

**MINUTES  
CITY OF IQALUIT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING #01  
January 20, 2015 at 6:00 PM  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**PRESENT FROM COUNCIL**

Mayor Mary Wilman  
Deputy Mayor Romeyn Stevenson  
Councillor Terry Dobbin  
Councillor Simon Nattaq  
Councillor Kenneth Bell  
Councillor Stephen Mansell  
Councillor Noah Papatsie

**ABSENT**

Councillor Joanasie Akumalik

**PRESENT FROM ADMINISTRATION**

John Mabberi-Mudonyi, A/Chief Administrative Officer  
Tracy Cooke, City Clerk  
Victoria Embree, Executive Assistant  
Jeanie Eeseemailee, Senior Interpreter/Translator

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Motion #FIN15-01**

Moved by: Councillor Dobbin  
Seconded by: Councillor Papatsie

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

**Unanimously Carried**

**1. MINUTES**

None

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None

**3. DELEGATIONS**

a) Northwest Company

Mr. Doug Anderson, Director of Sales and Operation with the Northwest Company, thanked the committee for giving him the opportunity to present. He stated that his presentation relates to community relations that the Northwest Company has entered into where one of the mandates, as a Director for the Northwest Company, is to attend community meetings, meet with different Councils, different business organizations and communities to discuss the Northwest Company and build relationships.

The company's strategy is to focus on engagement, support, employment and partnership. The Northwest Company has stores located across Canada as well as Giant Tiger stores; it offers corporate opportunities, distribution opportunities, Canada retail and international retail opportunities. One of the company's mandates is to recruit, train and give back to the communities they serve. It aims to hire members of the community to work at their stores and encourage those employees to re-invest back into the community by participating in a variety of volunteer opportunities and charitable events.

The Northwest Company strengthens its ties to the communities where they operate by supporting a diversity of organizations and charities. They are proud to partner with the Canadian and American Diabetes Associations as a charity of choice, along with United Way of Winnipeg, American Muscular Dystrophy Association, multiple Children's Hospital Foundations across Canada and choice Winnipeg organizations.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Northwest Company is proud of the active role it plays within communities. It strives to help make a positive, progressive difference within each community it serves. One of the fundamental operating principles of company is their commitment to local organizations and programs. To help make a difference in the communities they serve, they provide support to community programs and organizations, which reflect five elements of a healthy and strong community: sports and recreations, arts and culture, healthy living, environment and youth and education. The company also provides a number of sponsorships and donations to communities they serve on an annual basis.

The Northwest Company is committed to its communities and will live up to their commitments. They are open and honest, they care and are considerate to others and adapt to meet community priorities. The company provides support in many different ways but would like to hear from the community as to how they could improve their support, engagement and services.

The company launched an initiative in 2011 called "A Greener Tomorrow". The goal and objective of this initiative was to reduce and eliminate plastic bags in communities; twenty five cents per bag was being charged to customers and every dollar saved was given back to the community for different initiatives. The company provides the Nunavut Arctic College a scholarship each year for students studying in the environmental field; the scholarship is \$5,000.00 that

can be applied for the first and second year of the program. The company also participated in programs with the Aqsarniit Middle School and the City of Iqaluit on the goal to reduce plastic bags.

Mr. Anderson stated that the company also started another program approximately one year ago where all cardboard material is collected and shipped south. The company had approached the City on this matter a couple years ago to discuss what materials could be diverted from the landfill site and the fact that they were working towards being a waste free store. The company had also discussed the idea of composting with Mr. Jim Little and continues to work towards this goal.

The Northwest Company participates in the Run for Diabetes each year, across Canada; 30 individuals participated this year and raised a total of \$495,000.00. These funds are donated for research purposes towards the cause. The company also participates in other healthy living activities in Nunavut and other territories by developing healthy recipes; flyers and website information can be found on the company's Facebook page.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Iqaluit Northmart store currently employs approximately 145 individuals. They consider themselves to be one of the largest employers in the community and continue to strive for local hiring. The store is currently recruiting a Training and Hiring Manager and is working with the Nunavut Arctic College and local schools to develop a training and hiring program.

The company offers a President's Award to their employees. Employees are chosen from different categories and are offered this award when considered exceptional in their category of employment; two employees located in Iqaluit will be receiving the President's Award in 2015.

Mr. Anderson stated that he would like to meet with Council and engage the community as often as needed or requested by Council. This would create a better partnership with the community and would provide the opportunity to discuss important matters, issues or to present new ideas as to how the company could improve or increase their involvement in the community.

The company also offers gift cards, store credit cards, cheque cashing services, cash accounts, et cetera. They have also included ATM machines in some stores and share the revenue between stores. They continue to increase their pharmacies services and increase the relationships with medical practitioners. The Northwest Company also sells snowmobiles at the same price as major companies found in southern locations.

The company is often faced with challenges relating to their costs of products compared to southern costs. Individuals must realize that the company must take

into consideration the cost of electricity, cost of shipping goods and materials, storage of foods in refrigerators and freezers, et cetera. The cost to operate the Iqaluit store is much greater than the cost to operate the Giant Tiger store in Winnipeg. The inventory investment is significant and also costs a significant amount of money each year; the company orders goods through sealift in the summer months to reduce costs rather than flying goods in the winter months. The company is often a victim of product loss; either produce arrives frozen and must be disposed or outdated products due to late shipments. The cost for transportation of goods is very significant compared to southern stores and must also be considered.

Mr. Anderson stated that the company invested approximately \$7,000,000.00 in assets in Iqaluit between 2009 and 2012. The actual economic impact in 2012 indicated that the company must continue with their investments in repairs and maintenance and upgrades as the community continues to grow.

Councillor Mansell stated that the Public Safety Committee recently met with individuals representing Co-op and discussed safety issues surrounding their property. He welcomed Mr. Anderson to attend a future Public Safety Committee meeting to discuss safety issues surrounding the Northwest Company store as well as the other stores in Iqaluit.

Mr. Anderson stated that he met with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to discuss a number of issues the company has experienced at the Quickstop stores. They have completed a safety assessment and will be completing a number of visible and non-visible changes in the stores to address some of these issues.

The company has received a number of complaints, as a retailer, regarding certain activities that take place near and around the stores. There has been a significant amount of violence in the stores and the company would like to address this as soon as possible. The company has also seen a number of individuals in the stores who are simply there to warm up during the winter months as they are homeless; the company politely asks that these individuals move along elsewhere but being considerate at the same time. They would like to reduce these types of activities by implementing policies or by-laws to simply protect staff and property. He expressed his interest in meeting with the Public Safety Committee to discuss some of these issues. The company also offered their assistance to the community during emergency situations and will continue to involve themselves as much as they can to provide necessary resources during an emergency.

Mayor Wilman thanked Mr. Anderson for his presentation and believed that the City and the Northwest Company could develop a very positive relationship. The City held a public consultation relating to public safety in 2014 and asked residents for their concerns and ideas as to how they can be addressed. Many of

the residents expressed their concerns with activities surrounding the Northmart store and Quickstop stores in Iqaluit as well as the lack of lighting. These issues should also be addressed as soon as possible. She stated that the City received funding from Northmart and it was very much appreciated; two summer students were hired during the summer months for community cleanup activities.

Mr. Anderson stated that he was not aware of the lack of lighting at the northwest company stores in Iqaluit and will discuss this with other staff members to address the matter as quickly as possible. He stated that the activities surrounding the company's stores could be a community issue or a territory issue; this matter should be discussed further and addressed as needed.

Councillor Nattaq stated that the Niksiit Committee has also received funding from the Northwest Company for school programs and other community programs that the committee recommends to Council. He expressed his appreciation for the funding donations made by the Northwest Company and believed that any amount of funding was very helpful.

He noted that transportation costs in Iqaluit are very high as all goods must be shipped via air or sealift whereas southern cities have goods delivered by trucks. He wondered if the Northwest Company would be interested in assisting the City with funding the development of a seaport to use for delivery of goods and reduce transportation costs; having a deep seaport would permit the delivery of more goods to the community and would reduce the need of shipping goods via air during the winter months.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Northwest Company has a partnership with Nunavut Eastern Arctic Shipping for the shipping of goods annually. He stated that other members of the company would need to be involved in discussions regarding funding assistance for the development of a deep seaport and suggested that he be contacted in the near future by Council so that a meeting can be scheduled with the appropriate representatives from the Northwest Company. He stated that the company could sometimes offer discounts on goods purchased; these could be passed on for any programs or activities that promote healthy living or any other types of programs recommended by the Niksiit Committee or any other committee.

Councillor Dobbin expressed his appreciation for the Northwest Company's involvement in the community and across Canada. He believed that many individuals were not aware of these involvements and these should be made public and shared with residents so that they have a better appreciation of the company and its involvement in the community. He stated that all Nutrition North products purchased are not reflected on a receipt when purchased and residents often complain about not knowing where the savings are sent; perhaps the receipts could be changed to reflect the savings on the product purchased so that residents are aware that they have purchased a Nutrition North item.

Mr. Anderson stated that he would do what he can to try and accommodate the request to include in receipts the purchase of Nutrition North items. He stated that the company appreciates any recommendations or suggestions that residents or Council may have about the company's involvement or how things are currently progressing. The company is very considerate of the requirements surrounding Nutrition North and that items must be identified in stores; the company creates its own signs and posters relating to Nutrition North items.

Deputy Mayor Stevenson thanked Mr. Anderson for his presentation. He stated that Council and residents have a concern with safety issues with the Northmart store as well as Quickstop stores and hopes that these will be addressed as soon as possible. It was identified that the surveillance camera at one of the stores was not functioning when a past crime occurred. He believed that perhaps some youth in Iqaluit were of the understanding that serious crimes do not have severe punishment and hopes that this will change as crime is not tolerable.

He believed that the Northwest Company should become a sponsor of the Aquatic Centre and that this would increase their involvement in the community for healthy living activities. Toonik Tyme is also a very important event in Iqaluit and the company should also increase their presence and their involvement in the event; it will be the event's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and it will be very important. The City has also changed procedures on waste collection and separation and believed that the store should ensure that the clear waste bags are always available to residents as well as the composting bags.

He expressed his appreciation for the meat section in the store and believed that this could be a wonderful opportunity for training programs for future employees; individuals could take a butchering program or other programs that the company would chose to offer. He asked how much of the company's inventory in Iqaluit remains in Iqaluit and how much of it ships elsewhere in Nunavut. He asked how much of the locally purchased products can be serviced by the company such as the snowmobiles, refrigerators, et cetera. He noted that the City will be moving forward with the development of a new subdivision in the near future and asked if the Northwest Company had intentions on building a new store in this subdivision.

Mr. Anderson stated that he could not address the safety issues identified by Deputy Mayor Stevenson as he was not aware of the issue and would need to discuss this with the other team members. The company is taking every initiative possible to address safety concerns that have been raised. The company will be sponsoring the Aquatic Centre; discussions have been begun and the process is ongoing. He stated that the company would require additional information on the Toonik Tyme event and what they would like to company to provide or to assist with.

Chairperson Bell noted that Councillor Dobbin has been chosen as the representative to sit on the Toonik Tyme committee and will discuss this with them to provide the Northwest Company with additional information.

Mr. Anderson stated that he will ensure that the stores have the clear bags used for recycling and waste diversion available to residents at all times. He stated that he would also discuss the possibility of expanding the meat department at Northmart and providing butcher training programs and others to provide employment to interested individuals. He stated that the product inventory in Iqaluit remains in Iqaluit and is not shipped elsewhere in Nunavut. He stated that the company could offer services on purchased snowmobiles from the store if the individual has the necessary skills and knowledge; the company is currently in the recruitment process for an additional staff member in the snowmobile department. He noted that the Northwest Company was seeking a parcel of land in the new subdivision to be developed for a new store but is currently re-evaluating their assets and operations. Once the company completes their evaluation and makes a decision as to how they will move forward with operations, the community will be advised.

Councillor Mansell believed that many residents have some concerns with Nutrition North products. Residents were not properly informed of the process to order these items through sealift and were disappointed when they were informed that a credit card is required as well as a significant amount of money to pay for the order at once. Many residents cannot afford to do so and feel that there should be an alternative method of ordering Nutrition North items. Perhaps the program could be expanded to those who could pay by installments or through a store credit to give others the opportunity to make sealift orders and save money on products they need annually. He believed that the reusable bags that were distributed to residents should be distributed once again; the residents very much appreciated this donation from the company.

Mr. Anderson expressed his appreciation for the comments and suggestions and stated that a report will be created after his meeting with Council and other organizations. The report would then be shared with the Northwest Company representatives and future discussions would need to be scheduled; extra reusable bags will be shipped via sealift in 2015 and distributed to residents.

Councillor Papatsie thanked Mr. Anderson for his presentation and believed that Council and representatives from the Northwest Company should meet more often. He stated that the stores sometimes seem overcrowded and suggested that aisles be kept open and safe for customers. He expressed his appreciation for the company's involvement in the community and hoped that they would continue to help residents as they currently do.

Chairperson Bell passed the Chair to Councillor Mansell.

Councillor Bell thanked Mr. Anderson for his presentation. He asked how many employees of the Northwest Company in Iqaluit were locally hired and how many were in a supervisory role or higher.

Mr. Anderson advised that he does not have this information on hand but could report at a later date.

Councillor Mansell passed the Chair back to Councillor Bell.

Mayor Wilman expressed her appreciation for the company's goals and objectives and their commitment to the community. She hopes that one day plastic bags will be completely eliminated, as they are harmful to the environment. She expressed her support for the suggested training program for employment within the company and believed that this would be very welcomed and appreciated by residents.

**4. DEFERRED BUSINESS AND TABLED ITEMS**

None

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Discussion Item – 2015 Tax Increases**

Councillor Dobbin stated that he requested that the matter be included for discussion as he was absent from the Finance Committee of the Whole meeting held on December 20, 2014. Several commercial ratepayers approached him asking why the increase to mill rate for this category was much higher than others. He noted that the institutional rate did not significantly increase compared to the commercial rate even after the Government of Nunavut refused to assist the City with the extinguishment of the landfill fire. He stated that he was simply seeking for clarification as to how the mill rate increases were determined as he was absent from the meeting. He stated that he would also like to receive an update on the property tax arrears and how the City anticipates addressing the arrears.

Chairperson Bell explained that the property tax arrears would be discussed in a very near future meeting.

Administration explained that the committee was presented different mill rates to consider during the 2015 budget deliberations. Each category was carefully considered and discussed and it was determined that in order to have a balanced budget and accommodate the requested projects, purchases and operations of each department, the approved mill rate was necessary.



The committee did not approve all requested projects and purchases from each department, but did review them carefully and chose those that were of high priority and very important. After the approved mill rates, the City's budget remained somewhat unbalanced but the committee felt that additional funds could be identified later in the year or that some projects could be revisited if required.

Councillor Dobbin believed that the institutional mill rate should have been higher than the commercial and residential rates.

Deputy Mayor Stevenson did not believe that the difference to be paid in taxes from 2014 to 2015 is significant; the mill rate itself is higher but the amount of taxes to be paid is based on the last property assessment and the actual total taxes to be paid is not significant. The committee carefully reviewed and considered each category and did its best to not significantly increase the rates.

Councillor Dobbin believed that the increase should be clearly explained and communicated to the residents of Iqaluit as well as business owners to ensure they understand the reason for the increase. A 21 per cent increase is very significant for many residents and they are expressing their concerns.

Deputy Mayor Stevenson advised that he also did not like to use the 21 percent increase wording as it seemed to be significant, but after being approached by a few residents expressing their concern with the increase to the mill rate, it was explained and shown that the actual mill rate increase with the assessed value of the property does not create a significant increase.; perhaps the information needs to be explained clearly so that it does not seem as significant as residents are considering it to be.

Mayor Wilman agreed with Deputy Mayor Stevenson and suggested that the information be made understandable and clear to residents and business owners.

Mr. Shawn Lester, President of the Iqaluit Chamber of Commerce, stated that Iqaluit businesses are requesting additional information so that they can better understand the increase and would like to be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the mill rate increase prior to the by-law receiving third reading.

Chairperson Bell stated that the information being requested will be provided and the City will ensure that the increase is properly communicated to residents and businesses.

Mr. Lester stated that the Iqaluit Chamber of Commerce is also concerned with the fact that the mill rate has increased and the City remains in deficit. The members of the Iqaluit Chamber of Commerce would also like to receive

additional information on the City's budget to better understand what the City's expenditures and revenues are.

Chairperson Bell stated that the city must complete a number of important projects due to failing infrastructure and that additional information can be provided at a later time. A future meeting could be scheduled between the Iqaluit Chamber of Commerce and the committee to discuss these matters further.

A homeowners meeting is being held on January 21, 2015 and all residents are welcome to attend; detailed information will be shared with residents at this meeting and perhaps some of the information provided would benefit the concerns of the Iqaluit Chamber of Commerce.

Councillor Dobbin suggested that the committee meet to discuss how expenditures could be reduced and how revenues could be increased for 2015.

Chairperson Bell noted that this matter would be added to the next committee meeting for discussion as it was also recently requested.

**6. IN CAMERA SESSION**

None

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion #FIN15-02**

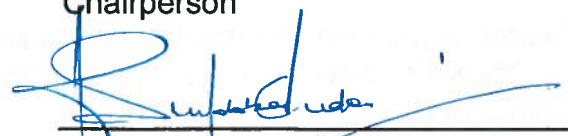
Moved by: Councillor Mansell  
Seconded by: Councillor Dobbin

That the Committee adjourns at 8:20pm.

**Unanimously Carried**



  
Councillor Bell  
Chairperson

  
John Mabberi-Mudonyi  
Senior Director, Corporate Services

Approved by City Council on this 13 day of October, 2015, A.D.