overall; however, there was a notable increase in challenging EMS calls. The team has been focused on improving access to mental health support, with the health center proactively collaborating to aid this initiative. The Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) and NorthwestTel outages were effectively managed by the Protective Services department. Communication efforts during these events were facilitated using Alertable, employing the advisory non-intrusive alerting option. Town staff were commended for their excellent support in communications and response preparedness.

Additionally, Karl Cox, a long-standing and highly valued member of the department, officially retired. His significant contributions to the community were acknowledged with gratitude, and his presence will be greatly missed. The department looks forward to continued collaboration with him in his new role as Town Councillor.

Cr. Heaton suggested that upcoming Fire and EMS training activities in the new year include Mental Health Training. She expressed the importance of equipping the Protective Services team, particularly volunteer and on-call firefighters in Fort Smith, with the necessary skills to address mental health concerns they may encounter during calls. Noting the increasing prevalence of such issues in the community, she emphasized the need to provide additional support and training to ensure they are prepared to handle these situations effectively.



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D. ADMINISTRATION

E. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) issues

Cr. Couvrette raised concerns about the prolonged power outage in Fort Smith on January 3, 2025, and the broader issue of power supply reliability. He noted that the community has been relying on diesel power for 18 months—well beyond the originally promised six months—and expressed frustration over NTPC's assurances of adequate backup power, which seem increasingly questionable.

During the outage, NTPC's communication was inconsistent, initially citing distribution issues and later mentioning generation capacity problems. Couvrette emphasized the significant distinction between distribution and generation issues, pointing out that local distribution inadequacies have been a recurring concern. Given the age of NTPC's infrastructure and the reliance on diesel backup, he questioned the system's capacity to handle prolonged outages.

Cr. Couvrette proposed a motion requesting the mayor to seek detailed clarification from NTPC on the root causes of the outage, an update on the Taltson hydro plant's recommissioning timeline, and specific steps to address distribution challenges. The motion also urged NTPC to accelerate investment in local distribution upgrades, aiming for completion by 2027. He highlighted the severe impact of outages, including damage to residential buildings, equipment losses, and food security concerns, urging immediate action to address these issues and hold NTPC accountable.

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey

Recommendation:

That the Mayor immediately contact NTPC seeking a full clarification and disclosure of the cause(s) of the prolonged power outage in Fort Smith on January 3, 2025. In addition, the ToFS seeks an update regarding the timelines for the recommissioning process for the Taltson hydro plant upgrade project, including an approximate date of when the hydro facility will return to its full function capacity.

Furthermore, if the primary cause(s) of the prolonged outage were related to “distribution issues”, what immediate steps will NTPC undertake to rectify those conditions and, will NTPC consider moving their investment in the local distribution system upgrade project for completion of no later than 2027.

This correspondence is to be copied to the Minister responsible for NTPC (Wawzonek), NWT Public Utilities Board

PASSED

F. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

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

That Mayor Fergusson and Cr. Bathe be excused from the Protective Services Standing Committee meeting on January 7th, 2025.

PASSED



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G. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

H. ADJOURNMENT

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

That the meeting be adjourned at 8:00 pm.

PASSED