



Ward Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium**

1. Red River Ward Meeting

Chair: Councillor Michael Zussino

2. Resource Persons

Dr. Richard Togman, CEO - Thunder Bay Public Library
Kelly Robertson, General Manager - Community Services
Kayla Dixon, Director - Engineering & Operations
Gordon Stover, Committee & Meeting Management System Coordinator

3. Attendance

Approximately 17 individuals were in attendance.

4. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed Administration and those in attendance and provided introductory comments.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Red River Ward meeting held on October 14, 2021, for information.

6. Thunder Bay Public Library

Dr. Richard Togman, CEO - Thunder Bay Public Library provided information relative to on-going initiatives and the upcoming facilities improvement plan:

- New Strategic Plan for the Thunder Bay Public Library as well as a Facilities Master Plan are being completed this year.
- Looking at reviewing neighbourhood library branches and the possibility of creating a new central location.
- New Head Librarian has been hired who will be focusing on the day-to-day operations of the libraries and how to improve communication with the public.

Discussion was held relative to programs and services offered by the library and community groups. Further information is available at all branches and on the Thunder Bay Public Library Website.

7. River Street Update and Red River Ward Infrastructure Projects

Kayla Dixon, Director - Engineering & Operations provided an overview of the planned 2023 construction projects.

River Street culvert replacement is currently still on-going with work expected to be completed and open to traffic by late May / early June 2023.

Discussion was held relative to the tender and bidding process for construction projects.

Additional Red River Ward construction projects include watermain on Cedar Avenue, storm sewer on Tupper Street, sidewalk work replacement on sections of John Street, Red River Road and Inchiquin Street.

Parks and Open Spaces are working on renewal projects to Hillcrest Park this summer.

Conservatory repairs and site work are scheduled for 2023 to be completed by 2024.

Traffic light renewal projects for more efficient synchronization is starting summer 2023 with updated technology and systems.

Various capital projects are still scheduled through 2023 throughout the city.

A concern was expressed relative to numerous potholes on Clarkson Street South between Sequoia Drive and John Street.

Discussion was held relative to the Red River Road/Court Street re-development project that will commence in summer 2023 and continue into 2024.

8. Proposed Indoor Turf Sports Facility

Kelly Robertson, General Manager - Community Services to provide a status update relative to the above noted.

Kelly Robertson, General Manager - Community Services provided a status update relative to a new site proposal for an indoor turf facility that was presented by Soccer Northwest to Council in December 2022. The proposed location of the new facility is next to the Community Auditorium, replacing the existing softball diamond.

Administration will be reporting back to Council in May 2023 with information on the feasibility of the new proposal along with an update on the existing proposal for a Chapples Park location.

Concerns were expressed relative to the cost of any proposed indoor turf sports facility and the need for a plebiscite.

Discussion about the possibility of a third party operating the facility.

9. Ward and City Issues

9.1 Urban Trees

A resident expressed a concern relative to the type of trees planted in the City as well as the cutting down of trees pre-maturely.

9.2 Work from Home

The Chair received correspondence prior to the meeting asking if administration has looked into whether city staff still operating remotely/virtually is costing more or saving money?

The Chair advised that a report is due back to Council by end of March 2023 providing information.

9.3 In-Person Ward Meeting

The Chair received correspondence prior to the meeting asking if his next Ward meeting will be in-person.

The Chair advised that plans will be made for a fall in-person ward meeting at a Red River Ward location.

9.4 Junot Avenue Traffic Speed

A resident expressed a concern relative to traffic speed in the community safety zone on Junot Avenue from Windsor Street to the EMS Headquarters.

More enforcement is needed from police in the area.

9.5 Hammarskjold High School Parking Lot

A resident expressed a concern relative to late night speeding in the parking lot of Hammarskjold High School. Police and the Public School Board have been made aware of the issue. Councillor Kasey Etreni advised that by-law enforcement can also be made aware for a noise complaint.

9.6 Social Issues

Concerns were expressed relative to an increase in homelessness, encampments, drug addictions and senior housing in Thunder Bay. The issues require further support from City Council and Administration.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.