

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PINCHER CREEK NO. 9
Tuesday, February 10, 2026,
11:00 am
Council Chambers

Present: Reeve Rick Lemire, Deputy Reeve Tony Bruder, Councillors John MacGarva, Jim Welsch, and Dave Cox.

Staff: CAO Roland Milligan, Director of Corporate Services Meghan Dobie, Public Works Manager Alan McRae, Utilities & Infrastructure Manager David Desabrais, Development Officer Laura McKinnon, and Executive Assistant Jessica McClelland.

Reeve Rick Lemire called the meeting to order, the time being 11:00 am.

1. Approval of Agenda

Councillor Dave Cox

Moved that the agenda for February 10, 2026, be amended to include:

4) Police Funding Model

AND THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

Carried

2. Delegations

STARS (Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society)

Jackie Seely, Donor Relations and Development Officer at STARS, attended the meeting to deliver her organization's annual presentation. She reviewed the history of STARS in Alberta and the current medical partners with whom they collaborate.

Over the past 5 years, our community has completed 89 missions. Donations, fundraising, and lotteries cover 59% of direct operational costs in Alberta. Annual costs are \$36.6 million, with a government contribution of \$15 million. 95% of Alberta Municipalities partner with STARS, including our neighbouring Municipalities.

Council questioned the difference between a fixed-wing aircraft and a helicopter, and when each would be used. Jackie explained that a fixed-wing aircraft would be used for long-distance flights or when the patient has heart or respiratory issues. A discussion took place regarding the STARS lottery, which includes donated prizes. The lottery raises approximately \$10 million for the organization.

Council discussed the plan for Lethbridge to establish a cardiac care facility and its potential impact on STARS. Jackie stated that STARS will still be needed to transport patients to the facility best suited to each patient.

The MD of Pincher Creek is currently set at \$6,000 per year, with a new request for \$7,000 as a standing motion.

The Council expressed appreciation for STARS's work in rural communities and will discuss it further at the next Council meeting.

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Jackie Seely left the meeting at 11:21 am.

Livingstone Landowners Group (LLG)

Al Garbett, with LLG attended the meeting at this time to discuss Grassy Mountain Mine.

LLG believes Northback wasn't sharing the full story about future plans for the proposed Grassy Mountain Mine. They are concerned for the impacts on the MD, including water, air and social concerns. Mr. Garbett stated that Northback plans to use water upstream, with a license purchased from the Crowsnest Pass. It is estimated to use 500 to 600 acre-feet per year, and LLG believes the water will now be contaminated by selenium leaching.

It was discussed that water is vital in southwest Alberta year-round. Our springs, dugouts, and small streams are drying up, and recent summers have seen flows in our three main rivers well below normal. The Crowsnest River, which drains the Grassy Mountain area, has at times recorded flows below 1 cubic metre per second. Mr. Garbett stated that Northback is expected to permanently divert water from the Crowsnest River drainage.

LLG considers that water runoff from Grassy Mountain will not be clean and will carry a variety of chemicals leaching from the fractured rock debris (approximately 375 metric tons over the mine's duration). The primary contaminant is selenium, although numerous other substances will also be present. LLG doesn't believe Northback's plans to ensure water safety will be sufficient to protect the water source.

Mr. Garbett highlighted the region's extreme winds, particularly along high ridges such as Grassy Mountain, which pose serious challenges for the mine and local residents. He cited extensive research from Eastern US coal-mining areas indicating that proximity to a coal mine is linked to numerous health problems affecting the lungs, heart, liver, bladder, and even the brain.

Mr. Garbett stated that the negative impacts are so well defined that researchers can predict when, after a mine opens, various health issues will appear. He stated that it takes about two years for childhood asthma to rise. Heart attacks and strokes increase after about a decade, while dementia rates rise after about 20 years. The exact mechanism through which health effects develop is not yet fully outlined. And while Northback has promised to implement dust-control measures to limit dust generation and dispersion from the mine, he reminded Council that locals can tell you what they have seen, including dust clouds from the BC mines blowing through Deadman Pass.

From a social perspective, LLG believes we already have a housing shortage. Local media have reported that professionals have been offered jobs but declined them because they could not find housing. Similarly, child care is in short supply, and new workers are likely to bring many children. Local residents are already concerned about the challenge of accessing health care. An influx of workers is not accompanied by an increase in the number of health workers. He stated that data suggest many health workers actively avoid areas with 'dirty' industry, and mining is considered 'dirty'.

Mr. Garbett questioned whether our schools can physically accommodate hundreds of new students. How many new teachers would we need? Could we recruit the necessary staff, and where would they live? In a competitive work environment, can teachers afford housing and other services that miners may also be seeking?

He mentioned that sudden influxes of workers, particularly young men, can cause social instability. This may lead to rises in violent crime, drug abuse, and social disorder. Such issues could worsen if there are disruptions in mine employment.

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LLG believes that Northback promises a relatively small number of jobs for a project that could endanger many times more jobs in agriculture. They fail to account for the greatly increased demands on our social infrastructure, including housing, health care, and education.

The Council thanked LLG for attending and will discuss this further at the next meeting.

Mr. Garbett left the meeting, the time being 12:01 pm.

3. Closed Session

Councillor Jim Welsch

Moved that the Council move into closed session to discuss the following, the time being 12:08 pm.

- a) Public Works Call Log – ATIA Sec. 29.1
- b) Name the Grader Contest – ATIA Sec. 29.1
- c) Draft Policy A-ADMIN-006 External Communications – ATIA Sec. 28.1
- d) Participation in Local Committee – ATIA Sec. 29.1

Councillor John MacGarva

Moved that Council move out of closed session, the time being 12:37 pm.

Carried

4. Police Funding

Director of Finance Meghan Dobie presented to Council the proposed changes from the Province regarding Police Funding. At this time, the Municipality doesn't know the exact amount of the funding increase and may not have those numbers before tax time, but it will be substantial. Council suggested that any information Administration has coming forward be pushed out to the public, so they are aware of the potential tax implications.

5. Round Table

- Airport Discussion
 - A video from Alberta SouthWest was shown regarding the need for rural airports
 - Discussion took place on the MD scheduling a Regional Airport Meeting
- Request from a company for where they could purchase land, with a rail system
 - Possible discussion around Pincher Station
 - MD doesn't have that amount of land
 - Suggestion to suggest to CAPTUS
- Public meeting regarding potential campground in Twin Butte area
 - Discussion around Land Use Bylaw at that meeting
 - Residents are concerned about increased development and look for the MD to add an exclusion area for that corridor

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- Gravel pit/crushing concerns
- Alberta Environment – Water Licenses notification
- Update on Rural Crime Watch

6. Adjournment

Councillor Tony Bruder

Moved that the committee meeting adjourn at 2:05 pm.

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Carried



REEVE



CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER