

**FORT WILLIAM FIRST NATION
CHIEF and COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
FEB 4, 2026 – 5:30 p.m.**

CHAIR: Chief Michele Solomon

COUNCILLORS: Bess Legarde, Sherry Pelletier, Jacob McKay, Bonnie Pelletier, Sheldon Bannon, Desiree Sheilds-Morriseau, Sherry Pelletier, Jennelle Charlie (zoom) Yvette Greenwald, Kyle MacLaurin (zoom), Peter Collins (zoom) Brian Ludwisgen (zoom 6:45pm)

STAFF: CEO-Jeremiah Windego, Exec. Assistant to CEO Melissa Zeleny, CFO-Sandra Buosi

REGRETS: Leo Bannon

AGENDA – Call Meeting to Order – Chair called meeting to order at 5:45. With prayer by Chief Michele Solomon

Requesting to add the agenda two items: U11 & U15 LNHL Hockey Requests will be added to the agenda today.

Request to add Legal Fees on the agenda for today’s meeting. Request to add Legal Fees – total for legal fees we have paid for this Council’s Term broken down by year. Legal Fee analysis shared in March of 2025.

Request for an Outstanding Council Agenda Items added back onto the bottom of the agenda

Request to have briefing notes to go along with any items that are listed on the agenda.

Action Item: Request to add State of Emergency as a Standing Agenda Item on Regular Meeting – brief update can be provided on regular meeting days (not Governance Meeting Days)

Action Item: Request to have updates from HR when staff are hired and/or leave the organization.

MOTION #1 – Moved by Bess Legarde, seconded by Sheri Pelletier to accept the agenda for today with the addition of agenda items U11/U15 LHNL Donation Request and Legal Fees for this term. **All those in favour. Motion Carried**

Public Council Meetings – edits to be made to the policy, goal to provide an opportunity for public meeting for those who do not have access to internet. Jeremiah did have a meeting with APS to let them know that we would be notifying them of our schedule and asked if they could have a police presence.

Meeting minutes -what meeting should they be discussed at regular meeting or governance meeting? Currently they are on every meeting agenda because they can add up if they are on the agenda.

Action Item: Add Director Reports onto the Agenda - to have a draft report ready for March 1, options for community to provide feedback at the Departmental Showcase, options in the newsletter to get feedback from community (forms also available online) opportunity for staff to provide feedback, opportunities for leadership to provide feedback which will guide the workplans. Monthly reporting beginning in April. Directors and Managers come and present the budgets and work plans.

Mountain Revitalization – Chief had query about the removal of the cross she will share the question and information.

AGENDA ITEM – ORNGE Agreement

Medical First Response – all first response programs previous had medical oversight by Lake of the Woods Hospital – ORNGE now has oversight of all first response programs in the province, since taking over they have completely revamped the

program. ORNGE has identified that they will be working in phases to establish the first response programs. 5 first nations established in their medical first response in the first year (focusing on First Nations who currently have no access to emergency care) Fort William is not on that list, despite being fully established and operational with Medical First Response Team.

This was always a volunteer service it was never paid positions- there was never funding for the first response staffing. Original agreement was only inclusive of funding for supplies and gasoline. We currently do not have any funding, however are continuing to look for various funding opportunities. This agreement is going require some political intervention. We did not get a copy of the draft agreement until October 30th and it was supposed to be instated by October 1. Our lawyer made recommendations which have been forwarded to Ornge, they assured us we would have a response by Monday. Administration met with our first responders on Friday they currently have limited abilities until we get this agreement signed. We now have to draft a letter to the Minister of Health.

What would the cost be to continue paying them – we have no funding after March 1st. full complement may be in the realm of Numbers of the full cost and compliment for staff.

It would be helpful for Council to know the statistics of response calls and scope of what our Medical First Response –

Emergency Management Assistant Program – ISC
Service agreements with local DSAP,

Could we set up an agreement with St. John’s ambulance or another company...could we add that Administration bring forward a plan on what the costs would look like running past March (budget)

council is in support of a letter to the Ministry of Health to ask them for funding to and moved it over to ORNGE – and look at shared responsibility costs between the Ministry of Health and ISC. We need response here for our people.

AGENDA ITEM # 2– DONATION POLICY

CFO- Sandra Buosi – Youth Recreation Program Policy Sandra made all the suggested changes as noted in last weeks meeting. The new language is noted in red text. Added proof of attendance for travel events. Payment Process – milage and meal reimbursements can be requested in advance of travel.

Question: Budget – last year 2024 calendar year \$53,717, there were 118 children who accessed bingo balls in Fort William First Nation.

In 2025 – 106 children accessed the Bingo Balls program

There 566 registered children overall.

We will need to have a budget for the amount of children we have with room to add onto that. \$60,000 had been allocated for the Bingo Balls Program, and we have never exceeded that amount.

The additional funds would come from the Boundary Trust Income or other funding sources that are available – and the community would need to be informed.

Fort William First Nation and Community Support Policy – request to Sandra to add to that this is a one-time donation and addition to include that Council Members can access this as well.

Suggestion to put a cap on donations to Hockey Donations.

Request to get the financial numbers from Bingo Balls– how many boxes of bingo balls are sold on the nights of the bingo per day.

Motion to Accept the Youth Recreation Policy with the suggested edits to keep the budget as it currently is with the suggestion to bring the possible increased budget back to community, this motion did not get seconded.

Continue to operate as Status Quo – until the Youth Recreation Policy can be ratified and voted upon.

Bring this item back 2 weeks from now.

AGENDA ITEM – CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY (IN-CAMERA)

Peter Collins and Sherry Pelltier declared themselves in conflict for the CONFLICT of INTEREST POLICY and left meeting

AGENDA ITEM – WARMING SHELTER (DID NOT GET TO THIS ITEM)