

**DISTRICT OF HUDSON'S HOPE
SPECIAL MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2009 AT 9:00 A.M.**

Present **Council:** Acting Mayor Johnson, Councillors Webster, Quibell and Summer
 Staff: C. Nash, Administrator; and B. Mercereau, Deputy Clerk
 Other: R. Trepanier, and S. Kenny

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Acting Mayor Johnson presiding.

Economic Development Strategy Planning Progress Update

Sue Kenny from Community Futures presented Council with the following information on the Economic Development Strategy planning they have been completing on behalf of the District:

Objectives:

- Determine the market potential;
- Identify unfulfilled services;
- Create a recruitment strategy;
- Determine marketing targets;
- Provide document based "tools";
- Provide a master strategy that Council can use; and
- Identify financial resources required and potential sources of funding that would be needed.

Activities Completed To Date:

- Acquired information from the Administrator and Council;
- Toured the recreational areas within the municipality;
- Completing ongoing research;
- Conducted a strategic planning session with the museum;
- Gathered information through interviews with businesses, Council, regional district board members and BC Hydro;
- Completed environmental scan;
- Hosted a Community Visioning Workshop with over 40 participants;
- Received information from the North Peace Economic Development Commission EDO; and
- Hosted a visioning exercise with the Business Association.

Common Threads:

- Maintain present lifestyle;
- Increase population to allow for increased services such as doctors, dentist, schools and recreation facilities, but not turn Hudson's Hope into a "city";
- Create affordable housing for first time homeowners and seniors;
- Develop affordable residential lots for purchase;
- Need to have the ability to attract more families to the community;
- Need more corporate and business participation within the community;
- Increase cell services and high speed internet;

- Improve signage at recreation sites to increase tourism traffic;
- Be prepared for the expected development boom in 2010 and 2011; and
- Develop areas for industry companies to use for offices and yards.

Next Steps:

- Meet with the new Administrator;
- Compile information gathered from the recent meeting with the Business Association and Council;
- Identify municipal goals and objectives that need to be incorporated into the Economic Development Strategy;
- Identify an action list and a timeframe for Council to use;
- Identify possible funding opportunities; and
- Submit final report to Council in January, 2010.

A roundtable discussion ensued with members noting the following:

- The current economic downturn may cause there to be less funding opportunities at this time;
- New business start ups in Hudson's Hope can equal more tax money;
- The oil and gas industry is relatively new in Hudson's Hope;
- Comments from the meeting with the Business Association were positive with many members stating that they felt they can work together with the Mayor and Council in some kind of partnership;
- Bringing broadband into the community would help with recruiting different types of businesses to work in the community, as well as allow for more education opportunities in Hudson's Hope through the Northern Lights College;
- Need serviced industrial lots that could be marketed to businesses;
- Want to protect the natural environment, with a balance between nature and business;
- A huge business draw is the natural beauty, recreation opportunities and lifestyle for employees;
- Should be actively pursuing an increase to the BC Hydro Grant-in-lieu of taxes;
- If the proposed Site C project proceeds then many employees may be drawn to live in Fort St. John;
- Hudson's Hope draws aging baby boomers looking for this type of lifestyle;
- Housing prices are high for young families wanting to relocate here;
- Need to prepare "solutions" for BC Hydro to become a better corporate citizen; and
- Although Talisman and other oil and gas companies do not operate with the boundaries of Hudson's Hope they still have a stake in the community.

Ron Trepanier and Sue Kenny will be continuing their research and will be reporting back to Council in January, 2010 with the final report

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 am.

Certified Correct:

Clerk

Mayor