



**Hamlet of Gjoa Haven  
Minutes of Regular Council Meeting  
Friday, April 10, 2026  
Meeting # 2026-04-10**

**Council:**

Deputy Mayor Christine Porter (acting Mayor)  
Councilor Susan Hillier  
Councilor W Aglukkaq  
Councilor M Aglukkaq  
Councilor Samuel Takkiruaq  
Councilor Peter Akkikungnaq  
Councilor Salomie Qitsualik

**Staff:**

CAO Jennifer Wakegijig  
ACAO Lewisa Oppong  
No interpreter

**1. Call to Order 7:13 pm**

Opening Prayer led by Councilor Qitsualik

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**Moved by:** Councilor Qitsualik **Seconded by:** Councilor Hillier  
**Motion # 2026-04-10-001** carried unanimously

**3. Adoption of Minutes for March 31, 2026 – deferred**

**4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None Declared

**5. Reports**

**a. CAO Report on Declaration of Local State of Emergency**

- i. Following the power outage on Wednesday night, many houses (including CAO) were out of power overnight, and there was a blizzard. It was believed, in collaboration with NEM, that as there was a blizzard, community members would be safest if they sheltered in place.
- ii. The following morning, we established a warming centre at the school, and met with NEM. It took 3 hours of back and forth to get permission to use the school. The hall was frozen / no plumbing.
- iii. Executive Committee met with Nunavut Emergency Management (NEM) who had indicated that until that point, with our water crisis we were not yet seen to be in a state of emergency as there was no danger to the health and safety of the community members. They explained that without

power, the minister would agree that our community was in a state of emergency, and agree to allow us to access additional resources. At 3:30 we signed a declaration of local state of emergency. NEM confirmed that they would be immediately providing extra supports, such as activating the Rangers, dealing with related media requests etc. and that a person would be allocated to us available around the clock to advise us on how to utilize the additional resources / authority that a state of emergency brings.

- iv. At 4:45 we had an interagency meeting about how to get through the next 12 hours with RCMP, executive committee, store and housing managers, airport support and NEM did not send meaningful support – came and went from meeting. Locally we identified that
  - 1. First priority - We needed to do everything in our power to allow the plane to land with techs to repair the power grid – as the landing strip had not power. RCMP unable to activate rangers – would need to be done by NEM, who was not present and able to make commitments. So local resources / housing and RAM agreed to try with generators, to light up the landing strip which had no power. They were not able to do this and the flight with technicians to restore the power grid was not able to land. Local partners agree this could have been avoided with more proactive and timely support from NEM. The first few hours were critical for receiving support, housing people without power in a blizzard , getting the plane to land and local partners managed that on their own, and the plane was not able to land. NEM had offered to provide waiver forms and other templates, to activate Rangers, to create public messaging about not using coleman stoves to heat homes... and none of it materialized. Only the next day, when the most critical urgency had passed, did we receive support.
  - 2. CAO is proud of our team and grateful to our partners, that we were able to billet everyone, move mattresses around town, mobilize a warming space, provide food, and make it through this crisis without major incident.
  - 3. Note that there was also a search for someone from Taloyoak that ended well, he was found. It was noted that this could have been avoided with better preparation on the part of the travellers.
- v. Council discussion
  - 1. Disappointment on the part of council that so many local groups seem to be working against eachother and letting things go instead of working together for the community. At one time, things were better
  - 2. Relief that power plant was not frozen / lost and everyone is safe.
  - 3. Appreciation for Hamlet staff and QEC staff and others that have done their best with what we have, despite lack of activation of NEM.

4. Discussion about attempted emergency planning meetings in 2023 when Jennifer started – that were only attended by RCMP and not other partners. This emergency is creating an opportunity / awareness and likely in the next few months we will have productive discussions and NEM likely willing to invest in helping us to create an exemplary emergency response plan.
5. Question about whether the church might be able to be a part of the emergency preparedness committee – as they also have spaces and resources. We agreed that the churches could be invited, though noted that previously the Catholic priest declined to participate in a committee about respectful burials, and it was felt that he would be unlikely to participate.
6. Note that during crisis, people should use IQ, and that perhaps some emergency blankets and other things could be stored at Tuttarvik.
7. **Local partners are now leaning in, to discuss emergency preparedness, and all seem to have strong / proactive management at this time. This bodes well for future incidents, and for creating a solid plan for the future.**
8. Note that perhaps the council and Mayor of Taloyoak would consider joint planning with our mayor and council, to plan a joint campaign for safer land travel and preparedness, which should include elder teachings. For discussion next meeting – to reach out to Taloyoak
9. Discussion that Mayoral communication with the community is needed – since we have a large team, and there is quite a lot of inappropriate social media discussion blaming things on the CAO, when in fact council feels the community is well-served with their chief administrator – council could do more to communicate with the community about community matters.
10. Also note that for the first time in many years this week, the Hamlet dug the grave for a burial, and a casket was not left above ground until the spring. Something to note as a point of celebration when we are through this emergency.
11. CAO advised that she is leaving on Saturday for a funeral, and confident that ACAO Lewisa Oppong will be able to manage the hamlet's affairs. Jennifer will support as needed remotely, and we now have a strong management team, and increasing support from NEM.

**Motion to accept the CAO report about the local state of emergency**

**Moved by:** Councillor Akkikungnaq **Seconded by:** Councillor W Aglukkaq

**Motion # 2026-04-10-002** carried unanimously

## 6. Old Business

### a. **Third Reading of New Lotteries Bylaw # 252**

As two councillors missed 1<sup>st</sup> and second reading, council discussed the contents of the bylaw again. When this bylaw is passed, effective June 1, the Hamlet will no longer be responsible for issuing lottery licenses. It is not in the interest of the Hamlet to do this, as it consumes considerable hamlet resources, and our priority is to meet our essential obligations well. This is not a Hamlet obligation and it burdens the Hamlet with many complaints about people stealing bingo money, about groups not being honest, and groups are not consistently fulfilling their legal obligations. Behaviours by sellers (allowing children, playing nevasdas while working etc) are not possible to control, and the Hamlet does not have the manpower to manage this, along with all of its legal responsibilities to the community. The Hamlet will continue to support fundraising, and people who wish to obtain lottery licenses will be able to obtain them from GN consumer affairs in Baker Lake.

Some questions in the discussion included whether it was permissible to just sell Nevadas without having a bingo. The response was that yes, any kind of lottery (Nevadas, raffle, bingo) can be done alone or with a different lottery – but not without a license – which would have to be obtained from consumer affairs in Baker Lake going forward.

Concern was raised that when the skidoo races start, kids start racing in the community trying to imitate what they are seeing – and it is not safe. Council directed the CAO to contact the skidoo club and ask them to include public messaging for kids about safety in town when they are advertising the races.

**Motion to undertake 3<sup>rd</sup> reading and finally pass Bylaw #252 and repeal all preceding lotteries bylaws.**

**Moved by:** Councillor Akkikungnaq **Seconded by:** Councillor Hillier

**Motion # 2026-04-10-003** carried unanimously and bylaw # 252 is passed.

**As there is no interpreter – motion to defer agenda items 7c and 9 to next meeting**

**Moved by:** Deputy Mayor Porter **Seconded by:** Councillor Takkiruq

**Motion # 2026-04-10-004** carried unanimously

## 7. New Business

### a. **Service contracts with Stantec Engineering, Reliable Arctic Mechanical, and Pilitak enterprises, for the completion of repairs to the Gjoa haven Water Main, tentatively anticipated to cost over \$700,000**

CAO explained that in the early days following the break in the water main in January, TIN held the leadership on making sure the repair took place, and they

engaged Reliable Arctic Mechanical (Jim Verch) to assist in overseeing what was hoped would be a quick repair. They then realized the repair was not as simple as was hoped, and engaged Stantec to engineer a bypass (temporary repair) to keep water flowing until complete repairs could be completed in the summer. They also selected Pilitak Enterprises as the contractor to complete the repairs.

In the meantime the GN also determined that it would be more appropriate for the Hamlet to hold these contracts, to pay for the repairs, as these are Hamlet assets, and the GN could assist with covering costs, if the Hamlet does not have the funds to complete the repairs.

CAO has been in discussion with Ken Kolb, ADM responsible for Community Services, about which funds may be earmarked for repairs, and the potential requirement to use the water sewer vehicle replacement reserve or other Hamlet funds. The Hamlet has limited funds to support this work, and the anticipated \$1M in extra operating costs (labour and fuel) for sustaining two shifts per day of water and sewer services. Ken Kolb has committed collaboration and support from the GN. Specific funds have not yet been identified as a total cost is not yet clear. The Hamlet will be required to cash manage through this project, with sometimes limited cash available.

**Motion to enter into service contracts with Stantec Engineering, Pilitak Enterprises and Reliable Arctic Mechanical, with unknown total costs, estimated at over \$700,000, in order to ensure that the repairs required to our essential water main be completed without delay - with the understanding that GN financial support will be required to cover much of the cost of this emergency repair.**

**Moved by:** Councilor Takkiruaq **Seconded by:** Councilor Akkikungnaq

Council Question – why are we hiring three different companies for this?

Answer – they have three different roles

1. Reliable Arctic Mechanical (RAM – Kim Verch) is making sure the water system keeps operating throughout the repairs
2. Stantec engineers designed the repair plan and will project manage / make sure communication is strong and that things are on track
3. Pilitak enterprises is the construction contractors that will do the actual repair work.

**Motion # 2026-04-10-005** carried unanimously

**b. Credit Card Limit Increase**

CAO explained that the hamlet credit card has a limit of only \$25,000, and if 5 or 6 people are travelling at the same time, the credit card is being drained for hotels and flights, and sometimes people (including elders) are stranded unable to check in to hotels, because of the credit card.

**Motion to approve a credit limit increase on the Hamlet's CIBC VISA cards to \$100,000 consistent with practices in other Hamlets.**

**Moved by:** Councilor Takkiruq **Seconded by:** Councilor Akkikungnaq

**Motion # 2026-04-10-006** carried unanimously

**8. Correspondence**

**a. Request for councillors appointed to DEA Languages Committee**

- i. DEA is establishing a committee to advise on language related curriculum content and learning models. They are requesting two or more community members/ councillors to participate
- ii. Peter Akkikungnaq and Salomie Qitsualik have volunteered.
- iii. Salomie wondered whether being a teacher at the school might create a conflict.
- iv. CAO will notify the DEA which councillors have volunteered to be part of the committee.

**9. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn meeting 2026-04-10 at 9:50 pm**

**Moved by:** Councilor Qitsualik **Seconded by:** Councilor Akkikungnaq

**Motion # 2026-04-10-007** carried unanimously

Mayor 

CAO 

Date April 28/26