

Minutes of a Regular Council Meeting of Clearwater County, Province of Alberta, held January 26, 2016 in the Clearwater County Council Chambers in Rocky Mountain House.

CALL TO ORDER: The Meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Reeve Alexander with the following being present:

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|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Reeve | Patrick Alexander |
| Councillors | Earl Graham |
| | Curt Maki |
| | John Vandermeer |
| | Kyle Greenwood |
| | Theresa Laing |
| CAO | Ron Leaf |
| Recording Secretary | Tracy Haight |
| Director, Public Works | Marshall Morton |
| Director, Community & PS | Ted Hickey |
| Manager, Operations Public Works | Kurt Magnus |
| Manager, TIMS | Brad Welygan |
| Project Technologist | Kate Reglin |
| Public | Mike Maki |
| Media | Laura Button |
| | Sylvana Crosby |

**AGENDA
APPROVAL:**

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That the January 26, 2016 Regular Meeting Agenda is accepted.

024/16 CARRIED 6/0

**CONFIRMATION
OF MINUTES:**

1. January 12, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That the Minutes of the January 12, 2016 Regular Meeting is accepted as circulated.

025/16 CARRIED 6/0

PUBLIC WORKS:

1. Waterworks and Sewage Utilities Bylaw 944/11 Wastewater/Water Rates and Charges

Marshall Morton stated that as per Schedule A of Bylaw 944/11, the current wastewater rates for Condor, Leslieville, and wastewater/water rates for Nordegg expired as of December 31, 2015.

Kurt Magnus reviewed the 2015 monthly wastewater operating costs for each system as follows:
\$26.57 for Leslieville; \$58.96 for Condor; and \$139.50 for Nordegg.

Mr. Morton stated that currently, residents in all three hamlets are charged the same \$42 flat rate for wastewater services and based on municipal comparisons and forecasted operational costs, Administration recommends zero increases to this rate for 2016-2018. Administration also recommends establishing a wastewater operating reserve so as to offset operational costs.

Mr. Morton responded to questions and explained that historically, surplus revenues are recorded in general revenues and operational deficits are recorded in general levies. He explained that the Nordegg and Condor systems are running a deficit due to a lower number of serviced lots.

Discussion followed on the rationale for establishing wastewater operating reserves so that any revenue surplus from each system can provide a source of funding for future wastewater infrastructure and/or operating shortfalls.

Council reviewed the previous wastewater rate increases from 2011 through 2015 recorded on Bylaw 944/11 Schedule "A". Discussion took place on the possibility of achieving cost recovery on all of the systems and that this is not feasible unless wastewater rates are increased.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council amends Schedule "A" of Bylaw 944/11 to reflect monthly residential wastewater rates for Condor, Leslieville, and Nordegg as follows: \$44.00 in 2016; \$46.00 in 2017; and \$48.00 in 2018, effective April 1, 2016.

026/16

CARRIED 6/0

Marshall Morton reviewed comparisons of other municipalities' residential water rates and explained that the average rate is \$35.33 per month per household and does not include consumption charges where applicable.

He noted forecasted operational costs for residential water supply in Nordegg per month are \$118 for 2016; \$130 for 2017; and \$143 for 2018. He recommended an increase of \$8.40/year for residential water rates and an increase of \$10.00/year for hotel water rates in Nordegg.

Discussion took place on if the recommended increase is sufficient to offset operational costs and the potential for metering so as to eliminate over usage.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council amends Schedule "A" of Bylaw 944/11 to reflect monthly residential water rates for Nordegg as follows: \$45.00 in 2016; \$50.00 in 2017; and \$55.00 in 2018, effective April 1, 2016.

027/16

CARRIED 6/0

Marshall Morton requested confirmation regarding the establishment of a wastewater reserve. Discussion took place on establishing individual reserves for the Condor, Leslieville, and Nordegg operations. Any revenue surplus realized on an individual system should be used to offset increased operating

costs on that system and should be reflected in separate reserves, however, Nordegg deficits will continue to be covered from the general levy account.

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council directs Administration to establish individual wastewater operating reserves for the Condor, Leslieville, and Nordegg wastewater operations.

028/16

CARRIED 6/0

Marshall Morton requested clarification on the recommended increase for hotel water rates.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council amends Schedule "A" of Bylaw 944/11 to reflect a \$15.00 per year increase for monthly hotel water rates for Nordegg, effective April 1, 2016.

029/16

CARRIED 6/0

Rudy Huisman, Denniece Crout, Jerry Pratt, and Ivan Dijkstra joined the meeting. Brad Welygan left the meeting.

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council tables Item D2 Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties Infrastructure Priorities Survey.

030/16

CARRIED 6/0

CORPORATE SERVICES:

1. 9:30 A.M. Delegation: Mike Maki, Rocky Rod & Gun Club

Mike Maki, Vice President Rocky Rod and Gun Club, provided a Power Point presentation "Rocky Rod and Gun Club Municipal Tax Exemption" that described the club's history, objectives and current activities.

Mr. Maki stated that the club's November 5 appeal hearing with the Central Alberta Regional Assessment Review Board to consider full exemption of taxation under the Community Organization Property Tax Exemption Regulation (COPTER) was denied. He noted that the Board determined the property does not qualify for an exemption from taxation as it was not established that 60% of the time the subject property is in use, the majority of those participating in the activities on the property are younger than 18 years of age.

Mr. Maki stated that the club asks that Council consider exempting the municipal tax portion of the assessment, as per COPTER Sections 15 and 16. He explained that the club, founded as a non-profit society, is accessible to members under 18 years of age and that the club benefits the general public by providing education on firearms safety and a facility for the safe discharge of firearms.

Discussion took place on the regulations for property assessment and that although the property was correctly assessed and that the appeal process was followed correctly, the Municipal Government Act, Section 364 legislation allows exemptions granted by bylaw as per Council's decision.

Denniece Crout, Assessment Manager, responded to questions from Council and explained that there is no current bylaw in place for municipal tax exemption on this property. Ron Leaf explained that as per legislation, a municipal bylaw only exempts the municipal tax portion and that education and senior taxes remain in effect and payable.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council requests the preparation of a bylaw providing for the exemption of municipal property tax for the Rocky Rod and Gun Club.

031/16

CARRIED 5/1

Discussion took place on the need to establish new policy to address requests for municipal tax exemptions from other non-profit organizations.

Rudy Huisman, Denniece Crout, Kurt Magnus, and Mike Maki left the meeting.

**COMMUNITY &
PROTECTIVE
SERVICES:**

1. 9:45 A.M. Ivan Dijkstra, Deputy Fire Chief – Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Service – 2015 Annual Reporting

Ivan Dijkstra, Deputy Fire Chief, as recommended by the CRFRS Committee presented the Clearwater Regional Fire Rescue Service (CRFRS) 2015 annual report for Council's review.

He noted that CRFRS operated under budget for 2015 by \$27,215 due in part to decreased amounts for salaries and benefits, training costs, telephone, and building/equipment repair expenses.

Ron Leaf stated that as per CRFRS Committee recommendations, CRFRS future financial reporting will reflect revenues and use a three year average costing method.

Mr. Dijkstra reviewed 2015 incidents and responses per station. Mr. Dijkstra responded to questions from Council and explained that although shown separately on the report, Condor and Leslieville responses are combined.

Mr. Dijkstra reviewed calls by type for 2015. Mr. Dijkstra noted the decrease in calls at the Nordegg station is due to Alberta Health Services ambulance stationed in Nordegg and providing coverage in that area.

He reviewed actual man hours for practice, training, and incidents from 2013-2015. He responded to questions and explained legislative requirements for training and a minimum two hour payment if called out.

Mr. Dijkstra reviewed incidents by hour of day, day of the week, and by month. He noted peak times are late afternoon and over the supper hour, Saturdays, and the May long weekend. He noted that incidents are increasing during the August long weekend.

Mr. Dijkstra reviewed statistics for actual calls in 2015 compared to accepted service level for 2014 and noted dispatch times for motor vehicle incidents averages 3:44 minutes per call which are within the accepted service level.

Discussion followed on the continuing increase in false alarm calls since 2013. Public education is required to mitigate further increases as responding to false alarms significantly increases salary and equipment costs.

032/16

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That Council receives the information as presented.

CARRIED 6/0

Ivan Dijkstra left the meeting.

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That Council raises Item D2 Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties Infrastructure Priorities Survey from the table.

033/16

CARRIED 6/0

2. Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) Infrastructure Priorities Survey

Marshall Morton stated that AAMDC asks the membership to complete an Infrastructure Priorities Survey so as to assist AAMDC's advocacy and lobby efforts with the provincial government.

Council reviewed the survey questions and discussion followed regarding infrastructure priorities. It was noted that infrastructure for wastewater/water and bridges are the biggest expense for a municipality.

Discussion continued on the number of bridges in Clearwater County that will eventually require upgrades and/or replacement for a total estimated value of \$10,000,000. Bridge upgrades/replacement is considered as an infrastructure priority project for Clearwater County that has economic development, environmental, and safety implications. Currently, there is zero funding from the provincial government for bridges as well as zero progress on provincial guidelines and standards for alternative bridge structures. Upgrading and replacement of bridges is of regional benefit and some are 'shovel ready' in the area.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council directs Administration to complete the AAMDC Infrastructure Survey and indicate bridge upgrades/replacements as the priority project.

034/16

CARRIED 6/0

Marshall Morton left the meeting.

2. Digital Futures Symposium and the Local To Global Forum

Ted Hickey provided information on the Digital Futures Symposium and the Local To Global Forum taking place in Medicine Hat on March 9 – 11, 2016.

Discussion took place regarding councillors availability to attend and the benefits of attending. Councillor Vandermeer indicated interest in attending.

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council authorizes 2 members of Council to attend the Digital Futures Symposium and Local To Global Forum March 9 – 11, 2016.

035/16

CARRIED 6/0

2. Growing Rural Tourism Conference

Jerry Pratt provided information on the Growing Rural Tourism Conference taking place in Camrose on February 22 – 24, 2016. He noted that the conference provides opportunity for attendees to learn of strategies that may expand the tourism industry and increase the economic benefits of tourism in rural municipalities.

Discussion took place regarding Councillors availability to attend. Councillor Laing indicated interest in attending.

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That Council authorizes one member of Council to attend the Growing Rural Tourism Conference on February 22 – 24, 2016.

036/16

CARRIED 6/0

Mr. Pratt responded to questions regarding the Clearwater Regional Tourism Business Forum taking place on January 28, 2016 and noted that based on registrations received, Administration anticipates the event will be well attended.

4. Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission Broadband Survey

Ron Leaf stated that Council may wish to participate in the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) online survey regarding the broadband internet needs of rural Canadians.

He inquired if Council also wishes to write letters to the CRTC, Prime Minister Trudeau, applicable Federal Ministers, Premier Notley, and applicable

Provincial Ministers outlining several key messages regarding the need for regulatory change in the provision of broadband internet service in rural Canada.

Discussion followed on the messaging and that it should reflect the following:

- Broadband internet should be classified as a “utility” with legislative and financial support by both Federal and Provincial governments consistent with electricity, and natural gas systems.
- Access to high-speed broadband service (defined as minimum 25/mps synchronous) is critical to economic prosperity, community sustainability, support for life-long learning; public safety and health care within rural Canada/Alberta.
- The current infrastructure and associated speeds provided by rural broadband systems is creating “technological backwaters” and diminishing quality of life and community viability. This “digital divide” is particularly critical in rural Canada given the role rural areas play in supporting the national economy through resource extraction and processing.

Discussion followed on rewording or eliminating “minimum 25/mps synchronous” as stipulating minimum amounts is limiting and not reflective of growth potential.

COUNCILLOR LAING: That Council directs Administration to submit a letter to the CRTC, Prime Minister Trudeau, Premier Notley, and applicable Federal and Provincial Ministers regarding the need for regulatory changes in the provision of broadband internet service in rural Canada.

037/16

CARRIED 6/0

5. Alberta Community Partnership Grant Application

Ron Leaf provided information on the Alberta Community Partnership program, and explained that this provincial government program provides grant funding in support of regional collaboration and capacity building initiatives so as to assist two or more municipalities in the development or expansion of regional municipal service deliveries.

He stated that Clearwater County, in partnership with the Town of Rocky Mountain House and the Village of Caroline wishes to apply under the Intermunicipal Collaboration category for assistance in three potential projects as follows: 1. University of Alberta geothermal research project; 2. Research municipal options for the expansion of broadband/internet; and 3. Development of industrial/commercial land.

Mr. Leaf responded to questions from Council and noted that \$30,000 is the maximum amount of grant funds available per application.

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM: That Council endorses an Alberta Community Partnership grant application on behalf of Clearwater County, in partnership with the Town of Rocky Mountain House and the Village of Caroline.

038/16

CARRIED 6/0

MUNICIPAL: **1. Confluence Heritage Society – Letter of Support Request**

Ron Leaf presented a draft letter of support for the Confluence Heritage Society’s Canada 150 Fund grant application for Council’s review. He noted that the Society’s grant application, estimated at \$624,000, is in the “Top 30’ category. If the Society is successful, funds will be used to schedule a series of events, in coordination with Parks Canada and the Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site, to celebrate Canada’s 150 anniversary.

Councillor Greenwood noted that the Clearwater County Heritage Board submitted Clearwater County’s application to participate in the Canada 150 Mosiac Project, a cross-country virtual mural, and was one of fifteen communities in Alberta selected.

COUNCILLOR GREENWOOD: That Council endorses a letter of support for the Confluence Heritage Society Canada 150 Fund grant application.

039/16

CARRIED 6/0

2. Community Partnership Showcase

Tracy Haight stated that members of Council are invited to attend the Community Partnership Showcase, hosted by the Caroline and District Chamber of Commerce, on April 1, 2016 at the Caroline Community HUB. The event will highlight collaborative efforts undertaken to provide health services to the community through the Caroline Community Health and Wellness Centre.

Discussion took place regarding councillors availability to attend the event.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council authorizes Councillors attendance at the Community Partnership Showcase event on April 1, 2016.

040/16

CARRIED 6/0

INFORMATION:

1. CAO's Report

Ron Leaf noted upcoming dates for events and programs. He provided information on Family Literacy Day, taking place on January 27. He noted February 12 is scheduled for a meeting between Alberta Rural Communication Alliance and with the Deputy Minister, Economic Development and Trade to discuss improved broadband services.

Discussion took place on a proposed meeting with Yellowhead County or Ponoka County during the AAMDC Spring Convention and it was determined that Council will extend an invitation to meet with Ponoka County.

COUNCILLOR VANDERMEER: That Council receives the CAO Report, Public Works Director's Report, Accounts Payable Listing, and Councillors' Verbal Reports as information.

041/16

CARRIED 6/0

**ADJOURNMENT:
12:23 P.M.**

COUNCILLOR MAKI: That the Meeting adjourns.

042/16

CARRIED 6/0



REEVE



CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER