

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
COUNCIL MEETING**

Monday, March 9, 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
Robin Beukens, Director of Community Development
Branden Morgan, Deputy Director of Corporate Services
Linda Goglin, Deputy Director of Finance

Others Present: 11 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 March 9, 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 February 23, 2026, be adopted, as presented.
CARRIED.

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) AdvantageHOPE

Representatives from AdvantageHOPE were in attendance to present to Council regarding recent activities and their vision and plans for 2026. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Mission and Values
 - Guides community and economic development by attracting residents, visitors, and investment
 - Promotes tourism, workforce development, and business growth
 - Values community pride, innovation, partnerships, and integrity

- Governance & Organization
 - Improved governance, HR systems, and performance management
 - Expanded staffing and leadership roles
 - Shift to fully in-house marketing
- Economic Development
 - Monthly economic development meetings with the District of Hope
 - Investor attraction and downtown revitalization initiatives
 - Hope Mountain Trail Network
 - Strategic planning completed with priorities identified for 2026
- Grants
 - Secured external funding for trails and downtown improvements through the Rural Economic Diversification & Infrastructure Program and the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior
 - Additional grant applications submitted to support recreation and summer students through the Outdoor Recreation Fund of BC and Canada Summer Jobs
- Visitor Centre
 - Over 10,000 visitors served in 2025
 - Strong retail performance driven by Rambo-related branding
- Museum
 - Collection moved to climate-controlled storage
 - Improved long-term preservation and grant eligibility
 - Deaccessioning and transfer of artifacts to other institutions
- Tourism and Marketing
 - Fully in-house marketing team with increased local presence
 - New website, community calendar, and business newsletter
 - Grand openings and major community milestone celebrations
 - Application to HGTV's Hometown Takeover
 - Partnerships to enhance and grow local events

Council inquired as to how an interested business should reach out to be featured by AdvantageHOPE. Amanda Figlarska, Marketing Manager, advised that their posts include contact information for interested businesses to reach out. Council inquired as to how organizations can have their events added to the Community Calendar. She advised that large stakeholders, such as the Hope and Area Recreation Centre, will have their own accounts to post events, and that smaller organizations can reach out to AdvantageHOPE directly. Council inquired as to where the new Community Calendar will be located. Tannis Hendricks, Chair, advised that it will be hosted on AdvantageHOPE's new website which will go live at the end of April.

5. STAFF REPORTS

(a) Report dated February 26, 2026 from the Chief Administrative Officer Re: Golf Course Flood Protection Works

The CAO advised that Brian LaCas, LCI Engineering Group, and Michael Richard, Nova Pacific Environmental, were in attendance to present to Council regarding the Golf Course Flood Protection Works. In their presentation, the following items were discussed:

- Flood Updates
 - The December 2025 event represents a significant but not extreme return-period flood
 - Peak river flow estimated at a 10–20 year return period
 - December 2025 flood estimated at 500 m³/s (40% of the 200-year flood)
 - Significant damage occurred at the Hope Golf and Country Club:
 - Channel avulsion through the course
 - Irrigation pond filled with sediment
 - Extensive riverbank erosion
- Proposed Restoration and Engineering Work
 - Reshaping riverbanks along the Hope Golf and Country Club
 - Use of rock riprap, tree root wads, and plantings
 - Installation of a bridge with clearance 1.5 m above the 200-year flood level
 - Construction of a fish rearing pond downstream of the proposed bridge crossing
 - Construction of spur dikes to throttle flows and prevent channel avulsion
 - Measures to prevent flooding and infilling of the pond
- Environmental Regulatory Setting
 - Streambank armoring triggers federal and provincial regulation
 - Federal Fisheries Act applies where works may cause harmful alteration, death of fish, or destruction of fish habitat
 - BC Water Sustainability Act applies to alterations affecting hydrology or ecological values
- Mitigation Through Design
 - Use of bioengineering with root wads and large woody debris combined with rock
 - Armoring approach described as creating microhabitat niches for aquatic life
 - A rearing habitat pond is proposed as a key offset intended to provide rearing habitat, particularly for coho salmon
- Timelines
 - Emergency classification may reduce federal review timelines to 2–3 weeks
 - Provincial approval under the Water Sustainability Act can take over one year unless deemed urgent
 - If declared an emergency under the Emergency and Disaster Management Act, work could proceed without provincial review

- Requirements During Construction
 - The project will require a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and utilize accepted Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - As siltation of waters adjacent to and downstream of construction activities is a key concern, mitigation measures (silt fences) and monitoring of turbidity will be required
 - Depending on water levels during construction and methods used, fish salvage may be required
 - A Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) must be present during all construction activities and will provide closure reports to the Federal & Provincial Agencies
 - Local First Nations may require additional monitoring
- Cost Estimates
 - Professional and Technical Services are estimated at \$198,569
 - Construction Option A, which uses a donated bridge that requires engineering and structural approval, is estimated at \$271,000
 - Construction Option B, which requires the purchase of a bridge, is estimated at \$466,000
 - Both construction cost estimates are Class D estimates that are high-level, conceptual budgets prepared at the earliest design stage with an accuracy range of 20-30% or more

Council inquired as to whether any donations, volunteer hours, and other in-kind contributions would help to offset the amount budgeted for the project. The CAO confirmed that any contributions would substitute District funding. He added that measures are already in place to allow tax receipts for financial donations and the District is prepared to apply for disaster financial assistance.

Council inquired as to how long the mitigation works will last if it is subject to continued flooding events. Mr. LaCas advised that mitigation works which were installed upriver six years ago have suffered no damage and added that the works are designed based on modeling for high flow levels.

The CAO noted that the recommended resolution accounts for the amount under Construction Option B, which requires the purchase of a bridge, to safeguard speed and interest. He added that while Option A is the likely scenario, there is no guarantee that the donated bridge will be fit for purpose or could be certified.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council endorses the flood protection works plan for the Hope Golf Course as prepared by LCI Engineering Group;

AND THAT Council directs staff to coordinate implementation of the works with project contractors and the Hope Golf and Country Club;

AND THAT Council authorizes staff to expend up to \$664,569 from the Growing Communities Fund to complete the project;

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs staff to identify and pursue applicable grant and disaster assistance funding opportunities to offset District costs associated with the project.

CARRIED.

**(b) Report dated March 4, 2026 from the Director of Community Development
Re: Local Government Development Approvals Funding**

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council supports the District of Hope application to the 2026 Local Government Development Approvals Program for grant funding up to the amount of \$150,000 to support an overall review of and recommendations to improve the District's development approvals process and to support the implementation of standardized designs for small-scale multi-unit housing; and

FURTHER THAT Council commit the District of Hope to provide overall grant management.

CARRIED.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Committee Reports.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Smith Reported:

- He attended the International Women's Day event at the Abbotsford University of the Fraser Valley (UVF) campus, noting that over 300 people attended.
- He noted that UFV had an Open House at the Hope campus where they presented courses being offered both in Hope and Chilliwack. He added that Crystal Sylvester, UFV's Hope Coordinator for Continuing Education, has lobbied for course offerings in Hope.
- He attended the opening of MLA Tony Luck's constituency office in Merritt along with other Mayor's and members of the Fraser-Nicola riding. He noted that he spoke with those in attendance about snowpack levels, wildfire concerns, and river levels.
- He noted that the FVRD has purchased a new mower for the Hope Airpark.
- He is working to keep Specialist Health Services coming to Hope, noting that over 2,200 people visited their offices in 2025. He added that most people will not be able to see specialists if they are required to travel to Chilliwack or Abbotsford.
- He noted that Communities in Bloom completed a cleanup on Old Hope Princeton Way and 6th Avenue, removing one load of brush, one load of items, and one load of trash. He thanked OMH Contracting and Envision Credit Union for helping the volunteers. He added that a drainage grate had been removed in the area which created a safety hazard and thanked the District's Operations crew for installing a new one.
- He noted that himself and few Council members attended the 2026 Hope Fire Department Annual Banquet. He added that the Fire Department attended over 840 calls last year and thanked them for their service.

Councillor Graham Reported:

- She attended a viewing of Common Territory at the Almsgiving Hope Cinema & Performance House, noting that it was well attended.
- She noted her appreciation for the Hope & District Chamber of Commerce lighting initiative and how it brightens the community.

- She attended an International Women’s Day luncheon in Chilliwack, recognizing community women in leadership and business.

Councillor Skoglund Reported:

- She attended the 2026 Hope Fire Department Annual Banquet, noting that she is thankful for the volunteers.
- She attended an HMI Skatepark fundraiser on March 7th, noting that they are raising funds to renew their lease.
- She noted that the Spirit of Hope Secondary School Spring Market will be taking place on April 7th and will feature more than 70 vendors.
- She wished everyone a happy International Women’s Day, noting that it is important to celebrate women and their successes.

Councillor Medlock Reported:

- He noted that there will be an AdvantageHOPE meeting on March 12th, adding that they are passionate about what they do and that he appreciated their presentation.

Councillor Smith Reported:

- He attended the final Hope Ice Breakers home game, noting that the arena was full.
- He noted that the Hope Figure Skating Club held their carnival on the weekend, adding that their membership is. He added that support is available through Skate Canada for those who are unable to purchase equipment.

Councillor Stewin Reported:

- She attended the 2026 Hope Fire Department Annual Banquet.
- She received a concern regarding a pothole at 6th Avenue and Kawkawa Lake Road. The Director of Corporate Services advised that the pothole has been addressed by the Operations Department.

Councillor Newbigging Reported:

- She attended the Fire Truck Pushing event on March 7th for the Hope Fire Department’s new tender.
- She attended the 2026 Hope Fire Department Annual Banquet.
- She thanked the District for supporting the Hope Golf and Country Club, noting that the club is working with Spirit of Hope Secondary School and their Junior Golf Club. She noted that there are currently eight kids enrolled who will work with club members beginning March 31st and will include a mini tournament.

8. PERMITS AND BYLAWS

- (a) Report dated March 2, 2026 from the Planner III
Re: Development Variance Permit Application at 66563 Summer Road**

The Mayor called for any input from the public regarding the proposed Development Variance Permit. Matthew Brown, the property owner, provided a brief overview of the project, noting that property and stream setbacks required a variance in order to fit a single family home.

Moved / Seconded

THAT Council approve a Development Variance Permit for the following Zoning Bylaw variances for 66563 Summer Road:

- Part 10.1.5.1 (Setbacks) to reduce the minimum front lot line setback from 4.0 m to 2.0 m for the relocation of a single family dwelling onto the property

CARRIED.

- (b) Report dated March 4, 2026 from the Planner I
Re: Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit Application - 21902 Union Bar Road**

Moved / Seconded

THAT a Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit be approved for the construction of a single-family dwelling at 21902 Union Bar Road, subject to the District of Hope receiving a satisfactory report from a qualified professional that meets the Development Permit Area conditions; and

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

CARRIED.

- (c) Report dated March 4, 2026 from the Planner I
Re: Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit Application - 66545 Stephens Road**

Moved / Seconded

THAT a Flood & Erosion Hazard and Geotechnical Hazard Development Permit be approved for the construction of a single-family dwelling at 66545 Stephens Road, subject to the District of Hope receiving a satisfactory report from a qualified professional that meets the Development Permit Area conditions; and

FURTHER THAT the Director of Community Development be authorized to endorse the Flood & Erosion Hazard and 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 March 9, 2026, be received.

CARRIED.

(b) Accounts Payable Cheque Listing – January 2026

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Accounts Payable Cheque Listing for the period of January 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, March 23, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

13. ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved / Seconded

THAT the Regular Council Meeting adjourn at 8:32 p.m. **CARRIED.**

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held March 9, 2026, in Council Chambers, District of Hope, British Columbia.

Original Signed by Victor Smith

Mayor

Original Signed by Donna Bellingham

Director of Corporate Services