

**Village of Haines Junction
Special Council Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2025**

Present:

Mayor Strand
Councillor Busche
Councillor McPhie
Councillor Sundbo

Absent:

Councillor Mackinnon (with notice)
CAO Fairbank (with notice)

A/CAO Ogden

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm

Acknowledgement of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Traditional Territory

Mayor Strand acknowledged that we are on the traditional territory of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

Adoption of Agenda

#254-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the agenda be adopted as amended with the following addition:
15b. Personnel

Motion #254-25 was **CARRIED**.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

Adoption of Minutes of Regular and Special Council Meetings

Council Meeting Minutes July 9, 2025

#255-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the regular Council meeting of July 9, 2025 be adopted as amended

- On page 12, under Motion #247-25, replace 204 with 2025

Motion #255-25 was **CARRIED**.

Proclamations

Delegations

Shakwak Survey Pins: Rebecca Schatz, Cory Magnusson, Joanne Thomas, Paulette Schatz

Presentation:

- All of the delegates/purchasers, indicated that they met individually with the CAO prior to signing their purchase agreements. Each reported that at these meetings, the CAO said the survey pins would be found or that the Village would ensure new ones would be put in place. A delegate/witness who attended one of the above-mentioned meetings, reported the same.
- Each of the purchasers indicated they trusted the CAO to follow through on this commitment.
- Purchasers requested Council hold staff accountable to their verbal commitments.

Discussion:

- Council sent the delegation questions (by email) on July 11th that have not been answered. Council asked delegation to respond to questions in writing.
 - The delegates indicated that they were not answered because they felt this would detract from the main point that a verbal commitment had been made by the CAO. They feel the questions do not reflect the fact that this promise had been made to which staff should be accountable. The questions are arguing semantics and that this has been going on for over a year is wasting everyone's time and money.
- Council asked if any of the delegates had discussions with the Village staff after the fact where the Village's position changed?
 - There were email threads after the fact that showed the Village was backing down on its commitment. Council requested a copy of this email.
 - CAO told purchasers that they had the option to turn the lots back.
 - The CAO suggested hiring a surveyor in an email. Council requested a copy of this email. The purchasers shared a copy of the CAO's July 24, 2024 Report to Council that suggested options to Council for resolving the dispute that included hiring a surveyor and a lesser expensive option to have the approximate lot corner locations marked. *(Note: Based on this Report to Council, and the lesser expensive option that was available, Council approved a \$1,000 contribution towards each property for the re-posting of the lot).*
- Council asked the delegates why they did not respond to prior Council's offer to pay for part of a lesser-expensive survey?
 - Had conversations with CAO where they indicated that offering to split costs does not reflect the original commitment that had been made by the CAO.
 - Purchasers assumed the CAO had briefed Council on those conversations.
- Council noted that the purchase agreement lists the lot sale was "as is, where is."
 - The purchasers acknowledged that this was in the purchase agreement; however, the agreement does not disclose that the survey pins were missing.

- Council noted that it is very difficult to have this kind of conversation without the CAO in the room to defend himself.

Pedal Junction – Bike Skills Park: Lianna Grice

- Deferred to next meeting

Public Hearings and Public Input Sessions

Old Business

Housing Accelerator Funding

A/CAO Presentation:

- When we submitted our annual report last year, it was reviewed by CMHC's underwriter who raised concerns that the Village was not meeting building permit targets outlined funding agreement, which could affect our eligibility for our fourth funding installment, and also potentially our third funding installment (the agreement provides for four installments of approximately \$305,000).
- Staff have explained to CMHC that much of this is beyond our control, that our estimate for building permits was largely derived from new Dhäl Gähy (Mountain Ridge) subdivision, for which lots have still not gone up for sale.
- The CAO drafted a letter, which is in the Council package, to the Minister of CMHC requesting written assurance that the Village will receive its full funding, as assurance is needed before the Village is willing to issue additional grant opportunities.
- Earlier this week, Village staff spoke to CMHC who indicated that it not even within the Minister's authority to issue a guarantee ahead of time; however, the Minister does have the authority to decide to make a payment if targets are not met (in extenuating circumstances).
- CMHC/Village staff recommend we take more time to work together on a solution that addresses the fact that the lot availability situation is out of our control, but the Village is deserving of funding. These conversations can then be reflected in a revised letter to the Minister.
- CMHC also indicated that there is no possibility for our timelines to be extended.
- There is an option to amend the targets in the agreement to what we think we will be able to achieve, but this will reduce the amount of funding we are eligible for.
- Staff recommend finalizing updates to our implementation policies/bylaws (as presented to Council back in early June, 2024) so we are ready to go should Council get the assurances it needs from CMHC to authorize releasing additional call for proposals.

Discussion:

- The draft letter to the Minister indicates that the Village is in planning discussions with the Northern Community Land Trust for a 10-unit multifamily development. This should be corrected --to date, Council has only had an information meeting with the Land Trust, saying that we are in planning discussions is misleading.

- What is the end date of the agreement?
 1. The agreement was signed in January 2024.
 2. Building permit targets must be met within three years. We have one year beyond this to spend the money.
 3. VHJ agreements with grant recipients require an occupancy permit to be issued before the grant is paid out
- Council requested the definition of affordable housing, Section 3.1 within the Affordable Housing Construction Grant Policy #41-24, be amended to make it clearer what is meant required for a housing unit is that is developed for sale to be considered affordable (e.g. small square footage, 1-2 bedrooms, etc.).

#256-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the following will be deferred to August 13 Regular Council Meeting:

- Amended Affordable Housing Construction Grant Policy
- Amended New Dwelling Construction Grant for Young Residents Policy
- New Dwelling Construction Grant Policy
- New Dwelling Construction Grant Bylaw

Motion #256-25 was **CARRIED**.

RTC – Action Oriented Minutes

A/CAO Presentation:

- Staff received direction from Council earlier in July to provide more explanation about what different types of minutes look like and to provide examples.
- The RTC addresses three types of minute taking – transcripts, anecdotal, and action-oriented.
- Staff researched what other Yukon municipalities are doing – most produce anecdotal minutes like VHJ however our minutes tend to be longer. A few municipalities do produce action-oriented minutes. No municipality produces transcripts.
- Each of these ways of doing minutes meets the requirements of the municipal act, so it is Council's prerogative to provide direction based on what values Council associates with minute-taking.

Discussion:

- Council expressed a preference for concise anecdotal minutes – as they are an important historic record and are crucial to fulfilling obligations to the municipal act and our electors and citizens as well as future council and administration staff.
- Council also expressed support for staff to make efforts to further summarize discussions, in hopes of finding a new balance between staff time requirements and Council's desire for transparency.

#257-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Staff will continue to prepare anecdotal minutes and look into opportunities to shorten the minutes. Staff are also directed to put out an expression of interest for minute taking at Council meetings

Motion #257-25 was **CARRIED**.

New Business

Accounts Payable to July 23, 2025

Discussion:

- No discussion

Draft Level of Service Framework

A/CAO Presentation:

- This is the first attempt by VHJ to develop a robust level of service framework that is no more complex than it needs to be, yet is a meaningful tool to support decision-making.
- This framework is a simplified version of what the NWT Association of Municipalities has developed, and includes.
 1. A Services and Assets Inventory – This lists the services VHJ is currently providing, or may have some ambitions to provide, along with the assets that are required to provide that service.
 2. Level of Service Assessment – Basic to enhanced levels of service are described for each service provided by the Village. The current service level is identified, as well as any desire to change the level of service. A performance gap exists where Council decides it wants to provide a higher level of service than currently provided. A sustainability gap exists when the assets required to provide the level of service need upgrading or replacing.
 3. Action Plan – This assesses options for addressing services where either a performance or sustainability gap has been identified. The action plan will give a sense of the cost of the various options for addressing identified gaps, and will provide Council with a structured opportunity to prioritize what needs to be addressed first.
 4. Performance Plan – This is the public-facing part of this framework, where we would communicate what services the Village provides. Service level commitments would be clearly presented alongside how we would monitor whether or not we are meeting that commitment.

Discussion:

- Council indicated that the Village does not need to own all of the assets it needs to provide a service to the community. Access to this equipment could be contracted out.

- The Village does an annual tender for access to third party equipment and equipment operators.
- Should the Village choose to contract, instead of purchasing, equipment, this would be reflected in the level of service the Village is choosing to provide.
- Next steps would be to work through this framework with Council over 3 or 4 Committee of the Whole Meetings, ensuring both Jerry and Dave are present to provide technical input.

#258-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the Draft Level of Service Framework be received and filed

Motion #258-25 was **CARRIED**.

Draft Landfill Credit Account Policy #47-25

A/CAO Presentation:

- At a previous Council meeting, Council directed staff to create a policy to ease the administrative burden around all the credit accounts that have been set up at the landfill and ensure that accounts are only set up for high volume users.
- The draft policy requires users to have at least \$50/month, on average, in tipping fees to set up a credit account.

Discussion:

- No discussion

#259-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the Landfill Credit Account Policy #47-25 is approved

Motion #259-25 was **CARRIED**.

Road Work Direct Award

A/CAO Presentation:

- Castle Rock was awarded YG's tender for Phase 4 infrastructure work, and have mobilized road work crews and equipment to Haines Junction to resurface roads.
- Staff have been exploring the possibility of adding on road work for the Village before Castle Rock's crews and equipment leave town.
- It is uncertain whether the crew will be available, and if so, whether the Village can access enough granular materials to get the work done.
- A quote to complete the work for VHJ has been requested from Castle Rock, which will be compared to the competitively tendered rates through YG's tendering process.

Discussion:

- Concerns were expressed with awarding a contract before a quote is received.
- A preference was expressed to follow the Villages' process for competitive bidding so local contractors can bid.
 - It is unlikely that anyone local would have been able to bid on YG's Phase 4 Infrastructure because it is such a large project, and no one in town would have all the equipment required to complete that project on their own.
 - No one in town has the ability to do resurfacing.
- The Village's procurement policy does not indicate that Council can sole source contracts. The policy states that anything over \$5,000 must go out to tender.
 - It is not unusual for governments to have the authority to sole source above \$5,000, particularly for emergency purposes or other extenuating circumstances – Council may want to review its policy to give themselves this authority.
- Concerns were expressed that if we do not take this opportunity to piggy-back on YG's tendering process, that this will delay roadwork until next year. In addition, the Village could incur significant costs to have equipment mobilized next year from Whitehorse that is currently in town.
- Council was cautioned against bid-shopping (putting out a tender that you have no intention of awarding), as this is an illegal practice
- Council tentatively planned to hold a Special Council Meeting after the Committee of the Whole meeting on August 6th to discuss this matter further.

#260-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT staff be directed to start to prepare a tender package for road repairs and resurfacing

Motion #260-25 was **CARRIED**.

#261-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT staff correct the numbering of the Competitive Bidding Process Policy.

Motion #261-25 was **CARRIED**

#262-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting go past 9:00pm.

Motion #262-25 was **CARRIED**

Bylaws – Reports, Readings and Adoption

Bylaw 428-23 New Dwelling Construction Grant – For 2nd and 3rd Reading

- Deferred to August 13, 2025 meeting (see above Motion #256-25)

Correspondence

Council Reports and Notice of Motions

Councillor McPhie

- Nothing to report

Councillor Busche

- Attended Community Wellness Planning Meeting
- Notice of motion – procedures for taking down old business signs in town

Councillor Sundbo

- Attended Community Wellness Planning Meeting
- Notice of motion: To form a volunteer group to do clearing work etc. along the Dezadeash Trail. More immediately, the small bridge on Dezadeash trail, near Kluane RV park, is failing. Hoping some of the wood could be salvaged from the viewing platform to reconstruct bridge right away.
- Electric vehicle charging stations, would like to discuss developing a policy.
- Regarding the staffing table presented to Council by staff, the table incorrectly showed there was less staff in 2024-2025 than in previous years when, in fact, there was a higher number of staff. Would like further discussion on change in FTE's over time, including non-union management positions, noting where contract staff are being utilized.

Mayor Strand

- Council participated in the Joint Council meeting with CAFN on July 22nd
- Attended Health Transformation Advisory Committee meeting as an Advisory Committee member.

Questions from the Public

Motion to Close Meeting to the Public

#263-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be closed to the public at 9:15.

Motion #263-25 was **CARRIED**.

Motion to Reopen Meeting to the Public

#264-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be reopened to the public at 10:13.

Motion #264-25 was **CARRIED**.

#265-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT in the spirit of reconciliation, the Village will offer to cover half of the cost of the survey the Shakwak lots, the amount being roughly \$9,000.

Motion #265-25 was **CARRIED**.

#266-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT Council attend the following meetings:

- CAFN Joint Council July 22, 2025
- Yukon Health Transformation July 29, 2025
- RCMP Interviews August 25, 2025 (Mayor Strand)
- AYC September 20, 2025
- CAFN Joint Council September 29, 2025
- Rec Centre Governance Workshop September 29, 2025

Motion #266-25 was **CARRIED**.

Adjournment

#267-25 It was moved and seconded

THAT the meeting be adjourned 10:16pm.

Motion #267-25 was **CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 10:16pm.


Mayor Diane Strand


CAO David Fairbank