



## Ward Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**  
**S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium**

**1. McKellar Ward Meeting 01-2024**

Chair: Councillor Brian Hamilton

**2. Resource Persons**

Ian Spoljarich, Manager - Roads  
Lori Wiitala, Council & Committee Clerk

**3. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and provided introductory comments.

**4. Winter Road Maintenance**

Manager - Roads Ian Spoljarich provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions relative to the above noted.

Discussion was held relative to winter road maintenance and it was advised that the 2023 budget for snow removal was favourable.

A question was asked relative to calendar parking enforcement, which is implemented through Parking Authority and not Roads Division.

When temperatures are above zero during the day and below freezing overnight it causes repeated melting and freezing on streets and sidewalks resulting in ice hazard to pedestrians; the city sends plows to sand the icy sections to prevent potential slips and falls.

Dispatch is the contact to report concerns including roads maintenance; all calls

to dispatch are logged, and a callback request option is available.

Discussion was held regarding filling potholes in winter months: asphalt plants close in winter months; the Python 3000 provides cold asphalt filling using pressurized air to remove water from the potholes when filling. Reporting for potholes is available online <https://www.thunderbay.ca/en/city-services/potholes.aspx> or by calling Dispatch.

A citizen asked why one street could wait longer than others to be plowed; each piece of equipment has its own route, priority streets and main arteries are plowed first for Emergency First Responders, and residential streets are plowed last. A second snowfall would result in priority to clear main arteries prior to residential streets. It is recommended to call Dispatch if your street is not plowed within 72 hours after snowfall.

## **5. Ward and City Issues**

Parking fees have increased to \$3 per hour and meters will require payment until 9:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, Sunday remaining free to park. Some citizens suggested that Marina parking should always be free, and The Chair advised that the fees assist with paying for infrastructure.

Citizens expressed that ward meetings should be held at a community or recreation center, within the applicable ward and not at City Hall. The Chair advised that having multiple platforms for ward meetings provides citizens a variety of ways to view or attend the meetings.

2024 Budget deliberations considered the following: raise taxes or bring in revenue; The Chair advised that City Council doesn't want to decrease funds for infrastructure and capital projects, which assisted with the decision of 5.5% tax levy.

The Chair is prepared to submit the following request for 2024 budget: \$30,000 to reinstate Recreation & Culture fund; including neighbourhood programming and movies in the park.

The following infrastructure projects were mentioned:

- Simpson St: following a watermain break and discussion with engineering, it was concluded to repair the road permanently, including underground

infrastructure. The phased-in project will start on Rowan St. to Dease St. and will include underground repair and pave.

- Rehabilitation project on Arthur St., from Selkirk St. to Brodie St.
- Traffic light synchronization along Arthur St. and Red River Rd.
- Repair and paving on Memorial Ave., from Second Ave. to John St.
- Phase 3 of Balmoral St. project, from Cameron St. to William St.
- Cameron St. project - similar to the work completed on Dease St.
- Completion of Streetscape Project - Red River Rd.

The Homes Debenture that matured last winter allowed for the funds to be transferred to capital projects and infrastructure, resulting in an increase to the infrastructure budget.

City Manager recruitment was discussed; the process is underway, City Council is hearing from the community, and business case analysis with an emphasis on economic growth will be used to make the decision.

The Chair advised that Administration is working on sales of underutilized parking lots and parkettes for land development, a Corporate Report will be provided to City Council.

The Chair provided the following information relative to VictoriaVille:

- An elevator is being designed for the Civic Centre
- Cladding and exterior finishing will be completed on businesses inside VictoriaVille
- 2024 - VictoriaVille is scheduled for demolition
- 2025 - rehabilitation of Victoria Ave. begins, creating flow, functionality and connectivity of Simpson Street and Victoria Ave east and west.

The Chair advised the public of their involvement with the following Committees: TBDSSAB, CEDC and AAC. The Chair is also on Downtown Fort William Revitalization Committee, which was not mentioned at the meeting.

A citizen was inquiring about the Homes Debenture in relation to the infrastructure gap and The Chair advised that to-date information could be requested from City Administration.

## **6. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.