

Minutes of a Regular Council Meeting of Clearwater County, Province of Alberta, held July 28, 2015 in the Clearwater County Council Chambers in Rocky Mountain House.

CALL TO ORDER: The Meeting was called to order at 9:01 A.M. by Reeve Alexander with the following being present:

Reeve:	Patrick Alexander
Councillors:	Earl Graham
	Curt Maki
	Jim Duncan
	John Vandermeer
	Kyle Greenwood
	Theresa Laing
CAO:	Ron Leaf
Director, Agriculture Services	Matt Martinson
Community Relations Advisor:	Jerry Pratt
Recording Secretary:	Christine Heggart
Staff:	Erik Hansen
	Kurt Magnus
	Charlene Johnson
Media:	Jordan Johnston
	Sylvana Crosby

**AGENDA
APPROVAL:**

Councillor Duncan added a discussion item regarding Clearwater Trails Initiative Rig Street Project.

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That the July 28, 2015 Regular Meeting Agenda be accepted as amended.

258/15 CARRIED 7/0

**CONFIRMATION
OF MINUTES:**

1. July 14, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That the Minutes of the July 14, 2015 Regular Meeting be approved as circulated.

259/15 CARRIED 7/0

PUBLIC WORKS: 1. Grader Maintenance Tender Award – Grader Beat # 512

Kurt Magnus presented the tender results for Grader Beat # 512, for five year contract to begin on August 1, 2015 for the maintenance of approximately 42 km of gravel road (Red Deer River Access).

Mr. Magnus noted that the tender opening was held on Thursday, July 16, 2015, at 2:01 p.m. and two bids were received, with Terry Morin being the low valid bidder (\$113.90/hour).

Discussion took place regarding the cost of the former contractor and hourly cost.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council approves awarding the Grader Beat # 512 contract to Terry Morin.

260/15 CARRIED 7/0

2. Speight Road Concerns

Erik Hansen presented a petition received from residents that live on or adjacent to the Cow Creek Road (R.R. 8-4) and the Speight Road (TWP 39-0). He noted that the concerns were related to the amount of industrial traffic and the quality of maintenance and dust suppression. Mr. Hansen noted that there is also a perceived lack of enforcement of the requirements associated with road use conditions.

Mr. Hansen added that staff believe the current policy has been effective in providing a balance between the quality of life for residents and the economic viability of industry. He noted the various road use agreements in effect in July 2015, traffic movement data for the same time and historical traffic movement data from 2014.

Mr. Hansen noted that cumulative effects of industrial activities are addressed by working with industry and residents, and is addressed through multiple policies, including: Dust Abatement policy, Road Use policy, Road Weights Control policy; and, annual meeting with industry.

Councillor Duncan provided a background on the Speight Road and concerns regarding magnesium chloride dust control applied in 2014, bridge damages and repairs in 2014 and dust concerns in 2015. He noted the need to supervise the magnesium dust control applications and that soil types impact the effectiveness of dust control applications.

Councillor Duncan described how road use agreements are administered and noted that residents see multiple industrial truck movements from different companies, that don't require road use agreements, as well as pickup truck movements which don't require road use agreements.

Rhonda Serhan, Rudy Huisman and Ted Hickey joined the meeting.

Councillor Maki questioned why one ton trucks are exempt from road use agreements. Discussion took place on inspections, and Mr. Hansen noted that the Industry and Land Acquisition Coordinator inspect roads as time permits.

Discussion took place on cumulative effects and enforcement options, high traffic volume roads, industry collaborations and monitoring.

Reeve Alexander added the petition notes that residents come second to industry, which he disagrees with and feels Council considers all taxpayers and all infrastructure requirements when making budget decisions. He noted that industry contributes 90% of the County's tax revenue and that roads are for their use, as well residents. He added that industry provides jobs to community members as well.

Councillor Vandermeer noted that dust concerns can occur on any road, any year, dependent on traffic from residents and industry and questioned the number of dust control contracts in the area.

Discussion took place on the road use agreement and recommended wording changes to remove the word "generally", industry group funding of dust control, other dust control options including higher quality aggregate, road evaluations timeframes and recommendations for rebuilding.

Marilyn Sanders and Keith McCrae joined the meeting.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM:	That Council directs staff to bring back the Road Use Agreement with amended definition of "dust control" for clarity and draft be presented at future Council meeting for review; to engage with West
--------------------	--

Central Stakeholders and Alberta Energy Regulator; and, report back on the status of the Cow Creek Road rebuild schedule during the 2016 budget process.

261/15

CARRIED 7/0

Kurt Magnus, Rhonda Serhan, Matt Martinson and Erik Hansen left the meeting.

PLANNING:

1. Adoption of Revised Bylaw at Land Titles Request

Marilyn Sanders provided background information regarding the approved closing of an unused lane in the Hamlet of Condor in 2014, noting that the closure progressed through first reading, a public hearing, Ministerial approval and second and third readings. She noted that the closure along with a Plan of Subdivision was submitted to Alberta Land Titles Office (LTO) for registration and that LTO issued a rejection notice indicating the wording of the Road Closure Bylaw 991/14 required amendment.

Ms. Sanders noted the two options to address the Bylaw 991/14 wording, including recommencing the entire process or adopting a revision as allowed by Sections 63, 64 and 65 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA). She noted bylaw amendments are allowed if the substance of the bylaw remains, and detailed the two step bylaw process to make amendments.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council grants FIRST Reading to Bylaw 1007/15 Authorizing the Revision of Bylaw 991/14.

262/15

CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR DUNCAN: That Council grants SECOND Reading to Bylaw 1007/15 Authorizing the Revision of Bylaw 991/14.

263/15

CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council grants PERMISSION for Third Reading to Bylaw 1007/15 Authorizing the Revision of Bylaw 991/14.

264/15

CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council grants THIRD Reading to Bylaw 1007/15 Authorizing the Revision of Bylaw 991/14.

265/15

CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR LAING: That Council grants FIRST Reading to Bylaw 1008/15 Adopting Revised Bylaw 991/14.

266/15

CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR DUNCAN: That Council grants SECOND Reading to Bylaw 1008/15 Adopting Revised Bylaw 991/14.

267/15 CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council grants PERMISSION for Third Reading to Bylaw 1007/15 Authorizing the Revision of Bylaw 991/14.

268/15 CARRIED 7/0

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council grants THIRD Reading to Bylaw 1008/15 Adopting Revised Bylaw 991/14.

269/15 CARRIED 7/0

Rhonda Serhan, Dwight Oliver, Reg Dean and Deb Northcott joined the meeting.

COMMUNITY &
PROTECTIVE
SERVICES:

2. Caroline HUB Completion – Construction Funding Report

Ted Hickey provided a history of the Caroline HUB project, the committee makeup, the primary contractor and financial contributions associated with the project. He noted that the Caroline HUB provides a multi-use facility and wellness centre, for all ages, and provides quality of life services that were not previously available in the community.

Mr. Hickey described the construction process, the community spirit and volunteer contributions and building challenges, including record snowfall amounts in 2013 as well as staffing changes at Clearwater County and the Village of Caroline.

Mr. Hickey introduced the delegation from the Caroline and District Athletic and Agriculture Society.

Dwight Oliver thanked Council for making the collective vision of the Caroline Community HUB possible. He noted the value added to the Caroline community, that the building is meeting all projections and operating in the black, that the community is fully utilizing the facility and that the success of the programs can be attributed to the community groups and users.

Deb Northcott provided an overview of the current HUB facility user groups including the Caroline Pre-School, Caroline Dance West, multi-use room and fitness facility. She noted that the pre-school and dance club have both increased their enrollment and days of operation, the multi-use rooms are utilized 50% of the time and that the new fitness facility has 230 members currently.

Reg Dean offered an overview of the Caroline and District Chamber of Commerce use, the shared space with an RCMP satellite office and the financial contributions of the space users. He also noted that the Chamber's management of the Caroline Medical and Wellness clinic, and the current use of the clinic, including doctors, nurses, massage, footcare and chiropractic.

Discussion took place on complimentary uses, availability of the concession, the success and synergies from the Caroline Community HUB facility and the numbers of users of the facility as a whole.
Council provided congratulations to the committee and the community for the success of the Caroline Community HUB.

Mr. Dean added additional details in terms of the medical clinic and its unique management where the Chamber owns and operates the clinic, and combines medical specialties under one roof, as well as use of paramedic and the enhanced services of prescription deliveries to the clinic.

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That Council accepts the Caroline HUB Completion report as information.

270/15

CARRIED 7/0

3. South East Recreation Grounds Completion – Construction Funding Report

Ted Hickey presented an overview of the Clearwater County South East (SE) Recreation Grounds construction project and noted the SE Recreation Grounds improved access to recreational opportunities in the southern portion of the County. He noted construction costs, grants and funding as well as project budget and variances.

Deb Northcott responded to questions regarding the concession operations.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council accepts the South East Recreation Grounds Completion – Construction report as information.

271/15

CARRIED 7/0

Dwight Oliver, Reg Dean and Deb Northcott left the meeting.

1. Creation of a Committee of Council - High Speed Internet

Ted Hickey presented an overview of Council's desire to address the gaps in access to high speed internet and the need for improved capacity in Clearwater County. He noted that the County applied for "Final Mile" grant funding but was not approved and that studies detailing an option of wireless (broadband using a 1.5 Mb/sec measure) and fiber connection have been completed.

Mr. Hickey noted the two reports identified that a majority of the County's residents (61.5%) and businesses are not currently served or are underserved in their ability to connect to high speed internet. He recommended the formation of a Committee of Council, comprised of members of Council and other community stakeholders, to provide clarity regarding the community's needs and insight into what role, if any, Clearwater County should have in addressing high speed internet gaps.

Mr. Hickey added that staff recommend Council establish a 20 Mb/sec internet speed as the standard baseline performance measure and discussed Council's options in terms of support for high speed internet.

Discussion took place on the short timeframe, recommended committee membership, regional project opportunities and recommended standard baseline performance measures.

Ron Leaf discussed recommended committee membership and recent Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) decisions to move towards an electrical distribution model for fibre infrastructure.

Councillor Vandermeer stated that the recommended baseline may not be significant enough for Clearwater County to keep pace with urban municipalities.

Matt Martinson joined the meeting.

Discussion took place on the SuperNet, deployment strategies, technologies and timeframes, as well as industry and community involvement in the committee.

Councillor Graham noted the need for a representative for every division and no more than two Council members.

Councillor Vandermeer added that the need for the community involvement in the development of a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the High Speed Internet Committee, as well as members from oil and gas industry and local utility providers, such as the gas coop and rural electrification association.

Councillor Maki noted that Council should draft the ToR to establish vision. Councillor Duncan and Greenwood agreed administration and Council should draft the ToR.

Discussion took place on the need to determine the role of the Committee, the County's role, and the scope of the ToR and other examples to draw from. Mr. Leaf addressed the question of internal capacity to develop a ToR and coordinate committee, noting that a consultant will need to be engaged.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council and Administration develop a broad Terms of Reference for the High Speed Internet Committee for Council's review at the August 11 Regular Council Meeting.

272/15

CARRIED 7/0

Matt Martinson left the meeting.

CORPORATE
SERVICES:

1. 2015 Operating Budget Six Month Performance

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council takes the 2015 operating Budget Six Month Performance off the table for discussion.

273/15

CARRIED 7/0

Rudy Huisman reported on the 2015 budget performance to the end of June and noted that there are no red flags to be dealt with. He provided an overview of the County's operating revenues, annual budget, variance amounts and actual revenue percentage in relation to the annual budget amounts.

Mr. Huisman noted that the capital program is underway and an interim capital budget report will be brought forward to the September 22 meeting. He provided an accounting of: net municipal taxes; user fees and sales of goods;

government transfers for operating; investment income; penalties on outstanding taxes; development levies and permits & licenses; well drilling equipment tax; and, other revenues. He also noted that Operating Expenses by department and provided details in terms of unusual variances.

COUNCILLOR DUNCAN: That Council accepts the 2015 Six Month Operating report as information.

274/15

CARRIED 7/0

2. Financial Indicators Graphs (2013)

Rudy Huisman provided an overview of the 2013 Financial Indicator Graphs for Clearwater County, produced by the Government of Alberta, and comparisons between neighbouring municipalities, including: Brazeau County, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview, Lacombe County, Leduc County, Mountain View County, Red Deer County and Yellowhead County. He noted that the comparative measures may be useful in assessing past performance and for budget planning.

Mr. Huisman described the graphs 1 – 3, indicating that the County’s municipal tax rates are below the median for the period 2008 to 2013, but with the tax rate increases in 2015, that gap will likely have been narrowed. He indicated that graphs 4 and 5 identify that the assessment per kilometer of roads and non-res assessment as a percentage of total assessment are right at the median and the graph 6 indicates that the County’s tax collection rates continue to be excellent.

Mr. Huisman noted that graphs 7 – 9 show that the County’s debt capacity is substantial if, and when, it is needed, and that graph 10 shows net municipal property taxes per capita and indicates that the County has consistently been at or near the median which was just under \$3,000 in 2013.

Ted Hickey and Jerry Pratt left the meeting.

He summarized the charts’ data regarding grants per capita; revenue sources; expenditures per capita by function; per capita expenditures on Salaries Wages and Benefits; per capita expenditures on Contracted Services, Materials, Debt Charges and Amortization; tangible capital assets (TCA); and the County’s accumulated surplus.

Discussion took place on major projects that impact data in 2013, including the paving of the Sunchild Road in 2012 as well as grant revenues.

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That Council accepts the Financial Indicators Graphs (2013) presentation as information.

275/15

CARRIED 7/0

3. Appointment of Auditors

Rudy Huisman noted sections 280 (1) & (2) of the Municipal Government Act requiring Council to appoint one or more auditors for the municipality and each of its controlled corporations. He added that the firm of Hawkings, Epp, Dumont LLP has performed the audit of the County satisfactorily from 2010 to 2014, and recommended their appointment for the 2015 calendar year.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council appoints the firm Hawkings, Epp, Dumont LLP as Clearwater County’s auditors for 2015.

276/15

CARRIED 7/0

Rhonda Serhan and Rudy Huisman left the meeting. Matt Martinson joined the meeting.

**AGRICULTURE
SERVICES &
LANDCARE:**

1. Livestock Tax Deferral Provision

Matt Martinson provided an overview of the recent announcement that the federal government will be deferring the taxes of western livestock producers, including Clearwater County, in response to extremely dry conditions across most of western Canada. He noted that the program will allow producers to defer some of their federal taxes for 2015 for one year and provided details in terms of eligibility.

Mr. Martinson responded to questions regarding crop producers and noted insurance options are available for those producers and that the County recommends utilizing the option to insure crops.

Discussion took place on alternate feeding options, feeder cattle trends, feed prices and provincial grazing releases.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council accepts the Livestock Tax Deferral Provision presentation as information.

277/15

CARRIED 7/0

Matt Martinson left the meeting. Rudy Huisman and Kurt Magnus joined the meeting.

MUNICIPAL:

1. Ministerial Staff and Cabinet Committee Membership

COUNCILLOR DUNCAN: That Council takes the Ministerial Staff and Cabinet Committee Membership agenda item off the table for discussion.

278/15

CARRIED 7/0

Ron Leaf presented *The Insight newsletter - Directory of Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Cabinet Committee* which identifies MLAs and senior provincial staff currently in key positions in the current provincial government. He noted the intent of the overview is to identify options with respect to informing/educating members of the Provincial Government on rural issues as well as identify lobby strategies for Council to consider in the future.

Additionally, Mr. Leaf provided background on the Executive Committees (i.e. Treasury Board, Economic Policy Committee, Social Policy Committee and Legislative Review Committee) that have specific mandates regarding developing policies and making recommendations to Cabinet on the priorities, programs and government direction within their mandate or area of oversight. Additionally, he provided details on the Legislative Policy (LP), and noted they are more program oriented, providing the opportunity for the most effective lobby on specific issues (i.e. hospital, broadband internet, bridge funding).

Mr. Leaf noted cabinet's key dates for the fall sitting of legislature and the associated challenges with getting issues in front of government.

Discussion took place on the timeframes for the provincial budget and the associated programs that are on hold, such as provincial road maintenance, as a result of the budget being confirmed in the fall.

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council accepts the Ministerial Staff and Cabinet Committee Membership as information.

279/15

CARRIED 7/0

2. Linear Property Assessments Discussion

Ron Leaf noted that Reeve Alexander requested a review of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA)’s 2012 resolution to reform the province’s assessment and taxation system and the AUMA’s call for more “equitable sharing of linear property assessments and associated taxation within the province.”

Mr. Leaf noted that over the past couple years there have been a few suggestions by the AUMA, or its members individually, proposing linear assessment be pooled and the resulting taxation be shared with municipalities throughout the Province. He added that the majority of linear taxation is located within rural municipalities and described linear property assessments and their associated value in Clearwater County (\$24.4 million in 2015).

Mr. Leaf also provided an overview of the recent Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) reports, including the 2013 *Apples to Apples: A Study of Rural Municipal Finance in Alberta*, as well as their 2015 *Position Statement on Industrial Taxation*. Both reports concluding that reallocating linear taxation based on population would have significant negative impact on rural municipalities, while adding little to no benefit to small urban municipalities. The reports concluded that assets such as roads, bridges, and water and wastewater systems are a better forecaster for municipal expenses and that per capita distribution would not be equitable.

Mr. Leaf noted that Council’s previous discussions on the issue of linear pooling, as well as their key messages to MLAs and provincial representatives, have been similar to that of AAAMDC’s position statement in that the current distribution of industrial taxation is fair, and reflects the expenses incurred by municipalities.

Reeve Alexander noted that MLAs and Ministers have indicated that the issue of linear assessment will be on the Province’s fall agenda, and that Clearwater County stands to lose significant revenues. He added that he’d like the County to gather and develop materials to explain the impacts of linear assessment on rural Alberta, to help educate the community and other municipalities.

Kurt Magnus left the meeting.

Discussion took place on “regional sharing”, the types of taxes rural and urban municipalities collect and the need to communicate data concerning assets and expenses, and that per capita comparisons between rural and urban municipalities don’t align.

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That Council accepts Linear Property Assessments Discussion as information.

280/15

CARRIED 7/0

INFORMATION:

1. CAO’s Report

Discussion took place on the Red Deer College’s request to present to Council regarding the College’s application to become a Poly-technic University and

advise Council on the College's plans to develop of a Centre for Health, Wellness and Sport.

Clearwater Trails Initiative Rig Street Tour

Councillor Duncan provided an update regarding the Clearwater Trails Initiative Rig Street Tour and the need for sustainable designated trail development and associated recommendations to the Minister of Environment and Parks.

Discussion took place on trails on leases and reclamation requirements.

Invitation to West Fraser's 60th Anniversary celebration and consensus was that Council may attend as private members of the community should they wish.

281/15

IN CAMERA:

COUNCILLOR DUNCAN: That Council accepts the July 28, 2015 CAO Report, Public Works Director's Report, Accounts Payable Listing, Councillor Remuneration, and Councillors' Verbal Reports as information.

CARRIED 7/0

282/15

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council returns to the Committee of the Whole to discuss a Labour issue at 2:01 P.M.

CARRIED 7/0

283/15

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That the meeting reverts to an Open Meeting 3:20 P.M.

CARRIED 7/0

ADJOURNMENT:
3:21 P.M.

284/15

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That the Meeting adjourns.

CARRIED 7/0


REEVE


ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER