

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
COUNCIL MEETING**

Monday, April 27, 2026
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

Council Members Present: Mayor Victor Smith
Councillor Bonny Graham
Councillor Scott Medlock
Councillor Pauline Newbigging
Councillor Angela Skoglund
Councillor Dusty Smith
Councillor Heather Stewin

Staff Present: John Fortoloczky, Chief Administrative Officer
Donna Bellingham, Director of Corporate Services
Mike Olson, Director of Finance
Kevin Dicken, Director of Operations
Danielle Laporte, Communications/IT

Others Present: 8 members of the Public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting is being held on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the Stó:lō people, particularly the Chawathil, Union Bar and Yale First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved / Seconded

THAT the April 27, 2026, Regular Council Meeting Agenda be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

(a) Regular Council Meeting

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held April 13, 2026, be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED.

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) AdvantageHOPE

Representatives from AdvantageHOPE were in attendance to present to Council regarding additional funding for an Economic Development Officer and renewal of the Fee-for-Service Agreement which includes Economic Development Services, tourism, and the operation of the Visitor Centre and Museum. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- AdvantageHOPE is requesting a three-year extension to the Fee-for-Service agreement, which expires on December 31, 2026, and cost-sharing agreement for an Economic Development Officer position
- The Economic Development Officer position has an estimated salary range of \$85,000-\$100,000, and AdvantageHOPE is proposing that they contribute \$40,000 and the District contributes \$45,000-\$60,000

- In 2019, as part of the current Fee-for-Service agreement, AdvantageHOPE was provided with an additional \$70,000 annually for economic development. This agreement was extended for three additional years in 2023 on the condition that economic development funds are returned if not used by December 31, 2026
- AdvantageHOPE could temporarily use existing funds received from the District for an Economic Development Officer, but would not have the budget to work on economic development initiatives
- Shared Executive Director and Economic Development Officer positions have been tried in the past but have not been successful
- The recently completed AdvantageHOPE Strategic Planning sessions identified the need for a dedicated Economic Development Officer as a priority with a separate Executive Director position
- Council expressed their appreciation for the work that AdvantageHOPE has done, including tourism, marketing, and fostering community collaboration

Following discussion, Council noted that they would like the opportunity to review the current Fee-for-Service agreement prior to deciding on its renewal. Council added that they would like to compare the agreement with economic development and tourism funding in like-size communities. The CAO noted that AdvantageHOPE can assist with this research by reaching out to other similar organizations.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council direct Staff to schedule a Committee of the Whole meeting to review and discuss the Fee-for-Service agreement between the District of Hope and AdvantageHOPE, including comparisons with other communities of similar population. **CARRIED.**

5. STAFF REPORTS

**(a) Report dated April 17, 2026 from the Chief Administrative Officer
Re: Station House Grant Proposal – Japanese Canadian Legacies Society**

Council noted that this agreement would no longer result in the grant funds being used strictly for a wraparound deck on the Station House. The CAO confirmed that due to the timelines involved, construction of the deck would not happen prior to the expiration of the grant, and this agreement allows the funds to be used for other parts of the project. He added that the deck is still in the development plans and will be funded by other sources later in the project.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council endorses the proposal for the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society to provide grant funding directly to the District of Hope for application toward the Station House Project prior to 31 March 2027; and

THAT Council authorize the execution of a grant agreement to facilitate this funding arrangement. **CARRIED.**

**(b) Report dated April 17, 2026 from the Director of Operations
Re: Drinking Water – Source to Tap Assessment**

Council inquired as to whether Staff believe that Fraser Health will require chlorination of the full water system despite what the results of the Source to Tap Assessment may be. The Director of Operations advised that TRUE Consulting and Western Water Associates

believe there is a good chance that the assessment will demonstrate that chlorination is not required. He added that while there is no guarantee, the District needs to provide this information for Fraser Health to review.

Council inquired as to whether the source of the contamination has been located. The Director of Operations advised that they informed Fraser Health of areas where Staff believe the system is susceptible to contamination, but that Fraser Health was not confident that the source has been located. He added that the assessment will help to determine the cause of contamination and better inform future efforts by water professionals.

Council requested clarification regarding whether the intent is for the District to chlorinate all water systems. The Director of Operations advised the District has installed connections for temporary chlorinators on its wells as required by Fraser Health but does not intend to chlorinate the water systems permanently. He added Fraser Health's concerns regarding water system pressure will also be addressed by the amalgamation project.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council authorize staff to proceed with a Comprehensive Drinking Water Source-to-Tap Assessment, as requested by Fraser Health, and approve funding from the Water Reserve in the amount of \$65,000 (plus applicable taxes). **CARRIED.**

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He took part in the Earth Day event, noting that paint, lights, and fluorescent tubes were the most popular items dropped off. He thanked Communities in Bloom, the Hope Rotary Club, and the Lions Club for their hard work.
- He toured a Grade 1 class from Coquihalla Elementary School around District Hall and noted that they took part in a trash pick-up activity in the community. He added that he later delivered a thank-you letter to the class.
- He noted that wildfire season has started early with 27 active fires reported in BC. He asked that the public remain cautious this year due to extremely dry conditions.
- He announced that the Rambo and Sheriff carvings are back on Wallace Street following repairs and refinishing over the winter. He added that the Cookie Monster carving has also been returned to the Boston Bar School.
- He attended a Hope & Area Health and Well-Being meeting where they reviewed the last ten years of projects.

Councillor Graham Reported:

- She attended the Chamber of Commerce and AdvantageHOPE breakfast meeting at Mia Pizza, noting that it was a good opportunity to learn about what each organization offers.
- She attended an AdvantageHOPE meeting, noting that they discussed pilot projects.
- She attended the Shxw'ōwhámél First Nation Spring Gathering.

Councillor Skoglund Reported:

- She attended a Hope Golf and Country Club meeting on April 18th, noting that they had a speaker give a presentation on the mental game of golf and fashion show.
- She attended a Hope and District Arts Council meeting on April 21st, advising they wanted to clarify their recent request regarding line painting in the back alley to include only the area outside their back doors.
- She noted that Kal Tire took in 322 loose tires and 191 mounted tires on Earth Day.
- She attended an Accessibility Committee meeting on April 27th, noting that they are making good progress on benches, sidewalks, and other projects.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He attended the AdvantageHOPE meeting on April 16th.
- He Chaired the Water Parcel Tax Roll Review Meeting on April 20th, noting that there were four complaints received and reviewed by the Review Panel, which found that none of the complaints met the criteria.

Councillor Smith Reported:

- He noted that it has come to his attention that when traffic is stopped on Water Avenue at the Wallace Street intersection lights, there is no indicator for traffic on Wallace Street to go.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She attended the Hope Inclusion Project meeting, noting that they are moving forward with Pride events and celebrations in June. She added that they have good attendance at their monthly Pride Gatherings, and that a mural project is being worked on which will be located on the TELUS building at the corner of Fort Street and Wallace Street.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She attended the Chamber of Commerce and AdvantageHOPE breakfast meeting at Mia Pizza.
- She attended the Accessibility Committee meeting on April 27th, noting that Staff have been provided with a map of bench locations and that they are working on having six installed. She added that the Committee will also be looking at an accessible playground project.

The Director of Operations added that the District has a sidewalk maintenance policy, and that a company inspects sidewalks each year and removes differentiation in panels and grinds down letdowns to ensure smooth transitions.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

(a) Water Parcel Tax Bylaw

Council noted that they want to ensure that all complainants to the Water Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel are informed of the outcome. The Director of Finance confirmed that they will be informed. Council inquired as to how the Water Parcel Tax will be displayed on property tax notices. The Director of Finance advised that it would appear as an individual line item on the property tax notice.

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Water Parcel Tax Bylaw No. 1622, 2026* be adopted this 27th day of April, 2026. **CARRIED.**

**(b) Report dated April 21, 2026 from the Director of Finance
Re: District of Hope 2026 - 2030 Financial Plan Amendment Bylaw**

It was noted that there was an error on Schedule “A” of the bylaw: the second to last paragraph under “Statement of Objectives and Policies” should read “*The current financial plan provides for \$11,738,300 to be generated from District of Hope property tax base for General Government, Infrastructure Reserve and Policing purposes.*” This value was to be consistent with the total on page 3 of Schedule “A”.

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope 2026 - 2030 Financial Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1625, 2026* be amended to correct the second to last paragraph under “Statement of Objectives and Policies” to read “*The current financial plan provides for \$11,738,300 to be generated from District of Hope property tax base for General Government, Infrastructure Reserve and Policing purposes.*”;

AND FURTHER THAT *District of Hope 2026 – 2030 Financial Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1625, 2026* be read a first, second and third time, as amended, this 27th day of April, 2026. **CARRIED.**

**(c) Report dated April 20, 2026 from the Director of Finance
Re: District of Hope 2026 Annual Tax Rate Bylaw**

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope 2026 Annual Tax Rate Bylaw No. 1626, 2026* be read a first, second and third time this 27th day of April, 2026. **CARRIED.**

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

(a) For Information Correspondence

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated April 27, 2026, be received. **CARRIED.**

(b) Accounts Payable Cheque Listing – March 2026

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Accounts Payable Cheque Listing for the period of March 1 – 31, 2026, be received. **CARRIED.**

10. OTHER PERTINENT BUSINESS

There was no other pertinent business.

11. QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions raised.

12. NOTICE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Monday, May 11, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

13. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held April 27, 2026, in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services