



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

**ADOPTED SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES**

Monday, June 6, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor R. Alty,  
Councillor S. Morgan,  
Councillor J. Morse,  
Councillor C. Mufandaedza,  
Councillor S. Payne,  
Councillor R. Silverio,  
Councillor S. Smith, and  
Councillor R. Williams.

**City Staff:** S. Bassi-Kellett,  
D. M. Gillard,  
C. MacLean,  
K. Thistle,  
C. White,  
G. White,  
S. Woodward, and  
S. Jovic.

1. Councillor Silverio read the Opening Statement.

**AWARDS, CEREMONIES AND PRESENTATIONS**

2. There were no awards, ceremonies or presentations.

**DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

3. There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

**DELEGATIONS PERTAINING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

4. Council heard a presentation from Tamlin Gilbert regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus on Tin Can Hill. Mr. Gilbert noted that City Council has only been given one week to deliberate on the Memorandum of Understanding being presented by the GNWT and decide whether or not they are in favour of the development of the only truly undeveloped piece of land adjacent to Great Slave Lake in Yellowknife. Mr. Gilbert further noted that he is concerned that Council, as our elected representatives, are not being given all of the information regarding



prospective locations for a new university building. Mr. Gilbert question why only one location was proposed and questioned what other locations were considered and why they were inferior choices. Mr. Gilbert noted that there is a lack of transparency that will lead to an erosion of trust and faith in the government.

5. Council heard a presentation from Dr. Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus on Tin Can Hill. Dr. Irlbacher-Fox noted that she has a PhD from Cambridge University and is the current President of the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies. Dr. Irlbacher-Fox noted that she is not affiliated with Aurora College. Dr. Irlbacher-Fox further noted that communication about Tin Can Hill as a location has not gone very well and opposition from residents who see themselves as adversely affected is completely understandable. Dr. Irlbacher-Fox stated that a university and existing uses of Tin Can Hill can co-exist. She further stated that it must be a campus that is land-based, including a body of water to ensure Indigenous students and their culture are honoured and valued, and that Tin Can Hill holds potential for a public institution. Dr. Irlbacher-Fox advised that a Yellowknife campus is sustainable and cautioned that the City can't afford to reject a Yellowknife campus. She further advised that the City also cannot afford to establish a campus that cannot expand, such as a downtown office building.
6. Council heard a presentation from Allan Gofenko regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill. Mr. Gofenko noted that he is the creator of a petition that, in 7 days, got over 640 signatures. Mr. Gofenko stated that this MOU was done in a hush-hush way. Mr. Gofenko stated that signing the MOU would identify Tin Can Hill as the intended site for the polytechnic. Mr. Gofenko stated that the GNWT has failed to consult residents about this proposal.
7. Council heard a presentation from Greg Cameron regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus on Tin Can Hill. Mr. Cameron noted that an Aurora Campus is long overdue and that now is the time for all levels of governments to have conversations with residents. Mr. Cameron further noted that discussions about the proposed location were done behind closed doors and that is unacceptable. Mr. Cameron stated that there are other sites available and that the GNWT should be seeking feedback from residents. Mr. Cameron further stated that it would be an injustice taking away a portion of Tin Can Hill without public consultation.
8. Council heard a presentation from Tyler Morehouse regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus on Tin Can Hill. Mr. Morehouse noted that the entire interior of Tin Can Hill will be gone. Mr. Morehouse





further noted that Council is giving 74 acres of land, an area the size of downtown Yellowknife, to Aurora College for free, which is unacceptable.

9. Council heard a presentation from Amanda Sharma regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus on Tin Can Hill. Mrs. Sharma noted that, as a resident of the Con Mine area and a daily user of the Tin Can Hill recreation site, she strongly believes that this would be a poor location for a university campus, and feels that Council should deny this request from the GNWT. Mrs. Sharma provided the following reasoning: Recreation and mental health; Downtown revitalization and use of existing spaces; Impact on surrounding neighbourhoods; and Damage to green space and threat to wildlife.

#0109-22

10. Councillor Smith moved,  
Councillor Morse seconded,

**That, pursuant to s.53(3) of Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, as amended, the time allowed for the presenter be extended by up to two minutes.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

11. Mrs. Sharma continued her presentation regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill. Mrs. Sharma noted that Council can take the old, abandoned lots and buildings in the downtown to restore them into a modern centre for learning.
12. Council heard a presentation from Libby Macphail regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus on Tin Can Hill. Ms. Macphail noted that the MOU establishes values of transparency and collaboration that will set a good foundational relationship between the GNWT and the City. Ms. Macphail further noted that the MOU clearly outlines future steps- so residents know what to expect and know how they can have their thoughts heard during the City's approval process. Ms. Macphail stated that the transferring of Tin Can Hill (assessed at \$2,112,680) to the GNWT for free (a Government that already owes the City \$12 Million) seems fiscally imprudent, given the lack of Community Engagement with the public so far. Ms. Macphail used a case study example from Portage College that served the region where she grew up in Northern Alberta to provide information on financial unsustainability of distinct college campuses. She noted that huge sums of deferred maintenance for big, distinct campuses can adversely affect universities' ability to pay for other things.



- #0110-22      13.      Councillor Williams moved,  
Councillor Mufandaedza seconded,

**That, pursuant to s.53(3) of Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, as amended, the time allowed for the presenter be extended by up to two minutes.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

14.      Ms. Libby Macphail continued her presentation regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill. Ms. Macphail asked Council to make the downtown-gown connection recommending the University of Winnipeg and Wilfrid Laurier's Brantford Campus as a model to follow as her preferred approach. Ms. Macphail further asked Council to provide the downtown with a kickstart to revitalization.
15.      Council heard a presentation from Robert Warburton, a representative of the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce, regarding the proposed Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill. Mr. Warburton noted that the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce is a strong proponent of the Aurora College Transformation project. He further noted that they are happy to see the project moving forward with the selection of a location for the Yellowknife campus. He stated that they support creating a sustainable polytechnic institution with relevant programming to meet local labour needs, to capture more Northern and Arctic research dollars, and attract international and southern students. He further stated that the Tin Can Hill location provides opportunity for future expansion and growth. He advised that Tin Can Hill's proximity to the downtown provides for a central distinct campus model that is attractive to perspective students and that this location is a step in the right direction toward further downtown revitalization efforts.

**INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Special Governance and Priorities Committee Report for May 30, 2022**

16.      Councillor Silverio read a report of a meeting held on Monday, May 30, 2022 at 12:05 p.m. via webcast.
- #0111-22      17.      Councillor Silverio moved,  
Councillor Payne seconded,

**That Council direct Administration to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of the City of Yellowknife with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Aurora**





**College regarding the location of a Polytechnic University  
Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill.**

- #0112-22      18.      Councillor Morse moved,  
Councillor Mufandaedza seconded,

**That the MOU be amended by adding:**

**5(h): New development should complement the natural setting through the careful siting of buildings, protection of existing vegetation, provision of landscaping and connections to a public trail system.**

**MOTION TO AMEND CARRIED  
(Councillor Smith opposed)**

19.      Council recessed at 8:30 p.m. and reconvened at 8:40 p.m.
20.      Council continued its discussion regarding a motion to direct Administration to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of the City of Yellowknife with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Aurora College regarding the location of a Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill.
21.      Those opposed to the motion stated that the City is missing an opportunity to revitalize its downtown. Those opposed to the motion further noted that they are supporting residents who are against the MOU.
22.      Those in favour of the motion stated that northern students deserve a beautiful campus that is integrated with the natural settings and trails and open spaces. Those in favour of the motion further stated that the City is maintaining control of this land and the planning through the Zoning By-law and Land Administration By-law. Those in favour of the motion noted that residents will have the opportunity to provide feedback through the Zoning and Development process. Those in favour of the motion further noted that the university plan would preserve public space at Tin Can Hill.

**MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED CARRIED  
(Councillor Smith opposed)**




ADJOURNMENT

- #0113-22      23.      Councillor Smith moved,  
Councillor Silverio seconded,

That the Meeting be adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

AC/   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

