

TOWN OF SMITHERS

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council held in Council Chambers, 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C., on Tuesday, March 2, 2010, at 6:00 p.m.

Council Present:

Norm Adomeit, Councillor
Mark Bandstra, Councillor
Lorne Benson, Councillor
Jo Ann Groves, Councillor
Frank Wray, Councillor.

Council Excused:

Cress Farrow, Mayor
Charlie Northrup, Councillor.

Invited Guests:

Rick Bandstra
Lindsay Clougher
Paul Cocklin
Robin Curry
Brian Edmison
Bruce Graf
Daryl Hanson
Loren Kelly
Doug McCrea
Harvey Tremblay
Paul Wojdak.

Staff Present:

Deborah Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer
Penny Goodacre, Recording Secretary.

Staff Excused:

Susan Bassett, Director of Corporate Services
Leslie Ford, Director of Finance
Mark Allen, Director of Development Services
Andrew Hillaby, Director of Recreation, Parks and Culture
Keith Stecko, Fire Chief
Patricia Berg, Airport Manager
Wilf Taekema, Director of Works and Operations.

Media Present: C. Orr, The Interior News.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Deputy Mayor Groves called the meeting to order (6:00 p.m.) and stated the purpose of tonight's meeting is to find out how Council can assist the mining industry in the community.

2. **CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

2-1 **Mining Industry Update:**

Bandstra/

THAT the following correspondence be received:

- 2-1.a) Email dated February 15, 2010, from R. Curry, Treasurer, Smithers Exploration Group, presenting ways that the Town of Smithers can reach out to the minerals sector, and letter requesting sponsorship for the Mining Week luncheon being held May 14, 2010 (0360-20).
- 2-1.b) Letter received February 26, 2010, from B. Edmison, regarding recognition and support for the mineral exploration and development sector (5280-18). (revised letter dated March 2, 2010, attached).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion:

Council wants Smithers to project a positive community attitude towards the mining industry. The Economic Development Committee (EDC) has been tasked with finding ways to develop, promote and improve the local economy. The Bulkley Valley Economic Development Initiative, to establish a local Economic Development Office resulted from the EDC.

Council is analyzing all sectors of the local economy and has already met with apartment owners, realtors and developers/contractors.

Council is reviewing the industrial land base, housing, services, infrastructure, and recreational opportunities in the community to ensure there is adequate room for growth. The Smithers Regional Airport is undertaking a business and land use plan review.

The following discussion occurred on how Council could assist the mining industry: a) inform the public on the differences between minerals exploration, mine construction and development, mineral extraction process, and reclamation; b) educate the public on what the industry does and how it plays a vital role in our economy; and c) use the phrase "Mineral Exploration" as it projects a more positive image than the word "Mining".

Within the mining industry, Smithers has a good reputation and is considered a mineral exploration community. Smithers has various support companies and resources including some of the following: a) diamond drilling companies, b) geosciences and engineering consultants, c) environmental assessment companies, d) expeditors, e) government agencies, f) laboratories, g) education facilities and programs, h) air transport; and i) freight transport.

The Mining Association of British Columbia conducted a public opinion poll regarding the mining industry in Smithers, Princeton, and Kamloops. Three hundred people were interviewed in each community. In Smithers, the majority of the respondents gave a positive feedback regarding mining. Those who gave a negative response cited their information source as Town Council. Council needs to portray a positive attitude, while gathering information from the public, to approach new subjects with an open mind and a united front.

The airport services (including expanded runway) and flight schedules are a vital component to the mining industry. Many mining employees live in Smithers and fly out to the mine sites. Smithers is considered a staging point for the "Fly In Fly Out" mines. One misconception is that more flight landings are missed at the Smithers Regional Airport compared to the Northwest Regional Airport Terrace-Kitimat. The public needs to be made aware that this is not the case.

P. Cocklin invited Council to tour the Galore Creek Project mine site. It was suggested that Council also consider a tour of the Huckleberry Mine site and the Owen Lake exploration site.

Council and the Smithers Exploration Group have partnered to produce a

biweekly newspaper article “Mining Matters” on a three-month trial period to profile the importance of the mining industry to the community. Council is open to suggestions for article content. The article will be posted on the following websites: a) Town of Smithers, b) Smithers Exploration Group, and c) Regional District of Bulkley Nechako Mining Portal. It was suggested that the article also be submitted to AMEBC.

The Northwest Community College’s School of Exploration and Mining provides courses geared towards entry-level positions in the exploration field, in the future professional level courses may be included in the program. The program has been able to integrate the First Nations community into the mining industry.

Companies prefer to locate to a community that has an “open for business” attitude. Council emphasized that they are working hard to remedy that and are focused on providing the best customer service possible. Council welcomes feedback on how they can improve their customer service.

When Council is informed of issues, they are able to lobby other levels of government to encourage change. Council thanked the group for participating in the meeting and providing insight into the mining industry.

2-2 Strategic Priorities Chart Review:

Wray/
THAT the Strategic Priorities Chart, be received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion:

Council reviewed the Strategic Priorities Chart. D. Sargent provided an update on the status of the “Top 5 Corporate Priorities”. Council requested a written report on the progress of the “Corporate Priorities #5 – Smithers Economic Development Strategy”. It was agreed that a quarterly review of the Strategic Priorities Chart would be undertaken by Council and the Chief Administrative Officer.

A suggestion for “Mining Matters” is to educate the public that the Smithers Regional Airport is self-sustaining and is not subsidized with taxation dollars but with the “Airport Improvement Fee” collected by the airlines for the Airport.

3. **OTHER BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

3-1 Item 9-3 – Regular Meeting of Council held February 23, 2010, Tradeshow Partnership with Regional District of Bulkley Nechako:

Adomeit/

THAT the letter dated March 2, 2010, from Councillor Groves, providing an update on the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako Tradeshow Partnership initiative, be received (0400-55).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Bandstra/

THAT Council decline to participate in the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako's proposed 2010 tradeshow partnership program;

AND THAT a letter be sent to the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako explaining that Council is interested in discussing the concept of the tradeshow partnership program in the future and that they have already arranged to have representation at the Outdoor Adventure and Travel Show.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3-2 Item 6-3-2 Regular Meeting of Council held February 23, 2010 – Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show

Benson/

THAT Council authorize G. Atrill, Smithers Tourism Coordinator, to attend the 2010 Vancouver Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show on behalf of the Town of Smithers, at a cost not to exceed \$2,000 to be funded from the Tourism Advisory Committee budget.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3-3 Item 2-1a) Committee of the Whole Meeting held March 2, 2010 – Smithers Exploration Group

Bandstra/

THAT Council provide sponsorship in the amount of \$200 for the Smithers Mining Week luncheon being held on May 14, 2010, with the funds to come from the Council Contingency budget, as requested in the email dated February 15, 2010, from R. Curry, Smithers Exploration Group;

AND THAT all members of Council be authorized to attend the luncheon.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Council agreed that a letter be sent to the Smithers Exploration Group advising the following: a) the Town of Smithers will be contacting Mr. Pierre Lebel,

Imperial Metals and Mr. Pierre Gratton, Mining Association of British Columbia to invite them to meet with Council during Mining Week, b) the Smithers Exploration Group may place a custom made sign on the new "Gateway" signs (the cost to produce the signs is \$600 and Council must approve the artwork) or Council could install their sign that states "Mining's Jewel of the North" during Mining Week, c) Council requests a calendar of mining events that Council could attend, and d) rather than naming a Council liaison, each Councillor will have the opportunity to attend events as their schedule permits.

A suggestion for "Mining Matters" is "Smithers is proud to support Mining Week". Council directed Staff to research the cost of placing the "Mining Matters" article into the Northwest Business newspaper.

Council agreed to accept P. Cocklin's invitation to tour the Galore Creek mine site.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

Bandstra/
THAT the meeting be adjourned (8:39 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Certified Correct:

Jo Ann Groves
Deputy Mayor

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO

SB/jm/plg

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meeting held on Tuesday, March 2, 2010,
at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at 1027
Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO