

Tagish Advisory Council
Monthly Public Council Meeting
September 5, 2019 @ 7.00pm.
MINUTES

Call to Order at 7:05pm

Attendance: Myron Penner (Chair)
Bonnitta Ritchie
Cheryl Goulet

Regrets: Rick Halladay

Delegations/Speakers:

Travis Ritchie - Yukon Energy
Zoe Morrison - Stantec
Jamie Davignon - Stantec
Kirsti DeVries – Community Affairs, Government of Yukon
MLA John Streicker

Adoption of Agenda (Moved by Cheryl / Seconded by Myron)

Adoption of Minutes from July 2019 (M Myron / S Cheryl)

Delegations

RCMP Monthly Report

- New members Cst. Caron and Cst. Lavalee. No members present

Yukon Energy / Stantec – Southern Lakes Enhanced Storage Concept

- Travis Ritchie, Yukon Energy (YEC), and Zoe Morrison – a community planner Stantec hired to do one last round of community engagement. They are preparing a “What We Heard” report expected to be completed in early 2020
- Southern Lakes Enhanced Storage concept – the purpose is to increase renewable energy in the winter and thus reduce consumption of diesel use for electricity. YEC is seeking to change its water license to allow for higher lake levels in fall and winter (within natural fluctuating range)
- YEC says higher water in Southern Lakes would create enough energy to power 500 homes (generate an additional 6.5 gigawatt hours), and reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions
- Since 2009, YEC has looked at mitigation measures at properties that would be impacted by the project, particularly looking at groundwater and erosion. Some properties will have longer saturation of groundwater. If the project is approved/water license changed, YEC would pay for mitigation – cost \$1.2 million (eg. sump pumps, raise septic fields) for 57 properties impacted (9 in Tagish – along Johns Rd and both sides of Tagish Bridge). To prevent erosion, mitigation would largely involve rip-rap and cost YEC \$6 million (69 properties affected – 34 in Tagish, from end of Reid Rd. and Taku Subdivision).
- YEC has commissioned studies on impacts on fish and wildlife which conclude there would be minimal damage. These studies were competitively tendered.
- YEC has had discussions with KDFN, TKC, CTFN about the impacts on First Nations land

- YEC is looking at an approach called “adaptive management”, where acceptable limits of impacts would be established then issues addressed. Travis said this was in the preliminary stage and that monitoring would probably be done by an independent monitoring consultant jointly selected by YEC and impacted First Nations
- Travis said that in order to get an amendment to water license, the project would need a YESAA application through Whitehorse or Teslin office. He anticipated there would be training opportunities offered to First Nations for studies, and anticipated for monitoring
- There was discussion about whether future climate change was part of calculation. Travis said YEC thinks about it (water is our fuel – 90% of fuel source), and about rate, flow in power plants through hydrology studies. John Streicker said despite the glacier system melting appreciably, it doesn’t necessarily mean there will be less water, but likely greater variability: some years there will more precipitation and there will bigger swings (more floods).
- There have been different forms of engagements since 2009 – 2 rounds with property owners affected by erosion; technical reviews by affected First Nations
- Zoe said the focus of this engagement process is to see what Yukoners feel about the project and talk to property owners
- Community meetings are planned for Tagish on Oct. 2, 5:30pm – 730pm; public surveys will be distributed during October – November (there will be 2 surveys: a Yukon-wide survey and a Southern Lakes survey), with a letter and mailer to Southern Lakes residents

LAP/HPA Update (Paul Dabbs)

- Paul reported on continuing delays with LAP and HPA plans
- John Streicker said he would put in a request to find out where things are with the YG on HPA and attempt to get a sense of a timeframe, and will share with Paul and TAC when he gets information. Paul says there is no timeframe – that the draft plans are still in the process of being written and the issue is government to government (YG and FNs). John Streicker said there could be other issues behind the scenes

TVFD Report (Myron Penner)

- This Saturday September 7th at 11am, there is a BBQ appreciation for Tagish fire volunteers
- There are 3 official members at present; 2 new members are in training and 2 planning to join in October
- Myron would like 10-12 volunteers. Now is a good time to get involved with training started
- Myron heard Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) talk in Dawson. Tagish is in a tough situation because of the risk of forest fire. He said in a forest fire scenario, it would be hard to help residents protect their property and evacuate – particularly because of the large number of seniors. The TVFD wants to know who can help out during large scale emergencies. Mailchimp might be a good way to communicate for emergencies, and to help identify people who could help.

Community Services advisor Kirsti Devries

- Solid Waste update – Dave Albisser, YG Community Operations, will be back in Tagish this fall for an update

MLA John Streicker

- The government made a decision to host a public meeting around wildland fire and decided to do 2 things in communities this fall: take Wildland firefighters and look strategically to reduce risk (eg. cutting down trees) – not reducing fuel but making locations where Wildland Fire could operate, and develop updated Emergency Plan for all the communities (many are out of date)
- Southern Lakes Forest Management Plan is in the final stages of public engagement

New Business:

Brush clearing along Tagish Road

- MLA Streicker passed along a map – described a contract that closed yesterday for clearing in 3 sections (including around Crag Lake and Tagish Estates). He said Highways and Public Works (HPW) picked Tagish to start a comprehensive brushing in the communities. He said a mailer was sent to 400 mailboxes on Tagish Road that brushing would happen in August. There was discussion that lots of residents didn't receive mailer (Crag Lake residents tend to use Carcross or Whitehorse mailboxes).
- John said he started hearing concerns from Crag Lake residents when they noticed Castlerock workers marking areas, bringing in bobcats. John said he wasn't able to see the contract on the tender management system, but the plan – in these three sections – was to brush 20 metres out from the centre line of the road.
- John talked to HPW Minister Mostyn. John said that before any cutting happens, the contractor will talk to Minister Mostyn. The motivation is road safety, but there are concerns that extensive brushing may create other problems and reduce safety.
- There was discussion about the need for clearing in highway 100 kph zones, and that maybe there should be lower speed limit around Crag Lake.
- There was discussion about brushing leading to more animals in the area near the road and more invasive species of plants
- There was discussion that clearing in some of more sensitive, special areas could lead to erosion. Anne Middler said she stopped a heavy equipment operator, but some damage was already done.
- Myron said that the last brushing job on Reid Road near the Transfer Station left a huge mess on the road and shoulders which could be unsafe to drivers. He said there is a need to inspect and follow up on these types of jobs, and that other jurisdictions levy fines for substandard work.
- Paul asked whether the brushing contract went through YESAA (John said it did not) and whether it is necessary in a highway Right of Way.
- John said that he would know from Minister Mostyn the approach road engineers would talk to try to reduce the 20 metre brushing from the centre line
- John committed to asking HPW to come and talk to the community (through TAC and SKLAC) before any work happens
- Paul said that a 100 metre riparian zone (environmentally protected) was identified by LAP process. He also said CTFN wants to create a heritage trail from Carcross to Tagish and want to protect land from lakeshore to highway ditch. John committed to bringing this matter to HPW's attention.
- Leslie said that Castlerock left debris on road and shoulder which could puncture tires. John said there is a set of standards contractors are required to follow, but that he will share concerns about quality of the work.
- Paul said Minister Mostyn spoke about doing this robust clearing of 5000 km near Yukon communities. Hopefully HPW will learn from Tagish – they will get in trouble in other parts of the territory if they continue with this approach of brushing before consulting. Not one-sized fits all. HPW should do an assessment in communities
- John said Marsh Lake was brushed first and that communities have different relationships with the road. Watson Lake was happy with full clearing. But every community wants a quality job, with appropriate distances given local concerns
- John said he believed HPW didn't think this was a big issue, and are not used to engaging on brushing. HPW is motivated in the belief it will improve safety. But we need to get HPW exposed to other ways of thinking.

- Gisela said wide clearing will make people drive faster, and it will be more dangerous to walk on the highway near Crag Lake – her local street
- John’s conclusion and his commitment: that everyone is concerned about safety, about inspections to ensure work is properly done, about width of clearing in 2 sections (Crag Lake section; section 6 mile to the bridge; overlaps with riparian area in LAP and other areas like cemetery) and he is asking HPW to take time to talk to community. John took emails to keep people up to date

MOTION ADOPTED: That Tagish Advisory Council write a letter to the Minister with respect to brushing (M Bonnitta / S Cheryl)

Public Access to California Beach (Cheryl)

- Cheryl said that the 5 public access points to the beach have had signage and markers removed repeatedly and access blocked. This past weekend she encountered visitors who couldn’t find public access to the beach. She thinks signage should be replaced or one good access path like Carcross developed (perhaps with washrooms, garbage bins and other infrastructure).
- John said he was meeting with Army Beach (Marsh Lake) residents in a neighbourhood meeting to determine where to develop with a path, stairs, etc. Tagish may want to take a similar approach to find a solution that is good for the community, respectful of the neighbourhood and supports tourism. John asked if TAC thought this was an infrastructure priority.
- Paul said this was an identified issue in LAP process, but there wasn’t an identified location. He was concerned about allowing unused access points becoming private property
- Leslie, who lives on California Beach, noticed signs and posts removed, that people park in access trail to prevent people coming in. She said the area needed garbage cans, washrooms. Not much littering.
- Anne said that developing any tourist parking or path needed to ensure dunes were protected
- John said that beach users need to pack out garbage and not depend on YG to pick up garbage. John said he would be willing to help organize a neighbourhood discussion, after Army Beach meeting

Forest Management Plan BBQ Aug 27 (Bonnitta)

- Bonnitta attended.

Liquor Act consultation

- John said to expect a rewrite of Liquor Act to be tabled during fall session of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. This has been a 2 year process and the biggest thing is building social responsibility throughout the Act

Old Business:

Tagish boat launch outhouses (Bonnitta)

- Ice cream vendor talked to Bonnitta with concerns about outhouses maintenance and about having 2 concrete outhouses installed at the boat launch
- Kirsti asked about complaint (messiness) and checked with and requested 2nd washroom to Parks Yukon regional supervisor
- John talked to ice cream vendor. She was willing to sell front piece of land to Parks Yukon at fair market value. He suggested TAC could write a letter supporting expanding parking there
Bonnitta shared the history that TAC wrote a letter about buying this land.
- Paul said that there are reasons against more parking there (safety; access for emergency vehicles).
- Bonnitta didn’t think TAC should push to buy land at this time, since the LAP and HPA need to be finalized, but supports a second outhouse.

California Beach cleanup

- Dangerous dock was removed, but contractor left a mess on the beach in June. Cheryl took pictures.
- Kirsti will do follow up
- John and Myron took a look a month ago and it looked good from their perspective

Vacancy on Tagish Advisory Council (Bonnitta)

- 3 people interested (Leslie Kerr, Anne Middler, someone who expressed interest via email)
- Could be an election (we are one year from full TAC election fall 2020)
- Interested residents should send an expression of interest to tacadmin@tagishyukon.org
- Bonnitta mentioned to James Smith that a space on council is reserved for a CTFN member. James said that someone may be available for fall 2020

Carcross Community Comprehensive Plan (Bonnitta)

- Bonnitta has been attending meetings and distributed pamphlets

Financial:

- May, June, July Bank Reconciliation
- Invoices to be Paid:
 - i. Andrew Whittaker admin work (July-Aug 2019) 800.00
 - ii. Andrew Whittaker admin expenses and printing (April – Sept) 240.00
 - iii. TCA rent (Sept 2019) 200.00
 - iv. AYC membership dues 250.00
 - v. Council Q2 honoraria:
 - Myron Penner 125.00
 - Bonnitta Ritchie 325.00
 - Cheryl Goulet 200.00
 - Rick Halladay 100.00

1. Correspondence:

- Off-Road Vehicles What We Heard document
- Various Carcross Community Comprehensive Plan
- BYTE federal election event Sept 4 Carcross
- Biz Chat Sept 10 Carcross
- First Aid Training Sept 23-24 Carcross

2. Question Period

3. Adjournment 10:06pm