

FOCUSED ON FARO

MARCH 2024

CARPET BOWLING TOURNAMENT



Pictures by Sally Lee Baker

The Carpet Bowling Tournament on February 17 was well attended with 6 teams playing at the Rec Center. This event was sponsored by New Horizon's for Seniors, the Faro Seniors Groups and the Town. It is always nice to see the community coming together for some friendly competition. If you are interested in this low-impact sport, join the Seniors Carpet Bowlers on Tuesday and/or Thursday afternoon at the Rec Center from 1-2:30pm.

Council Meetings

Council Chamber is open to the public. The Next Regular Meetings are:

March 5, 2024

March 19, 2024

April 9, 2024

Note: Meeting schedule subject to change by Council Resolution

Copies of meeting agendas are posted at the Town Office, Post Office, and faro.ca.

The Public Package will be available on the Town's Website at the time of the meeting at:

faro.ca/p/council-meetings

Remote Attendance is available with the Zoom App.

To join a Zoom Meeting go to :

<https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 506 321 8045

Passcode: 641202



TOWN HALL

COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATION



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Jack Bowers

First the bad news: When the dust settles, we will experience an actual deficit this year for the first time any of us here can recall. The final amount is still to be determined and was planned when we developed the 2023 Operating Budget.

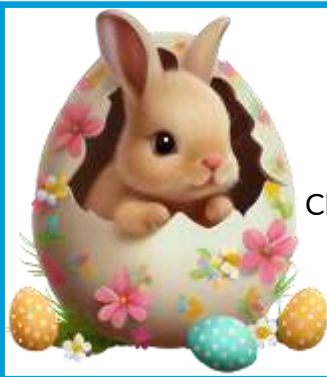
Now for the good news: When we, your Council, developed last year's budget we planned for additional staff and funding for several capital purchases to better equip the Town to do the necessary work that seemed to keep on increasing year after year. With cash reserves including unappropriated surpluses and dedicated reserves totaling \$3.5m, we were prepared to spend some of our surplus to get the work done. In many ways, Council's role is that of a facilitator. Our job is to make sure our Town's staff have the tools and resources necessary to provide safe and secure services to the residents while maintaining our infrastructure.

I must say I am proud of our Administration, Council, and Managers for the way we worked as a team by pulling together to develop this year's budget. It was, in some ways, a painful process as we worked hard to find ways to reduce expenses while increasing revenues. I mentioned before, in previous reports, of the efforts that the Association of Yukon Communities has been making on our behalf to engage with our Minister of Community Services and negotiate a new formula for the calculation of the Comprehensive Municipal Grant (CMG) following last year's study of the grant's development as led by Cory Bellmore. We are hopeful this review will be completed in time for it to be used in each community's budget development for the 2025 fiscal year.

For this year's budget, however, we were compelled to delay or drop some projects or capital purchases. We must also replace one of our ageing fire trucks next year. Replacement costs for new fire trucks have doubled to something near \$800,000 compared to what costs were pre-pandemic. And there is a two year wait from the time it is ordered. Of course, it must be paid for in advance.

We have other challenges to face this year, too, including resolving the regional landfill agreement and finding ways to minimize the damage to our streets by the next phase of construction scheduled for this year along Bell Avenue between the School and the Recreation Center. Council appreciates your feedback on issues involving the Town and we encourage you to contact either your favorite Councillor or our CAO, Larry Baran.

We will keep you posted.



EASTER HOURS



Town Office

Closed Friday, March 29 and Monday April 1 for the Easter Holiday.

Landfill

The Landfill will be open Good Friday - Friday, March 29.

Closed Saturday, March 30 - Monday, April 1.

Open Regular Business Hours Tuesday, April 2.

MESSAGE FROM THE CAO

Larry Baran

It wasn't built in a day ...

I have found that one of the most difficult tasks that parents need to teach children is the importance of making a decision. 'Deciding to decide' is difficult, even as an adult, because not making a decision often creates a new set of problems.

It is important to be reminded that, when we celebrate completion of some municipal projects, those projects may have been initiated years before. For example, even though we grumble about the painful progress of underground infrastructure work now being completed in the Town, those projects were green-lighted many years before. Funding had to first be confirmed, then there was engineering design, changes due to budgets, then tenders, then actual construction.

I remember, while working in a small community in the NWT, we were rebuilding roads and adding wooden boardwalks so the elders didn't have to walk down the middle of the roads. One of the local residents expressed his approval and asked when we decided to do all that work. He was surprised when I said that the decision had been made about 2 years prior.

I was again reminded of this long process when I was recently researching some information from a previous set of minutes. I came upon this resolution from May 2021:

Resolution 21-194

Be it resolved that Council approves the priority list and ranks them in that priority order:

1. *Council Procedural Bylaw and Code of Conduct*
2. *Regulate the Conduct of Municipal Elections Bylaw Review & Update*
3. *New - Human Resources Policy Review - Bullying & Harassment*
4. *Lagoon Desludging*
5. *Develop a Curb Stop Program*
6. *Buried Tanks Removal/ Replacement*
7. *Develop Lease Agreement for Town Properties*
8. *Abandoned Property Sale Program - Compliance & Building Commitment*

The other priorities are either in progress or not started yet.

As residents may note, some of these items were completed in 2021, 2022, or 2023, and some will be completed in 2024. Other projects changed in scope, like the Lagoon Desludging was changed to an enzyme treatment process that cost a lot less and works very well.

The *previous* Council set some goals and objectives for the Town to address, which took the immediate burden off the *current* Council right

after they were elected in late 2021. Some projects are required, while some projects are by choice. Now, as *this* Council works to finalize the 2024 O&M budgets and prepare the 2024-2027 Capital Budget, they will be lifting some of the burden from the *next* Council after their election and as they become oriented and develop a full understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Certainly, the next Council will have the opportunity and authority to change any of those goals but, in the interim, recognizing that it often takes months, if not years, to reach some objectives, the Town will continue to move forward.

In the next few weeks, Council will approve budgets that will confirm some projects to be completed this year, as well as initiate projects that may take a year or more to complete. I have always believed this sort of Strategic Planning assists each subsequent Council, as well as ensures the Town doesn't get caught in a *waiting game* for someone to make a decision. As the Town's CAO, I am grateful that Town staff can work on the needed projects to ensure Faro is always a secure and progressive community, regardless of the size. Whether 600 people, or 1,600 people, Town Staff want residents to be safe and cared for.

PUBLIC WORKS & OPERATIONS UP-DATES



MESSAGE FROM THE OPERATIONS MANAGER

Mark Vainio

Public Works Crew

- ◆ Our Contract Engineers have almost completed the new plans for our Distribution Pump-house Backup Generator. There is a 32-week lead time to receive the new generator which is fine as we have many projects to do this summer. We'll have this completed sometime in the fall.
- ◆ Water Well #5 Replacement Project has completed the YESAB process with no conditions (rare event), so it should pass through the Regulators fairly quickly. This will be our spring/summer project.
- ◆ We also have a project cleaning up the power to our Water Treatment Plant and our Water Wells. These projects are leftovers from YG that were not completed or left in an unsafe condition, in 2017/2018.
- ◆ Norcope will be back again this year to complete Phase 2. There is no schedule or plan yet as to when they will complete the work.
- ◆ The Town of Faro will be managing our projects with local workers and contractors. If this continues to prove successful, we'd like to project manage as much of our own infrastructure work as possible.



Focused on Faro

Landfill Operations

- ◆ Satellite communication for payment and computer access has been installed and is working.
- ◆ This year we'll be drilling 3 new monitoring wells, replacing one failed well and completing a Hydrogeological Study at our Landfill to meet Regulators requirements.
- ◆ In 2024, we'll be training some of our crew on Solid Waste Management and do some more improvements on how we handle our solid waste.



Community Services Building (PWFH)

- ◆ Hopefully the Fire Department will be able to move in soon; we are still waiting on some electrical work which is happening right now. Manual Overhead Door overrides are installed.
- ◆ Radio & telephone are installed in the new building and SCADA is moved now.
- ◆ Public Works is mostly moved into the new building. We are finding deficiencies as we move along and dealing with them. It has been a long, painful and stressful process but we're working through it.

Infrastructure Upgrades

- ◆ Completion of Phase 2 and Phase 3 design discussions were to be undertaken this winter and we've made it clear we will be intimately involved, from the start, to ensure Town interests are protected. Phase 2 discussions are underway with some Town involvement, but no mention of Phase 3 yet.

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Projects

- ◆ Ladue Drive property update - Yukon Lands Branch has hired Surveyors to replace missing property pins and Yukon Energy to do the power line installation. Ditching, culvert and driveway installation to be undertaken by Town of Faro. This work will likely all happen this spring to be ready for a sale later in the year.
- ◆ Future property development may include Lower Douglass or Rose Crescent.
- ◆ The Town of Faro has been developing a local Contractor List to assist us in upcoming projects in collaboration with Yukon Govt or with our own projects. The Town of Faro will accept applicants throughout the year.
- ◆ Construction of a new Animal Shelter will be happening in the spring.



Snow Removal

- ◆ We're pulling snow off the streets now and hauling snow away to our snow dumps. Please be sure you haven't parked boats, trailers etc. in our snow dumps. Avoid parking on the streets especially during the day. In some areas, particularly Douglass and Yates, we'll be pulling as much snow out of the ditches as possible to minimize damage from runoff once the melt starts.

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EMERGENCY PRACTICE IN FARO

Many residents may have already read the article in the Yukon News but, on January 25th, the Town of Faro hosted about 25 people to participate in a municipal emergency tabletop exercise.

A 'tabletop' exercise means that everyone gathers around a table (in this case, about 15 tables in a large U-shape) to talk about how to respond to a certain series of emergency problems. In most cases, our local emergency responders are able to respond to the problems that might crop up in Faro but, when the event becomes larger and exceeds the local response capability, we need to call in Territorial resources and it becomes a serious emergency.

For this exercise, we had Cody Goulin of Yukon EMO come in and lead the exercise. Cody proposed a scenario that developed in three phases, starting with a simple situation where some campers around Drury Creek were asked to leave due to a small wildfire near the campground that was also blocking the Robert Campbell Highway to Carmacks. Of course, those folks came to Faro. Over the course of the exercise, as the pretend situation developed with each scenario addition that Cody proposed, the situation

eventually got so bad that Faro had to be evacuated.

While, in real-life, the exercise discussions took place over a 3 hour period, but the pretend scenario covered about a week of progressively worsening events. It was a great opportunity for the local and regional emergency responders to talk about how they would coordinate with EMO offices in Whitehorse, as well as access resources around us. Parsons, Boreal, Yukon Energy, and a number of other players were also involved in the exercise, and we learned what resources we could call into play, as well as those areas we need to know more about.

Mayor & Council participated in the exercise, and noted they appreciated the commitment of everyone to adjust their schedules to ensure attendance. At the end of the tabletop exercise, Mayor Bowers noted he would like to see the Town coordinate a 'live' exercise later this summer, where the emergency responders can practice in a more realistic scenario.

Again, the Town of Faro thanks everyone who was able to attend the Community Emergency Management Plan tabletop exercise.



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TURNING WATER SERVICES ON/OFF

As many residents in Faro know, not all properties have curb-stop water valves installed for each building. Some only have one service that provides water to more than one residence in a multi-residential building. This is a hold-over from the days when one mining company owned the buildings and they didn't care whether one or all units were filled. They simply wanted water to the building, so they paid for everything. When the mining companies left Town, many of those units were turned over to the Town and were later sold privately.

A few years ago, the Town of Faro started an expensive process of installing a separate water line with a valve located near the curb of the road. Each of these units costs about \$15,000 to purchase and install. Last year, the Town acquired a special vacuum truck to assist in speeding up this installation process. What used to take three days per curb-stop installation, now can be done in half the time or less. The challenge the Town has is there are well over 100 of these curb-stops that need to be installed. It only takes some simple budget math to understand why the Town is limiting these installations to 10 or 15 per year.

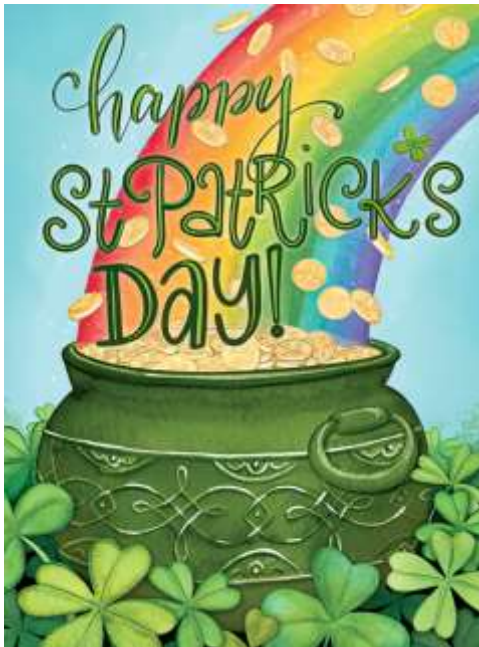
In the meantime, the Town Office needs property owners to advise us when a housing unit is put into service. The revenue generated from water-sewer-garbage invoices is used to replace older sections of the underground network and ensure the residents of Faro always have access to some of the best potable water in North America.

If you have a vacant rental unit, and we can't physically turn off the water service, please advise us and we can discontinue the invoicing. Similarly, if a vacant unit is rented, please also advise us.

COMMUNITY NOTICES



Sally Lee Baker



Landfill Hours

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9a.m. – 4p.m.
Wednesday	1p.m. – 4p.m.
Thursday	Collection Day (landfill closed)
Friday	9a.m. – 4p.m.
Saturday	9a.m. – 4p.m.
Sunday	Closed

The Landfill will be closed all holidays as per the union agreement.



FARO'S VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT IS LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS!



If you are an able bodied individual, please consider joining the Fire Department and Protecting our Community.

Contact the Town Office or Fire Chief for more information.

TOWN OFFICE

Public hours are Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm.

TOWN CONTACT INFO & STAFF DIRECTORY:

Chief Administrative Officer

Larry Baran
994-2728 ext 4
cao-faro@faroyukon.ca

Operations Manager

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GM of Finance

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Finance Clerk

Glenda Power
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The Source of official Town information and notices:

www.faro.ca

www.facebook.com/TownofFaro



KEEP CALM AND DRIVE WITH CARE

IT IS STILL WINTER

Even with the warmer weather the road conditions can change at any time. Drive safely to the conditions on the roads.



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