

# **Council Meeting Highlights**

## **November 4, 2023**

### **Grand Falls-Windsor**

#### **Building Capacity for Non-Insured Health Benefits**

Council discussed a briefing note which focused on remedies to the amount of time it currently takes to process medical travel claims.

The processing times, currently around 12 weeks, have led to irate clients and inquiries and are having a negative impact on staff and members.

To process these reimbursements more efficiently it was recommended that the Health and Wellness Department hire an additional NIHB Support Specialist and NIHB Support Clerk for a one-year period with the possibility of extension.

Corner Brook Ward Councilor Sherry Dean made a motion to approve the hiring.

“I move that we agree to increase capacity in our health department so that we have one additional support specialist and one additional support clerk to improve our response to client claims.”

The motion was seconded by Western Vice-Chief Jenny Brake.

Motion carried.

#### **Building Capacity in the Housing Division**

The council reviewed a briefing note that laid out plans for the creation of new positions within the Housing Division.

Increasing capacity within the division is part of the Housing Strategic Plan and is part of the 2023-24 Annual Operating Plan. With a three-year contribution agreement from Indigenous Services Canada, and with budgetary review and support from the Finance and Audit Committee, it was recommended that the Council make a motion in support of hiring a Housing Manager and two Housing Officers.

Corner Brook Ward Councilor Sherry Dean moved that the Council approve the employment of one Housing Manager and an additional two Housing Officers.

Glenwood Ward Councilor Frank Skeard seconded the motion.

#### **School Breakfast Program**

\$9000 was approved to be donated to School Breakfast Programs within the nine Wards. The method of distribution of funds was discussed at the last meeting and staff were tasked with finding a way to distribute the money fairly.

At the meeting, staff shared its list of schools, information about school enrolment from last year and suggested that allocation be based on the number of students in the school; any school under 250 students would receive \$150, and schools with more than 250 students would receive \$300.

Western Vice Chief Jenny Brake moved to accept the recommendation.

Corner Brook Ward Councilor Sherry Dean seconded the motion.

### Investment with First Nation Finance Authority (FNFA)

Qalipu First Nation opened an investment (savings) account with the FNFA in August 2022. Despite withdrawals made to cover certain budgeted costs, the band still earned over 700 thousand dollars in interest revenue in a six-month period.

Qalipu currently holds funds that are not immediately needed to meet short-term cash requirements. As such, the balance could be moved into the same savings account to avail of the preferable interest rates.

The briefing note sought an addition to the delegation of duties and authority to the Director of Finance to deposit funds in order to increase the flexibility and ability to maximize interest revenue generation.

Motions were passed to authorize a deposit of funds that were not in short-term need, to allow the fund to generate interest until it was needed.

An additional motion was made to update the delegation of duties and authority of the Director of Finance to identify opportunities for depositing funds, and to do that at his discretion based on operational requirements.

### MOU (2018-2023) with CNA reviewed, updated, and renewed.

Qalipu First Nation originally entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) in 2018.

Council looked at a document that summarized what had been accomplished together since that time including the latest work of redefining shared goals, objectives and opportunities before renewing the MOU for another five years.

The MOU was approved by Council.

### Appointment of a representative to the Marine Biomass Project

Corner Brook Ward Councilor Sherry Dean was appointed as a Band Council representative on the Marine Biomass Project

### Visit to Marathon Gold

On October 23, 2023, members of staff and Council made a site visit to Marathon Gold site visit. The group shared some details of their experience and impressions.

They looked at sites, camps and emplacements for tailings ponds. Councilors had a lot of questions about the environmental procedures. They seemed to be satisfied with the answers to the questions, and what they saw during the site visit backed up a sense of good environmental protection and controls.

Vice Chief Jenny Brake was taken aback by the work that was being done but felt confident in the due diligence that was being done. She commented that they are a “passionate team that cares about the environment.”

The group shared that there is a commitment to hiring a percentage of Indigenous workers on the site. A lot of things were covered that day. She felt assured by the end of the day.

Stephenville Ward Councillor Hayward Young reported that he drove alongside “the guy who’s in charge, the head geologist.”

One of Hayward’s main concerns was wildlife, specifically the caribou. He learned that a approximately 40 caribou have been collared and that production at the site is shut down during migration along the place where they cross. The other thing Hayward said he was most concerned about was reclamation. But he said “I was left with confidence about this process.”

Benoit’s Cove Ward Councilor Terri Green reported that she was impressed with the extreme measures around care of the caribou.