



Town of Fort Smith
Special Town Council Meeting
SP-04-19
Agenda

August 30th, 2019 at 2:00 pm – Council Chambers

- A. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum
- B. Approval of Agenda
- C. Discussion
 - i. Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment Superintendent Position
 - ii. Request to Secure Department of Infrastructure Compound
 - iii. Airport Runway Modifications
 - iv. GNWT Commissioner's Land Transfers
 - v. Prisoner Escort Services
 - vi. Youth Rehabilitation/Treatment Centres in the NWT
- D. Absence of Council Members
- E. Adjournment
- F. Question Period



**COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH
SPECIAL MEETING SP-04-19
THE FOURTH SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL FOR
THE YEAR 2019**

PRESENT: Mayor L. Napier Cr. K. Campbell
Cr. J. Cox Cr. L. Beaulieu
Cr. C. Westwell Cr. A. Pischinger
Cr. M. Couvrette

REGRETS: D/M K. Smith Cr. B. McArthur

STAFF: K. Morrison, Senior Administrative Officer
K. Reid, Executive Secretary

GALLERY: Honourable Minister Wally Schumann
Honourable Minister Louis Sebert
Don Jaque

Special Meeting SP-04-19 2:00 PM
August 30, 2019 Council Chambers

The purpose of the Special Meeting is to meet with the Honourable Wally Schumann, Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment; and the Honourable Louis Sebert, Thebacha MLA, Minister of Justice, and Minister of Lands.

A. **CALL TO ORDER & CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Mayor Napier called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm and confirmed quorum of Council was present.

B. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

19-176 Moved by: Cr. Cox
Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. **DISCUSSION**

- i. Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment Superintendent Position – Mayor Napier and Council welcomed Ministers Louis Sebert and Wally Schumann. Minister Sebert advised that they attended the Opening Ceremony of the new Corrections Facility that morning. Minister Schumann indicated that August 31st is the last day government business until elections but welcomed dialogue.

Mayor Napier stated that the topic of the location of the ITI Superintendent position has been discussed before and is an ongoing issue as the position is assigned to Fort Smith but that the Superintendent lives and works in Hay River. She added that multiple funding applications submitted by the Town to ITI have been denied and that most business is being pursued in Hay River including the Fish Plant which is not a government agency.

Cr. Westwell noted that multiple government positions in the community have moved including the Aurora College President position not living in Fort Smith. Other changes in positions including Director and Superintendent positions assigned to Fort Smith have been relocated long term and there is concern of them not returning. He indicated that the Superintendent position has been in Hay River for five years and the issue of the position returning to Fort Smith has been left unresolved. He added that the Department of Transportation was also moved to Hay River.

Cr. Couvrette stated that Fort Smith has been negatively impacted economically from the relocation of the position and through loss of property tax revenue. He added that the negative impacts continue through the loss of the Superintendent position of Transportation/Infrastructure and the loss of the Aurora College President position.

Cr. Cox expressed concern that the loss of these positions from the community results in the loss of the community's decision-making ability within the Territorial Government and that the Town is experiencing the affects of not having the voice of the Regional Superintendent. She requested an explanation on how to get the positions relocated back to Fort Smith.

Minister Schumann was happy to invite discussion and was pleased with the invitation. He felt that the many of the issues are a result of misinformation. He indicated that the Aurora College President position isn't lost as the Department of ECE is performing a full review which will be determined by the 19th Legislative Assembly. He noted that the Department of Infrastructure Superintendent position being relocated to Hay River was due to the amalgamation of two departments and was offset by the Superintendent of Lands position being relocated to Fort Smith. Minister Schumann added that the number of positions in Fort Smith has not changed. Minister Sebert clarified that the Public Service Annual Report states that as of December 31st, 2015 there was a total of 513 government employees in Fort Smith and in March 31st, 2019 there was also a total of 513 employees. Minister Schumann stated that there may have been changes through amalgamation but that Minister Sebert has added positions through Lands expanding the equity and leases department and that Fort Smith has not lost any positions.

Minister Schumann advised that the Superintendent of ITI was renting a house in Fort Smith, but his workload has been heavily situated in Hay River with the Aurora Wood Pellets, the Fish Plant and other ongoing projects. He indicated that his work would continue in Hay River as work progresses with the Pine Point Mines. He noted that the Superintendent provided him with contribution reports for Fort Smith since 2016 which includes key performance indicators and advised that Fort Smith continues to get their fair share. Minister Schumann advised that the Superintendent and himself have concerns with the Town removing ITI from all ex-officio seats and felt that if ITI is not at the table regarding economic development, ITI is in a reaction mode which does not bode well for Fort Smith. He added that almost every other community has included ITI as ex-officio as part of their mandate going forward for economic development and felt that not having ITI at the table for tourism is not a good thing for Fort Smith. Minister Schumann has reviewed contribution reports and indicated that Fort Smith is getting a lot. He stated that in regard to economy, Fort Smith is an end-of-the-road community and that there is not much industry and suggested that there are opportunities that could be expanded on including tourism. Minister Schumann noted that he visits the tourism booth in Hay River frequently and promotes tourism to Fort Smith. He felt that the paving of Highway 5 through Wood Buffalo National Park has increased tourism as travelling on gravel roads is a concern of tourists travelling with campers.

Minister Schumann advised that the GNWT has brought in over a billion dollars from the Federal Government for infrastructure projects across the NWT. He noted that the GNWT had the grand opening for the new Women's Correction's facility today and that other initiatives include the Mine Training Society building that was opened last fall at the Aurora College.

Minister Schumann stated that there was a lot of push back regarding the Aurora College and felt that if Fort Smith has a clear understanding of what ECE Minister Cochrane is trying to accomplish, Fort Smith will be a big part of the solution moving forward. He anticipates plenty of opportunities and discussion in the 19th Legislative Assembly regarding the future of the Aurora College.

Minister Schumann advised that the Superintendent position would continue in Fort Smith [sic] for the near term due to ongoing initiatives but that he has had discussion with the department about implementing an associate position for the South Slave regarding opportunities that are here. He added that the implementation of the position may be dependent on who is elected into the 19th Legislative Assembly. Minister Schumann has had discussion with his Deputy who would work to move this forward.

Minister Schumann advised that the 19th Legislative Assembly and Executive Council will be elected on October 24th and recommended attempting to be the first community to invite the new Premier and Executive Council to Fort Smith to provide input and discuss how to steer the new Legislative Assembly. He added that there will be extreme fiscal pressure on the newly elected government as they are very close to their debt limit and noted that the 18th Legislative Assembly has done their share in performing debt reduction. He stated that the 19th Legislative Assembly will need to make decisions on status quo with limited money for capital projects or to determine other forms of debt reduction or revenue sources moving forward. Minister Schumann appreciated that the Town is worried about the economy in Fort Smith and felt that it was good that Minister Sebert and himself could meet with Council to explain. He added that it is clear to the Executive Council, Minister Sebert and himself that the number of positions in Fort Smith has not changed but that there have been allocations of positions. Additionally, he noted that the ITI Superintendent position is in Fort Smith and anticipates dependent on the new Legislative Assembly that the position will remain in Fort Smith for the foreseeable future.

Mayor Napier advised that she had previously met with the Premier and Minister Schumann earlier this year and that she had requested the number of employees with the GNWT in Fort Smith. The number received on May 10th was 340 employees as of March 13th, 2019 and 339 employees as of on March 13th, 2016. Minister Sebert clarified that the number previously provided excluded the Department of Health and Social Services employees. Mayor Napier asked if there were any changes to the levels of employees. Minister Sebert understands they are the same with minimal changes.

Cr. Westwell suggested that there may be a lack of communication rather than misinformation. He advised that he has attended every meeting in Fort Smith with Minister Cochrane and has been told that Dr. Tom Weegar's position as ADM and President of the Aurora College is based out of Yellowknife. He noted that the future of the Office of the President is still undetermined and that there were other promises about not moving head office from Fort Smith. He felt that with the Strategic Plan and other initiatives underway, it would be a number of years without the position in Fort Smith. He noted that this position in conjunction with multiple other senior management positions being moved, vacant positions, and the shuffling of positions due to devolution, there is concern of a trend of decentralizing from Fort Smith. Regarding the ITI Superintendent position, he felt that renting a house in Fort Smith doesn't compare to raising a family in Fort Smith and that each family member contributes to the community via school funding formulas, etc. He added that ten years ago the Aurora College had no vacant pods and that they are now 50% vacant. He had concerns with the number of positions numbered compared to the visible vacancies. He clarified that the community is concerned with senior management positions transferred, GNWT position vacancies, the uncertainty of the Aurora College, and the centralization of Health and Social Services in Hay River. He added that the cornerstone of Fort Smith economy is GNWT services and that the tourism economy hasn't amounted. Cr. Westwell's perception from previous meetings with the Premier was that the GNWT has plans for all NWT communities, except Fort Smith.

Minister Schumann urged Mayor and Council to invite the 19th Legislative Assembly once sworn in on October 24th to Fort Smith to discuss plans moving forward. He advised that his portfolios are tied to economy and that he anticipates a downturn and recession due to Donald Trump's US Presidency. He noted that the diamond mines are a major contributor to economy and that a recession would have a much bigger impact than a few GNWT jobs leaving the community. He suggested preparing a vision for Fort Smith moving forward with the new Legislative Assembly. Minister Schumann added that Hay River lost thirty-three jobs within the same time frame. He noted that Hay River has a different economy including half the economy as private businesses and that the GNWT took over NTCL but that most NTCL jobs are contract based.

Cr. Couvrette referred to Minister Schumann's comment regarding ITI being removed as ex-officio on the Tourism and Trade Advisory Board. He advised that he represents the Tourism and Trade Advisory Board as a Councillor, and previously as a representative of the Department of ITI and his understanding was that the department withdrew their participation. He doesn't think the Town asked the department not to participate and he felt that having ITI at the table was a valuable resource. As the Councillor representative on the board, Cr. Couvrette would be pleased to see a member of the department participate as ex-officio and felt this could be addressed prior to the closing of government business. Minister Schumann stated that based on his discussion with the Superintendent was that the Town had removed the department from ex-officio seats but advised that the department would be supportive of being included in discussions.

Minister Schumann advised that the GNWT puts tools in place to create opportunities but is not in the business of being in business which is what entrepreneurs do. He noted that Fort Smith has a lack of entrance in that space as there appears to be a lack of opportunities or people do not want to take the opportunities. He noted that the GNWT will allow programs and services for those opportunities going forward. He believes there are opportunities in Fort Smith but asked how to create the opportunities to inspire people to do them and felt that that is the challenge going forward. He suggested this discussion take place around the review of the Aurora College. He added that he is supportive of the Futurepreneur, an outside agency offered through BDIC, with mentors that provide a four-day course that takes you through the process to become an entrepreneur. Minister Schumann advised that Minister Sebert and himself have toured every community in the NWT and that other communities besides Fort Smith, Hay River, Yellowknife and Inuvik have very limited opportunities. He felt that it is not good for communities to build their business models around the GNWT and that the government needs to continue to work with all communities on opportunities. He suggested that Fort Smith's biggest opportunity and resource would be Wood Buffalo National Park.

- ii. Request to Secure Department of Infrastructure Compound – Mayor Napier advised that over the past few years there has been an increase in youth-related crime. One of the issues is youth having access to guns and vehicles due to government compounds not being secured. Mayor Napier is looking for a commitment from the GNWT to have their compounds secured and alarmed to prevent harm to the public and indicated that the concern had been expressed through the RCMP due to lack of a response from the Department of Infrastructure. She noted that the issue is a GNWT concern due to liability, and aside from damage and theft, if anyone was seriously injured or killed due to lack of security around the compound.

Minister Schumann was unaware of the issue and advised that the concern was never brought forward to the Legislative Assembly. He has received feedback from the Acting Superintendent of Infrastructure who has indicated that they are looking at a plan going forward to secure the compound including barred windows and alarms. He reassured Council that funds have been allocated for this and there is a plan to secure the compound.

Cr. Westwell was disappointed that the issue wasn't made more apparent. He noted that the compound is fenced although it hadn't always been. He added that keys had been left in heavy duty trucks and that a recent incident included Northern Store doors being driven through and the Aurora College property being smashed including their fence. He advised that keys to government facilities were accessed through the breach of the Infrastructure compound and that the Aurora College had spent thousands on key and door replacements.

Minister Schumann advised that he would contact the department for their plan and will provide Council with the details.

Cr. Campbell clarified that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources compound has been secured with Liberty Security Systems and that guns have been put in a secure location.

- iii. Airport Runway Modifications – Mayor Napier advised that a letter was sent from local governments in opposition of the narrowing of Fort Smith runway and that Fort Smith has seen a lack of consultation on the issue. She noted that the runway will be much narrower than any other runway in the territory. Mayor Napier was previously advised that the new runway width would be the same as Norman Wells, but that it isn't the same width. She noted that the understanding was that new LED lights were to be installed and that the narrowing to 100 feet was issued with no consultation with local business Northwestern Air Lease (NWAL). She added that NWAL is Fort Smith's major airline and would be starting an aviation school in Fort Smith. Mayor Napier advised that the narrowing of the runway is a huge concern for the community.

Cr. Couvrette reviewed surveys of all NWT airports and stated that all major communities in the NWT including Inuvik, Norman Wells, and Fort Simpson have runways with a width of a minimum of 150 ft. He noted that all other airports that have gravel strips are roughly 100 ft wide. He felt that the Fort Smith's runway is being downgraded to an airstrip and noted that NWAL indicated that minimum consultation occurred. Cr. Couvrette added that a 200 ft wide runway would be ideal for the aviation school; 150 ft wide would be okay; and that 100 ft wide may increase the chance of an accident. Cr. Couvrette also expressed concern that Fort Smith Airport is a major operational centre for the GNWT fleet and that when flying in less than ideal conditions there is additional risk involved in operating on less than a standard airstrip.

Cr. Westwell agreed that the government isn't in the business of being in business and should be in the business of supporting businesses development and incentivizing and making an economy favourable for business. He advised that NWAL is one of the economic pillars in Fort Smith as the largest employer in the community, a long-term flyer in the north and is implementing aviation school. He noted that the changes have impacted that aviation school and is a great entrepreneurial opportunity due to a shortage of pilots in the north. He noted that NWAL was included at the table until construction began and that both NWAL and the Town were unaware of the changes. Cr. Westwell wasn't pleased with the lack of consultation for the narrowing of the runways and doesn't think the potential economic opportunity lost versus the snow removal savings would justify the cost of the expense.

Minister Schumann advised that there would not be any economic opportunities lost and that the work is being performed by a local contractor for approximate two million dollars. He noted that concerns have been raised about downgrading the airway but reassured Council that 737s and airbuses up to a A30321 would continue to land in Fort Smith. He added that a resident of Fort Smith had concerns that Westjet would not land in Fort Smith and that Westjet has been contacted and that they have no issues besides concerns of the ends of the runway and the ability to turn the aircraft. As a result, a change order was issued to accommodate Westjet's concerns in case there was ever the need to evacuate Fort Smith. He confirmed that all commercial aircrafts can continue to land in Fort Smith. Minister Schumann advised that the GNWT had consulted with Northern Air Transport Association (NATA), Transport Canada, with other aviation partners and with the local contractor before performing the work. He noted that as concerns have been raised with the issue the department has addressed them including the Westjet issue. Minister Schumann also recognized that the new LED lights are to Transport Canada regulations.

Minister Schumann advised of the fiscal issue that Transport Canada has stated that they will no longer pay for overlay on 60 meter runways through their assistance program which is used for all airports across the NWT. He noted that the narrower runway meets Transport Canada regulations and will have better lighting moving forward. Minister Schumann advised that the modification has already occurred in Tuktoyaktuk and that he anticipates the change in other communities as well. Minister Schumann noted that the project is on schedule and will be complete in the next few weeks. He added that he responded to a letter from local governments with concerns.

Cr. Westwell thinks that the issue may be communication. He was appreciative of written and email communication and was pleased to have discussion in person. Cr. Westwell thought it was interesting that NWAL advised that they weren't consulted with. He felt that the larger issue was that the municipality was unaware of the plans and would appreciate being consulted directly.

Cr. Cox thanked Minister Schumann for reassurance that the runway could still accommodate larger aircrafts. Cr. Cox reiterated the concern with the process of how the decision was made and that there was no communication.

Minister Schumann advised that NWAL uses Jetstream aircrafts and that only a 23 meter wide runway is required according to Transport Canada. He noted that the Fort Smith runway is 30 meters wide.

- iv. GNWT Commissioner's Land Transfers – Mayor Napier advised that this has been an ongoing issue and that the recent Public Lands Act highlighted the problems Fort Smith and other communities are having with Commissioner's land within municipal boundaries including the GNWT responsibility of the land and the inability for the Town to manage land within municipality. She indicated that the Town has a few issues regarding GNWT's responsibility of Commissioner's land including fire abatement, landslide instability up and downstream of the areas that has already been treated, the acquisition of the Riverside Park lot and adjacent washcar lot, and leasing of Commissioner's land within municipal boundaries which disables the municipality from determining the use of the property. Mayor Napier asked for the process to have Commissioner's Land transferred to the municipality and if changes have been made to the Public Lands Act to allow municipalities control of the properties.

Minister Sebert was pleased to meet with Council. He advised that Cabinet had approved the transfer of the three Snowboard Park run lots to the municipality. Minister Sebert is aware of Fort Smith's and other community's concerns as a result of NWTAC meetings and indicated that the Town would need to submit applications for the other two lots and that the process is cumbersome. Minister Sebert advised that on a policy basis, the Departments of MACA and Lands will be working together on this. He understands the need to have Commissioner's land transferred but that the issue in transferring in Fort Smith is due to unsettled land claims. He added that consultation occurred for the three lots north of Marine Drive and that there were no concerns expressed. He felt that there may be concerns with the two larger lots as aboriginal groups may wish to express land claims. He understands that the Town does need land within the municipality and hopes for a less cumbersome process in the future.

Cr. Westwell advised that he received Minister Sebert's letter in response to their conversation and that he was displeased with the response and manual provided to acquire land. He noted that the Town had already initiated the process in submitting applications for the two lots and that he was hoping for a more direct response. He asked if the Town would be required to restart the process of submitting applications for the lots.

Minister Sebert advised that the lots north of Marine Drive had been transferred after consulting with one additional aboriginal group that had not yet been consulted; Salt River First Nation. He added that as the lands are in the slide zone, they cannot be used for much. Minister Sebert advised that there would still be the need to consult with aboriginal groups regarding the other two lots and understands that there may be interest as the lots are larger and more valuable. He noted that the other issue is that the Town signed an agreement to remove the structures from the adjacent lot to Riverside Park and that it would be difficult for him to tell the department to ignore the agreement. He understands that the Town would rather own than lease but felt that the transfer would not be as simple as the lots north of Marine Drive due to consultation.

Cr. Westwell agreed with Minister Sebert's comments and was looking for a response as to whether they would waive the agreement or if the structures would have to be moved to push the applications forward. Cr. Westwell understands from Minister Sebert's comments that the Lands Department doesn't have the Town's applications on file for the two lots. He felt that the Town having requested the lands in 2016 would have initiated the consultation process similar to the other three lots that were transferred. Minister Sebert was not certain that requests were made for the larger two lots as a response wasn't issued. He indicated that he would have to check the file but that requests were certainly made for the three lots north of Marine Drive. He added that the other two lots haven't had consultations and that he does understand that the Town does want to acquire the lots now.

Cr. Westwell clarified that he was looking for a response in regard to the structures to move forward with the acquisition process of the other two lots as it was his understanding that the Town submitted requests for all five lots. Minister Sebert replied that the structures are in the slide zone and wondered if the Town would want the structures there but understands that the answer is yes.

Cr. Westwell noted another issue is the interpretation of use of the structures on the adjacent lot. He noted that the structures are portable washroom and change room facilities that promote the use of the Snowboard Park and festival site, and that removing the buildings is an obstacle although understands the Town signed an agreement. Beyond the issue of the structures is that he understands that consultations have not moved forward on the other two lots and felt that it was unfortunate due to missing information and hopes the Town will not have to restart the process. Minister Sebert will check if a request was submitted for the other two lots.

Cr. Couvrette asked if the department would consider an extension to leave the structures on the lot until determination is made if the properties will be transferred to the Town. He noted that moving the structures to and from the site is a high expenditure over the schematics. Minister Sebert suggested writing a letter to the department with the request although restated that an agreement was made to move them. He understands the structures aren't residences but that there are concerns of them being in the slide zone. He added that he would be interested for the Town to determine a solution for the department to move around the issue.

Cr. Campbell asked if the structures could be left in place until after land claims. Minister Sebert restated that an agreement was made that the structures were temporary and noted that the settlement of land claims could extend years and would essentially be agreeing to leave them in place permanently. He restated the concern of the structures being in the slide zone and that the agreement was made to facilitate the Arctic Winter Games in 2018.

Cr. Couvrette clarified that the Town is in the process of determining if the lots have been applied for or reapplying for the two lots and requested the structures be left until a decision is made on the process. He felt that it would be redundant to move the structure back if the department is willing to transfer the lots to the Town. He added that having washroom and change room facilities is a requirement to support the legacy Snowboard Park. He also noted that the Town is not allowed to have structures in the slide zone but that the Department of Land has placed structures in the slide zone area.

Minister Sebert suggested a letter be written with the request to extend leaving the structures until after consultations if the Town does not receive the lots and clarified that he is not saying he would be in agreement. Minister Sebert felt that there is a good chance the Town would not receive the lots as a result of aboriginal consultations as he believes interest has been expressed. He added that he was unsure how far the structures would be required to be moved to be out of the slide zone area as there is concern of slide activity in the area and having any buildings within the slide zone. Mayor Napier clarified that the two lots are above the treated area of the slide zone that hasn't moved.

Cr. Westwell advised that the buildings promote economic development opportunities and that the area in question has been stable since the 1980's when the slope was treated. He felt that the Town should be partners with the Department of Lands to ensure the safety and stability of the land while also collaborating on the enhancement of the land. He hopes to establish development guidelines that are acceptable to both the Department of Lands and the Town. He felt that the Town's guidelines are reasonable but understands the concern of larger structures in the area and that there is a differing opinion on guidelines for where they are located.

Minister Sebert realizes that there are larger issues and noted that some of the land within the slide zone is owned privately and since it isn't taxed, there is no incentive for the owners to transfer to the government. He acknowledged that the land privately owned should be transferred and that it may be challenging to acquire. He understands there is concerns of the slide zone and that the SAO has been meeting with the department to discuss those issues.

Minister Sebert would look forward to hearing a solution regarding the Riverside Park lot and adjacent washcar lot and anticipates receiving a letter on the proposal put forward regarding the adjacent lot. He didn't feel the department was being difficult due to legalities and felt that there are legitimate concerns of major structures in the slide zone which is why the clause was incorporated into the agreement.

Minister Sebert advised that in regard to the slide zone along the riverbank, the land is both privately owned and Commissioner's land and whether a study or slope stabilization is performed, the solution would be costly but that he hopes to work together with the Town on the concern of lands and the riverbank.

Mayor Napier noted that Bill 46 was passed by the GNWT against the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment who felt that the Bill was fundamentally flawed and didn't address any of the recommendation for consultations especially with Indigenous governments. She added that there wasn't anything in the Bill about the transfer of Commissioner's land within municipal boundaries, extending municipal boundaries and the leasing of Commissioner's land. She asked why the Bill was pushed through when there were multiple objections against it especially regarding consultation.

Minister Sebert agreed that the Public Lands Act did not break new ground but was an amalgamation of the Commissioner's Land Act and the Territorial Lands Act. He noted that the main concern was to rationalize the two Acts and that the new Public Lands Act was passed through the Legislative Assembly. He added that there wasn't much concern expressed by aboriginal governments. He acknowledged that there was some opposition to the new Act and that there may be opportunity for improvement in the future.

Mayor Napier advised that the municipalities of Inuvik, Hay River, Yellowknife and Fort Smith submitted objections to the Bill as there was not clarification on the transfer of Commissioner's land, the ability to determine what development occurs on the land, and planning and management of land. She noted that as a result, this leaves decisions to the department without clarity or information in the Bill on how to administer the land. Minister Sebert is hoping that when regulations are developed for the Bill that it will provide clarification on the process of how to obtain Commissioner's land.

Mayor Napier suggested that this may be an issue to bring back to the next Legislative Assembly. Minister Sebert stated that there may be opportunities for improvements with the Bill in the future but he felt that moving forward with the Bill was the right decision.

- v. Prisoner Escort Services – Mayor Napier advised that the RCMP Sergeant delegates regularly to Council and it has been brought to their concern that RCMP members have been required to perform prisoner transport services which decreases the number of RCMP members in the community. She requested that transport services become the responsibility of the Department of Justice Correction's Officers and felt that this is a territory wide issue.

Minister Sebert advised that escort services are performed one to two times per week and that each escort takes approximately an hour. He also noted that Fort Smith has had five or more members since 2018. He added that quite often Correction's Officers perform transport services to the airport but was unsure if they take them to Yellowknife. Minister Sebert has contacted the local Correction's facility Warden and advised that they are working towards this. He thanked Mayor and Council for bringing the concern forward as he wasn't aware of the issue.

Cr. Westwell added that Mayor and Council have meaningful discussions with the local RCMP Sergeant and work collaboratively together with the local detachment.

- vi. Youth Rehabilitation/Treatment Centres in the NWT – Mayor Napier was pleased to see an anonymous two million dollar donation for mental health for youth. Mayor Napier advised that it is a major concern that there are no youth rehabilitation centers in the NWT.

Minister Sebert noted that the letter sent from Council was directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services, Glen Abernethy, and was pleased to assist in providing information from Minister Abernethy. He indicated that there are two options for children and youth requiring specialized treatment; Up Services in Yellowknife for children eight to twelve years old and Shift at Trail Cross in Fort Smith for youth twelve to eighteen years old. He advised that service contracts for Up Services and Shift are managed by HSSA regional offices and admission is coordinated on a regional level.

Minister Sebert advised that Trail Cross is an emerging resource for approximately six months and that nine youth have attended the program since opening. The program strives to promote cultural activities, therapeutic programs, counselling, educational support, and engagement with families in communities. He noted that due to the infancy of the program, performance indicators are not available at this time.

He added that both Up Services and Shift support children and youth who are struggling at home, school or in the community and provide counselling, mental health support, structure and routine. He noted that staff in both facilities work with children and youth, case managers, family, and social workers on reintegration into their homes and community. He noted that significant efforts are made to keep the children and youth with their families, however, sometimes the level of support is beyond what can be provided. He stated that in these circumstances out of territory programs are used and reviewed a list out of territory programs. Minister Sebert advised that out of territory placement is requested at the regional level and coordinated with the Department of Health via the interprovincial and territorial services specialists. He added that youth facing criminal charges may be able to access out of territory services if their needs cannot be met within the territory's resources and that probation orders are sent to the receiving jurisdictions for follow up. He noted that the courts have also mandated youth to treatment services for the purposes of rehabilitation. Minister Sebert stated that the issue is complex and there are treatment options available but that there may not be specialized treatment options in the north.

Minister Sebert advised that there is a child and youth mental wellness action plan that was released two years ago which includes the major initiative of establishing child and youth counsellors on a phased approach. He added that this would bring forty-nine new positions to the NWT and that they are in year two of four for the initiative. He thanked Minister Abernethy for the extensive note and for providing indication that the issue is being treated seriously.

Mayor Napier replied from the report provided that services for youth are a priority, but the Town is seeing a deterioration of services or lack funding and cuts to programs such as Our Youth Our Future, Our Babies Our Future and youth center funding on a territorial level. Minister Sebert replied that the establishment of forty-nine positions as a result of the Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan is a significant financial investment.

Cr. Cox advised that the concern heard from monthly RCMP delegations is a lack of treatment options for prolific offenders. She noted that prolific offending youth in the community are sent out and returned to the community with very limited treatment options and that there is concern that the pattern will continue to escalate without adequate treatment centers. Minister Sebert advised that the concern of after care is an issue of the adult system as well and that the Hay River Correction's Centre would be converted to a Guthrie House model.

Mayor and Council thanked the Ministers for meeting. Cr. Westwell requested more communication and collaboration going forward to become better partners. Minister Schumann advised that the government is working to increase communications and that the next Legislative Assembly will push heavily for an enhanced social media presence.

Minister Sebert thanked Mayor and Council for the invitation to the meet. He is Minister for a more open and transparent government and noted that more meetings are open to the public. He urged Council to write a letter regarding slide zone issues. Minister Schumann also thanked Mayor and Council and advised that he would provide a plan for securing the Department of Infrastructure compound.

D. **ABSENCE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

19-177 Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Campbell

That D/M Smith and Cr. McArthur be excused from the Special Meeting of Council on August 30th, 2019.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

E. **ADJOURNMENT**

19-178 Moved by: Cr. Cox
Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

That this meeting be adjourned at 4:14 pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes adopted this 17th day of September, 2019.



Mayor Lynn Napier



Certified Correct by Keith Morrison
Senior Administrative Officer

F. **QUESTION PERIOD**