

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
COUNCIL MEETING**

Monday, January 26, 2026
Council Chambers, District of Hope Municipal Office
325 Wallace Street, Hope, British Columbia

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

Council Members Absent: Councillor Scott Medlock
Councillor Dusty Smith

Staff Present: John Fortolczky, Chief Administrative Officer
Donna Bellingham, Director of Corporate Services
Robin Beukens, Director of Community Development
Thomas Cameron, Fire Chief
Branden Morgan, Deputy Director of Corporate Services

Others Present: 7 members of the Public and 1 Media

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 January 26, 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 January 12, 2026 be adopted, as presented.
CARRIED.

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) Hope & District Arts Council

Representatives from the Hope & District Arts Council (HDAC) were in attendance to present to Council regarding Concerts in the Park, growth, and their future plans. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- History of Concerts in the Park
 - Started almost 10 years ago by the Hope and District Arts Council
 - Has been run for approximately 7 years by volunteer Dani Vachon
 - Now organized by a small committee

- How are bands chosen?
 - Bands are chosen through a combination of applications, sought out groups, and past performers
 - There is a focus on crafting a lineup with a variety of genres and representation including local Hope talent
 - All fees are negotiated individually with each ensemble
 - Applications are available on the HDAC website and notices are published through social media regarding availability
 - A jury ranking system is used to remove bias and get feedback
 - Options are limited by the available budget
- Costs
 - \$15,300 for talent, or an average of \$1,700 per band
 - \$4,050 for operations
 - \$450 for marketing
 - \$3,600 for miscellaneous expenses, which include security, volunteer t-shirts, and royalty payments
 - Government funding is variable, so funding relies heavily on local sponsorships
- Attendance and Social Media Engagement
 - Attendance and social media engagement levels have been steadily increasing
 - 2024 saw an average of 429 attendees, while 2025 increased to 601
- Community Survey Results
 - Majority of respondents prefer that the concert continues regardless of rain
 - The most requested genres include rock, country, folk, blues, and pop
 - Respondents identified a need for more variety in food trucks and interest in local service group BBQ's
 - Community atmosphere, genre variety, and mainstream selections were identified as favourites
- How can you help?
 - Sponsorship packages are available, with rewards beginning at \$500 and going up to \$10,000
 - Vendor table options are expanding for sales or information-oriented groups, with a fee of \$75 per week
 - You can also show support by attending the concerts

HDAC has reached out to a number of venues within the community that may serve as alternate venues for rain events.

5. STAFF REPORTS

- (a) **Report dated January 15, 2026 from the Fire Chief**
Re: Budget Amendment for Capital Purchase 2026

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council approve the change in the capital budget from 2027 of \$150,000 to 2026 due to availability from the selected proponent with an anticipated delivery date of September 2026. **CARRIED.**

- (b) **Report dated January 19, 2026 from the Fire Chief**
Re: Fire Hall 1 (865 3rd Ave) Summary of Structural Assessment

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council receive the report dated January 19, 2026 from the Fire Chief regarding the summary of structural assessments for Fire Hall 1, for information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council supports the direction of staff for the following actions:

- Step (1) – Fire Department to work with the Planning Department to obtain a building permit to bring the deficiencies noted in the December 2025 Engineering report into compliance with the 2024 BC Building Code; and
- Step (2) – Plan for the replacement of Fire Hall 1 in accordance with the Facilities Master Plan. **CARRIED.**

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He noted that the Fraser Health Healthy Communities Committee, as led by Cedar Strong, is completing a report regarding rental housing needs that will be shared with Council this fall.
- He noted that Communities in Bloom has planted some daffodils at the corner of 6th and Hudson Bay Street. He added that they are looking to add some flowers in the spring that will keep growing year after year.
- He met with AdvantageHOPE, the Hope and District Chamber of Commerce, the Recreation Centre and the Hope Standard to create a community calendar for posting events. He added that the calendar will be managed by AdvantageHOPE.
- He spoke at the graduation ceremony for the welding class at the Spirit of Hope Secondary School. He noted that there were 12 graduating students from Agassiz, Hope, and Boston Bar, and that one student already has three job offers.
- He noted that the University of the Fraser Valley is hosting an in-person English course at the campus in Hope that will also be available online for remote students. He added that bookkeeping courses will also be available in February and that he is still working to bring a carpentry course to Hope.
- He attended the Canyon Golden Agers meeting and congratulated Hank de Meulder for stepping up to be the Society's new President. He added that they are working to attract more members and thanked the Hope Legion for the pancake breakfast

fundraiser.

- He attended the grand opening event at the Almsgiving Hope Cinema and Performance House, noting that the new operator is trying different ideas to connect with groups in the community.
- He noted that some carvings in the community have been moved inside for maintenance and repairs, with work scheduled to begin in the second week of February.
- He noted that work is being undertaken to create a short and long-term Fraser-Coquihalla Rivers Flood Management Plan. He added that staff are collecting information on areas between the Golf Course and Gardner Drive, and that the District will be pursuing both the Provincial and Federal governments for funding.
- He announced that he is seeking a motion from Council to issue a letter to the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Vancouver and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office advising that the District intends to replace the Republic of China (Taiwan) flag with a sign indicating the direction to the City of Taipei.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council issue a letter to the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Vancouver and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office advising that the District intends to replace the Republic of China (Taiwan) flag, currently displayed on a flag post located at the bus stop adjacent to Memorial Park, with a sign indicating the direction to the City of Taipei.

CARRIED.

Councillor Graham Reported:

- She attended the AdvantageHOPE meeting, providing the following updates:
 - Amanda Figlarska, Marketing Manager, has hired an assistant for web development
 - The Tourism Centre is still open, and Rambo memorabilia is still at the top of the list
 - AdvantageHOPE has extensive plans and events coming up for 2026 which will be revealed on the new community calendar
- She attended the Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation winter gathering, noting that she enjoyed the opportunity to discuss growth and development in housing, environment, health, and business ventures.
- She attended a Hope Icebreakers game on the weekend, noting that it was good to see the full arena with an enthusiastic crowd.
- She attended a Hope and District Arts Council meeting, noting that they will be having a meat draw at the Legion Hall on March 7th.
- She noted that the Arts Council expressed concerns regarding intermittent lighting issues in the alley behind the art gallery.
- She attended the Hope Accessibility Committee meeting, noting that they are working towards addressing mobility issues, sidewalk access, and the installation of benches and picnic tables.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She attended a Hope Inclusion Project meeting, noting that they discussed creating license plate stickers to show support and spread work that Hope is a welcoming community, and discussed a potential mural project on the Telus building at 4th and Wallace Street.
- She added that the Hope Inclusion Project group inquired about whether the District has created any diversity policies or action plans and advised that she is working on a response with the CAO for the group's February 10th meeting.
- She noted that the Purple Lights Committee continues to meet and prepare for the October 1st kickoff.
- She attended the Legion Meat Draw for the Mount Hope Senior Citizen Society, noting that they received \$1,000 from the draw and \$130 from the 50/50.
- She congratulated John Duff, manager of the Park Street Manor, for completing the HVAC upgrade project in partnership with BC Housing and the BC Non-Profit Housing Society.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She attended the Hope Icebreakers games on the weekend, noting that there is one more game in Hope before the playoffs.
- She attended the Hope Accessibility Committee meeting, noting that the Director of Operations confirmed that ten benches will be installed in 2026 in addition to the three accessible picnic tables that have been installed in Memorial Park and on Wardle Street. She added that the committee is continuing to work on making the community more accessible.

The Mayor added that he would like to thank Amanda Figlarska for her continued work on the HGTV Hometown Takeover competition, and that the winner should be announced in the next few months.

Councillor Skoglund had nothing to report.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

- (a) Report dated January 20, 2026 from the Planner I**
Re: Application for a Temporary Use Permit at 571 Rupert Street

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council approves the issuance of a 3-year Temporary Use Permit for the property at 571 Rupert Street to allow daycare use with no residential use. **CARRIED.**

- (b) Report dated January 15, 2026 from the Fire Chief**
Re: Amendment to MTI Bylaw No. 1453 and BNE Bylaw No. 1454

Moved / Seconded

THAT *Bylaw Notice Enforcement Amendment Bylaw No. 1618, 2026* be given first, second and third reading this 26th day of January 2026. **CARRIED.**

Moved / Seconded

THAT *Municipal Ticket Information Amendment Bylaw No. 1619, 2026* be given first, second and third reading this 26th day of January 2026. **CARRIED.**

**(c) Report dated January 20, 2026 from the Director of Corporate Services
Re: Pool Hall Repeal Bylaw**

Council inquired as to how this bylaw came to staff's attention. The Director of Corporate Services advised that she noticed it during work on amendments to the *Bylaw Notice Enforcement* and *Municipal Ticket Information* bylaws and, following review, concluded that it was obsolete and should be repealed.

Moved / Seconded

THAT *District of Hope Pool Hall Repeal Bylaw No. 1620, 2026* be read a first, second and third time this 26th day of January 2026. **CARRIED.**

**(d) Report dated January 12, 2026 from the Planner III
Re: Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit Application 22900 Trans-Canada Highway**

Council inquired as to whether the subject property is located adjacent to the Hope Transfer Station, and whether it was recently cleared of trees. The Director of Community Development confirmed the property's location adjacent to the transfer station, noting that the property should not have been cleared prior to a development permit being issued. He added that work on the property has now ceased and the appropriate steps are being taken by the applicant to obtain a permit. He also advised that work cannot proceed on the property until the required covenant documents are completed and a development permit has been signed.

Moved / Seconded

THAT a Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit be approved for 22900 Trans-Canada Highway, subject to the District of Hope receiving a satisfactory report from a qualified professional that meets the Development Permit Area guidelines; and

FURTHER THAT the Director of Community Development be authorized to endorse the Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit and required covenant documents. **CARRIED.**

9. FOR INFORMATION CORRESPONDENCE

(a) For Information Correspondence

Moved / Seconded

THAT the For Information Correspondence List dated January 26, 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, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

13. RECESS TO IN-CAMERA MEETING AT 7:41 P.M.

Moved / Seconded

THAT the meeting be closed to the public to consider matters pursuant to Section 90(1)(c) [labour relations or other employee relations] of the *Community Charter*. **CARRIED.**

14. RETURN TO REGULAR MEETING

The Mayor reconvened the Regular Council Meeting at 7:47 p.m.

15. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 7:48 p.m. **CARRIED.**

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held January 26, 2026, in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services