

DISTRICT OF BARRIERE
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday, August 27, 2025 at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers at Municipal Hall
4936 Barriere Town Road, Barriere, B.C.

*“We acknowledge and respect the indigenous peoples of Simpcw First Nation
within whose traditional lands we are meeting today.”*

Present: Mayor Rob Kerslake
Councillor Scott Kershaw
Councillor Louise Lodge
Councillor Colin McInnis – *via Zoom*
Councillor Brody Mosdell

Regrets: Councillor Judy Armstrong
Councillor Donna Kibble

Staff: Daniel Drexler, Chief Administrative Officer
Tasha Buchanan, Corporate Officer
Kathy Abel, Finance Officer
Chris Matthews, Public Works Manager
Alexis Hovenkamp, Fire Chief

Mayor Kerslake called the meeting to order at 5:30pm

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Councillor Kershaw
Seconded by Councillor Mosdell
That Council approve the August 27, 2025 SPECIAL Council Meeting Agenda.

CARRIED

2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FUND - CAPITAL – CAO

The CAO provided Council with an overview of UBCM's 2025 Strategic Priorities Fund, noting that the fund is limited to a total amount available of approx. \$130M. As previously reported, staff are proposing on applying for the maximum amount of \$7M to help fund a much-needed Fire Hall retrofit. Historically, funding for such projects is rare and due to the Fire Hall's age and the service rapidly outgrowing the Hall, including the future need of a ladder truck, pursuing this project has been identified by staff as prudent.

As outlined in the written report, a full description of the current state of the Fire Hall, projected costs of a retrofit (including the code requirements that it be built to a 'Post Disaster' classification standard, and potential tax implications to residents) were reviewed. Three construction options with financing implications were provided in the written report with 'Option 2' being identified by staff as the most feasible of the three. Further, after the production of the written report, staff explored the option of removing a bay from Option 2 which reduced the cost by approximately \$1.6M. Staff, with architect Stephen Shamchuk, have continued to identify alternative funding options and cost savings.

Discussion ensued. Key comments and questions made were as follows:

- Option 2 was generally agreed to be the best option with the expectation that the District will continue to pursue funding options and cost cuts to bring the total cost as close to the grant amount (should the District be successful with its application) of \$7M as possible in order to reduce the burden to the taxpayer wherever possible.

- The grant's funding announcements likely won't be made until the spring of 2026 with a deadline to start the project within 2 years and it be completed within 3 years after the start date.
- The Post-Disaster component may not be required for the entire proposed construction which would further reduce the cost of the build.
- Q: *If the District pursues the grant and was successful but couldn't afford the 3rd Bay, would 2 bays work?* A: Potentially, yes. However, it would likely only temporarily work for approx. 5 years or so, but another Bay will be required within 5-10 years. It would also require that the current building also continue to be utilized in some capacity to meet the Department's needs.
- Implementation of the new ACC (*Amenity Cost Charge*) legislation that recently was implemented by the Province could help generate revenue for this project was suggested to formally be explored going forward.
- Q: *Will the District need to borrow funds no matter what?* A: That is unknown. Staff will continue to explore options to reduce the total cost of the project.
- Council attendees of this year's UBCM, along with the CAO, have scheduled a meeting with UBCM to directly discuss the District's application and its importance during the Convention. While many local governments may be submitting applications for various projects, some of those applicants may have a project that will still come to fruition even if they are not successful, whereas Barriere's application for a Fire Hall retrofit, would not be possible without an awarded \$7M.

Moved by Councillor Lodge

Seconded by Councillor Kershaw

THAT Council instructs Staff to apply to the Strategic Priorities Fund – Capital Infrastructure Stream in the amount of \$7,000,000 to undertake the Fire Hall Retrofit project;

AND THAT Council instructs Staff to provide overall grant management for the project; AND FURTHER THAT Council will support any reasonable cost overruns if those should occur.

CARRIED

3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FUND - CAPACITY BUILDING / ASSET MANAGEMENT – CAO

Council was provided an overview of the written report and noted that TRUE Consulting has offered to submit the grant application on behalf of the District at no charge should Council choose to pursue the funding for the proposed projects.

It was noted that Phase 1 of the Water Master Plan has been completed, but Phase 2 is necessary in order to have a complete Plan. It was also noted that historically, this funding stream has been under-subscribed so there's a better chance of success.

Moved by Councillor Lodge

Seconded by Councillor Kershaw

THAT Council instructs Staff to apply to the Strategic Priorities Fund – Capacity Building Stream in the amount of \$265,000 to undertake the following strategic priorities and goals of Council:

- 1. Wastewater Master Plan Update**
- 2. Completion of Water Master Plan**
- 3. Asset Management Integration and Financial Planning**

AND THAT Council instructs Staff to provide overall grant management for the project; AND FURTHER THAT Council will support any reasonable cost overruns if those should occur.

CARRIED

4. **PUBLIC INQUIRIES** – *none presented.*

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor McInnis that the meeting adjourn at 6:40 p.m.

CARRIED

Mayor Rob Kerslake

T. Buchanan, Corporate Officer