

NOTICE OF MOTION

To: Mayor and Council

From: Councillor Wright

Date: November 27, 2024

Subject: Notice of Motion - South Peace Mackenzie Trust Application

The date for this motion to be considered is at the December 9, 2024 Regular Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council directs staff to submit a grant application to the South Peace Mackenzie Trust with the intention of hiring a second Economic Development Worker for the municipality to work in the Corporate Service Department.

BACKGROUND:

Rationale:

1. This would allow the municipality to increase the capacity for Economic Development by having one worker focusing on tourism and internal economic support, and the second to focus on external industry recruitment and economic diversification to Mackenzie (or some other combination of these tasks based on the skills/experience/expertise of those hired.)
2. The District of Mackenzie is in an unsustainable fiscal situation with the crisis in the forest industry, with this year seeing a budget shortfall of around 1 million dollars.
3. Options discussed internally so far have focused largely on service cuts or property tax increases. But there is a third option, which is to increase revenue.
4. To increase revenue, we need to work for it. And since being elected I have repeatedly been told District of Mackenzie staff are already overworked and overcapacity with their current job responsibilities. This new position will hire someone to be able to focus on this work.
5. The South Peace Mackenzie Trust is designed to increase income earning positions in the community. Not only would this be a new income-earning position for the Municipality, but this position would be designed to bring more jobs to the area.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

1. The South Peace Mackenzie Trust covers a certain percentage of the wages. Applying for the full \$250,000 would mean we would need to cover a certain percentage as matching funds.
2. To pay for the municipalities' matching funds, this money would come from our MLMCF dividends.
3. The idea is there would be no burden on taxpayers for this project. If MLMCF dividends were not enough or earmarked elsewhere, further grant applications to the McLeod Lake Community Forests Community Grants, IREN's Community Grants, and any other granting opportunities that arise, with the intended goal of raising enough money that none of the salary and benefits would be paid for by District of Mackenzie property taxes.
4. This position would be contingent on future funding, once the SPMT funding goes away, and if no other funding sources have been identified, the position would just go away, meaning no long-term funding would be locked into this project beyond what the SPMT can fund.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

Economic Vitality:

- The District is a leader on efforts aimed at diversifying the community's economy, supporting local businesses, and attracting new investment to the community. Diversification, a strong business sector and new investment are key to our economic vitality.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Councillor Jesse Wright