

**Village of Haines Junction  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
August 28, 2024**

Present:

Mayor Tomlin  
Councillor Strand  
Councillor Nassiopoulos  
Councillor Charlebois

Absent:

CAO Fairbank, Recorder Ogden

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm

**Acknowledgement of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Traditional Territory**

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

**Adoption of Agenda**

#244-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the agenda be adopted as amended with the following additions:

- Letter from Will McKeller added to New Business

Motion #244-24 was **CARRIED**.

**Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

**Adoption of Minutes of Regular and Special Council Meetings**

Council Meeting Minutes August 14, 2024

#245-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the minutes of the regular Council meeting of August 14, 2024 be adopted as amended

- Motion 241-24 – the intention of this motion was clarified – Council’s direction is to remove all ‘other regulations’ related to Short-Term Rentals from each Zoning Category

Motion #245-24 was **CARRIED**.

**Proclamations**

**Delegations**

## Public Hearings and Public Input Sessions

### Old Business

#### New Dwelling Construction Grant for Young Residents Policy

##### *Project/Asset Manager Presentation:*

- This is the revised version of the policy that reflects the changes requested during a previous Council meeting.

#246-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the New Dwelling Construction Grant for Young Residents is approved as presented.

Motion #246-24 was **CARRIED**.

### New Business

#### Accounts Payable to August 28, 2024

Materials provided: Municipal Accounts Payable to August 28, 2024

#247-27 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the Municipal Accounts Payable to August 28, 2024 be approved as presented.

Motion #247-24 was **CARRIED**.

#### RTC -- Options to encourage the development or sale of underdeveloped lots

##### *Policy/Communications Manager Presentation:*

- This RTC was drafted in response to Council's March 27, 2024 motion requesting Administration to prepare a report on all undeveloped, non-residential lots with options to encourage their development or sale, including exploring raising of property tax minimums
- In this analysis, undeveloped lots were identified by those lots that are paying the minimum property tax levy of \$400.
  1. 125 of the 483 lots in town, or 26% are undeveloped
  2. 54 of these are urban residential (24% of all urban residential lots)
  3. 57% of the 23 industrial lots in town are undeveloped
  4. 52% of the 60 tourist commercial lots in town are undeveloped
  5. 46% of the 24 mixed commercial lots in town are undeveloped
  6. 33% of the 6 agriculture general lots in town are undeveloped

7. All country residential lots have had some level of improvements
  8. The Village does not have statistics on the number of vacant or derelict buildings in town.
- There are costs, both environmental (e.g. urban sprawl) and economic (e.g. sewer and water infrastructure, lost property tax revenues), to under-developed/vacant/derelict properties.
  - There are more minimum tax rate residential lots in town than will be newly developed in the Dhäl Gähy / Mountain Ridge development that has cost millions to develop.
  - Rather than opening new developments to meet the demand for lot sales; it may be cheaper to consider approaches that encourage the development or sale of under-developed/vacant/derelict lots.
  - Different municipalities have taken different approaches to reducing the number of vacant/under-developed lots and vacant/derelict buildings that range across a spectrum of punitive actions to inducements – for example, some municipalities impose fees/standards, while other provide incentives
  - Seven options to encourage the development or sale of under-developed/vacant lots and vacant/derelict buildings were presented
    1. Enforcing build requirements
    2. Raising the minimum tax levy
    3. Levying tax by zone instead of use
    4. Restricting or prohibiting the amalgamation of residential lots
    5. Establishing a vacant building bylaw and registry
    6. Providing property tax incentives to encourage the re-development of brownfield sites
    7. Offering an annual farm property class tax rate reduction program

*Discussion:*

- Some people do live on lots and pay the minimum tax – for example, an older home that has a low assessment value.
- How many people have adjacent undeveloped lots that haven't been amalgamated? What is the intention is for those lots – to keep vacant in order to have a larger residential lot or is there an intention to develop?
- Like the idea of looking at what could be done to address brownfield lots – they are impossible to sell and cost-prohibitive to correct, and some of these lots are in ideal locations for re-development.
- Council doesn't want to see an impact on lower income residents who are living on lots and paying the minimum tax.
- Doesn't make sense to charge \$400 for an empty lot when we are paying \$7Million to develop 44 new lots.
- Commercial and industrial lots that are used only as residential lots are taxed at residential rates. This is how the YG tax roll is handed to the Village. There is an option to modify this, but by default this is how this is done.
- An Airbnb on a limited ag lot with no agriculture – it would make sense to charge the residential tax rate as a disincentive use of the lot for non-agriculture purposes.

- If taxed by zone instead of by use, and we change the mil rate for commercial and industrial lots to be higher than residential lots, it will not be fair to if someone is using a country residential lot for industrial use and is taxed lower than someone using an industrial lot for industrial use.
- Our tax rate was lowered because we have been putting money into reserves every year – it didn't make sense to take taxpayer money and put into reserves. When we start drawing down reserves, it will make sense to look at the mil rate.
- Would like to increase the minimum tax rate on empty lots – need an inventory of which lots are vacant (paying minimum tax doesn't necessarily mean a lot is vacant).
- There is some inconsistency in the tax role – some people have multiple lots and are only charged tax as if they have one property; others have multiple lots and have been charged tax on each lot – some unpacking is required.
- Amalgamation authority is technically with YG – there is a process for YG to consult with Council on any requests for amalgamation Add this to the transition binder for next Council.
- Are there any grants from YG to address brownfield sites? Send a letter. The Federal government's Investing in Canada Plan or ICIP was a significant funding opportunity. Will having a land treatment facility near town help with costs (yes)? Would it be more cost effective to remediate several lots at one time instead of remediating on an individual lot by lot basis (yes)?
- Still in the figuring out what we want to do stage, not ready yet for a bylaw to be brought forward. At the end of the mandate so this will need to roll into the transition binder for the new Council.
- Support for further exploration of raising property tax minimums, lot amalgamation and incentivizing brownfield sites and having a more refined list of what lots are empty.
- Having a draft bylaw on raising property tax minimums, with a strong RTC, even if not passed, and if staff have time, would be a good next step.

#248-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Administration be directed to do further analysis based on the topics of discussion this evening.

Motion #248-24 was **CARRIED**.

#### RTC – Conditions of Employment for Non-Union Staff

##### *CAO Presentation:*

- Proposing overtime pay for management staff who work more overtime than the time-in-lieu in their contracts.

##### *Discussion:*

- Not clear if time in lieu is being removed from the bylaw and instead staff will be asked to punch an overtime clock?

- No, keeping in and paying OT if work more OT than time in lieu.
- Wondering why we would have both.
- Overtime usually means being paid at a different rate of pay per Canada Labour Code. Can count as straight time, can count as how the Canada Labour Code
- How counting time towards time in lieu target? As straight time or time and a half?
- Compensating with banked time instead of payout can create issues with being able to meet operational requirements. Need to cap.
- Union staff have provisions that prevent them from accruing too much leave.
- Do not like the word overtime as it can be misconstrued.
- CAO is exempt from these changes.
- Salaried positions don't have to abide by Canada Labour Code.

#249-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the report on the Amendment to Conditions of Employment for Non-Union Staff be accepted as presented.

Motion #249-24 was **CARRIED**.

#### Affordable Housing Construction Grant Policy

##### *Project/Asset Manager Presentation:*

- This is a follow up to the Call for Expressions of Interest that closed several weeks ago, for which we got a great response.
  - 8 applicants
  - Mix of individual and multi-unit projects
  - A total of 23-25 affordable housing units
  - 20-22 rental units, 3 sale units
  - Most have identified lots; several seeking assistance with identifying a lot for their project
- Policy modelled on Young Resident Grant that was reviewed by Council and approved earlier this evening.

##### *Discussion:*

- Lottery process -- how will this work given that there is another step -- to invite full proposals --from eligible EOI recipients.
- Don't want to waste time to be put in a lottery when we can only support 10 of 25 projects.
- Should we put out Youth program and see what update there is. It may be premature to set a lottery process if say there is a low uptake on the Youth grant, we could reallocate unused funds to support all the affordable housing grant projects?

- Would like to see consideration for how all projects could be funded if all projects are good and meet all the requirements. We have reserves or could explore reducing grant funding from \$25k to \$20k per unit. Don't want to say no to a viable project with a great proposal if we don't have to given that we need housing in the community.
- There are really big targets in the agreement so we need to find ways to say yes.
- This is an extra project we are looking to do within our HAF funding envelope – the initial budget did not allocate all of the funds; half of the funds was not allocated, and we did not specify what it would be allocated towards.
- We do need to ask CMHC to make changes to the initiatives we were funded to do.
- Separate this lottery review process from the application review process.
- Provide options other than lottery if we are oversubscribed.
- Don't love the lottery process – not the preferred method to identify projects. Staff asked to come back with other methods e.g. scoring proposals and accepting the top ranked. Criteria based on ability to meet timelines, etc.
- Desire for funds to be distributed and not to go all to one applicant.
- Would like a visual showing the process workflow.

#250-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Administration come back with a revised policy reflecting the discussion this evening.

Motion #250-24 was **CARRIED**.

#### Request from Will MacKellar for a Letter of Support

##### *CAO Presentation*

- Will is proposing to develop a land treatment facility at the site of the old landfill/car dump; the site is 450m from CAFN Settlement land
- Consultation with CAFN will be required.
- The project will need to go through YESAB.

##### *Discussion*

- Would want to touch base with CAFN to understand their perspective on this proposal before providing a letter of support.
- Next Joint Council meeting is scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup>.
- The Village supported Castle Rock, owned by CAFN Development Corp, and would like to ensure there is a competitive environment and support the proposal. Would like to know if there is significant opposition to this proposal, and if so, the reasons for opposition.

#251-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Staff are directed to approach CAFN staff as discussed and to inform Will McKellar that Council would like to take this extra step before providing a letter of support.

Motion #251-24 was **CARRIED**.

## **Bylaws – Reports, Readings and Adoption**

### Bylaw #414-24 Council Remuneration Bylaw – Third Reading

Discussion:

- The Mayor requested to be on record as opposing this Bylaw.

#252-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Bylaw #414-24 Council Remuneration Bylaw be read for a third time and adopted on August 28, 2024.

Motion #252-24 was **CARRIED**.

### Bylaw #417-24 Affordable Housing Construction Grant – First Reading

#### *Project/Asset Manager Presentation*

- Per the Municipal Act, a bylaw is needed in order to provide grants
- May want to hold off on first reading until the policy is revised per the discussion earlier this evening; proceeding with first reading will allow this to stay on schedule for approval before the end of Council's term.

#253-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Bylaw #417-24 A Bylaw to provide for grants for developers to construct new affordable housing units within the Village of Haines Junction be read for the first time on August 28, 2024

Motion #253-24 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #418-24 New Dwelling Construction Grant for Young Residents – First and Second Reading

#254-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Bylaw #418-24 A Bylaw to provide for grants to young residents to construct new dwelling units within the Village of Haines Junction be read for the first time on August 28, 2024

Motion #254-24 was **CARRIED**.

#255-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Bylaw #418-24 A Bylaw to provide for grants to young residents to construct new dwelling units within the Village of Haines Junction be read for the second time on August 28, 2024

Motion #255-24 was **CARRIED**.

Bylaw #419-24 Conditions of Employment for Non-Union Staff Bylaw #356-20 Amendment #3 – First Reading

Discussion

- Council indicated its preference for staff to provide a clean version for approval

#256-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** Bylaw #419-24 Conditions of Employment for Non-Union Staff Bylaw #356-20 Amendment #3 be read for the first time on August 28, 2024

Motion #256-24 was **CARRIED**.

**Correspondence**

**Council Reports**

Councillor Nassiopoulos

- School is back in session, please be mindful to drive slowly around town

Councillor Charlebois



- Expressed thanks for the community's patience with the construction that is underway around town

Councillor Strand

- Nothing to report

Mayor Tomlin

- Nothing to report

**Questions from the Public**

Why are public meetings catered and where does the money come from? Surprised this is done as much as it is and that taxpayers are expected to pay for this.

- Dinner is provided to encourage turnout, and to recognize that we are asking folks to attend a meeting over the dinner hour.
- In the case of the zoning bylaw, funding is sourced from the budget that is set aside for this project. The Village Received funding from CMHC's Housing Accelerator Fund to update the Zoning Bylaw.

Where can a person go to ask for funding to do something when you are not a society? There is a line item in the budget for \$48,000, what is this for?

- Staff will need to look into this further to see what line item in the budget is being referred to.

Is the funding for affordable housing grants from the Federal government?

- Yes, the Village received funding from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

**Motion to Close Meeting to the Public**

#257-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the meeting be closed to the public at 8:49pm.

Motion #257-24 was **CARRIED**.

**Motion to Reopen Meeting to the Public**

#258-24 It was moved and seconded

**THAT** the meeting be reopened to the public at 9:38pm

Motion #258-24 was **CARRIED**.

#259-24 It was moved and seconded  
**THAT** the meeting be extended beyond 9pm.

Motion #259-24 was **CARRIED**.

#260-24 It was moved and seconded  
**THAT** staff be directed to generate an information sheet on construction that is underway at the landfill to make improvements to the front end.

Motion #260-24 was **CARRIED**.

### Adjournment

#260-24 It was moved and seconded  
**THAT** the meeting be adjourned.

Motion #260-24 was **CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.

  
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Mayor Bruce Tomlin

  
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CAO David Fairbank

