

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Council of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo held in the Council Chamber at the Municipal Offices in Fort McMurray, Alberta, on Tuesday, March 28, 2017, commencing at 6:00 p.m.**

**Present:** M. Blake, Mayor  
T. Ault, Councillor  
L. Bussieres, Councillor  
J. Cardinal, Councillor  
S. Germain, Councillor  
K. McGrath, Councillor  
P. Meagher, Councillor  
J. Stroud, Councillor  
C. Tatum, Councillor  
A. Vinni, Councillor

**Absent:** C. Voyageur, Councillor

**Administration:** A. Antoniak, Interim Chief Administrative Officer  
J. Brown, Senior Legislative Officer  
R. Billard, Director, Public Works and Transit Services  
C. Bouchard, Director, Community and Protective Services  
J. Doyle, Director, Planning and Development  
D. George, Director, Engineering and Environmental Services  
L. Ollivier, A/Chief Financial Officer  
D. Soucy, Legislative Officer

**Call To Order**

Mayor M. Blake called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Moved by Councillor P. Meagher that the Agenda be adopted as presented.

**Notices of Motion**

Councillor S. Germain served notice of his intent to bring forward the following motion for consideration at the April 25, 2017 Council meeting:

THAT Administration work with the Recovery Task Force and other relevant internal and external stakeholders to investigate and explore policy options for Council's consideration on FireSmart building materials and property safety for residential and non-residential property owners in the Municipality.

Councillor K. McGrath served notice of his intent to bring forward the following motion for consideration at the April 11, 2017 Council meeting:

WHEREAS a number of properties in the Regional Municipality that were severely damaged or destroyed by the wildfire of May 2016 have been assessed for taxation in 2017 at values that in the opinion of the property owners do not accurately reflect the diminished market values of their properties resulting from the fire damage;

AND WHEREAS the Regional Assessor is a designated officer having statutory duties under the Municipal Government Act and regulations with respect to the property assessment process, that cannot be affected by a resolution of the Council;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Administration be directed to take appropriate steps, including but not limited to posting a notice on the municipal website and using the media, to inform residents that:

- (a) the Regional Assessor has the independent authority to issue a revised Notice of Assessment where it appears to the Regional Assessor that the original Notice of Assessment does not accurately reflect the market value of a property; and
- (b) residents who believe their 2017 Notice of Assessment does not accurately reflect diminished market value as a result of destruction of or damage to the structures on their properties caused by the wildfire, may contact the office of the Regional Assessor to present the facts of their situation and seek issuance of a Revised Notice of Assessment.

Voting then occurred on Councillor P. Meagher's motion.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

1. **[Minutes of Special Council Meeting - March 10, 2017](#)**

Moved by Councillor J. Stroud that the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on March 10, 2017 be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. **[Minutes of Regular Council Meeting - March 14, 2017](#)**

Moved by Councillor T. Ault that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on March 14, 2017 be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

### **Recognition**

3. **[Responders Way](#)**

Ms. Shelley Morrison, long-time resident, was presented with a sign commemorating the naming of Responders Way.

Councillor K. McGrath was also presented with a sign recognizing his contribution to the naming of Responders Way.

## Presentations

4. [Carol Cleminson and Vaughn Jessome, Fort McMurray - Conklin and Fort McMurray - Wood Buffalo Wildrose Constituency Association re: Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission](#)

(6:17 p.m. – 6:34 p.m.)

**Carol Cleminson and Vaughn Jessome, Fort McMurray - Conklin and Fort McMurray - Wood Buffalo Wildrose Constituency Association**, provided an overview of the current Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission review of all provincial electoral boundaries, and requested a letter from Council supporting the retention of both electoral divisions in the Municipality and the realignment of the existing boundaries of both divisions.

### Exit and Return

Councillor K. McGrath exited the Chamber at 6:24 p.m. and returned at 6:26 p.m.

Moved by Councillor T. Ault:

That the Mayor, on behalf of Council, issue a letter to the Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission in support of:

- (a) retaining the division of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo into two electoral divisions;
- (b) adjusting the boundaries of Fort McMurray – Conklin Electoral Division to make it a Special Electoral Division with a population just above the minimum for a special electoral division of 23,349; and
- (c) adjusting the boundaries of Fort McMurray – Wood Buffalo Electoral Division to make it a Regular Electoral Division with a population of approximately 40,000.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## Public Hearings and Related Reports

5. [Land Planning and Transportation Committee Recommendation – Bylaw No. 17/001 – Undeveloped Government Road Allowance Closures within the Canadian Natural Resources Limited Horizon Project Area](#)

(6:35 p.m. – 7:06 p.m.)

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/001 open at 6:35 p.m.

**Jamie Doyle, Director, Planning and Development**, gave an introduction from Administration, indicating that the road allowance closure will facilitate development of the project and address safety concerns related to public access within a mining operation. Vehicle traffic will be diverted through alternate routes around the site and away from mining operations.

**Bob Dunn, District Landman, Horizon Oil Sands, Canadian Natural Resources Limited**, provided an overview of the request for the road allowance closure, noting that the area is within a mining operation that is not accessible by the public.

It was noted for the record that a written submission had been received from Northland Forest Products Ltd. opposing the closure.

Exit and Return

Councillor S. Germain exited the Chamber at 6:42 p.m. and returned at 6:43 p.m.

Moved by Councillor A. Vinni that the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/001 be adjourned to April 25, 2017.

DEFEATED

For: L. Bussieres, P. Meagher, C. Tatum,  
A. Vinni

Opposed: M. Blake, T. Ault, J. Cardinal,  
S. Germain, K. McGrath, J.  
Stroud,

Exit and Return

Councillor K. McGrath exited the Chamber at 7:03 p.m. and returned at 7:05 p.m.

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/001 closed at 7:06 p.m.

6. [Land Planning and Transportation Committee Recommendation – Bylaw No. 17/002 – Undeveloped Government Road Allowance Closures within the Enbridge Pipelines \(Athabasca\) Inc. Project Area](#)  
(7:06 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.)

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/002 open at 7:06 p.m.

**Jamie Doyle, Director, Planning and Development**, gave an introduction from Administration, noting the road allowance closure will facilitate development of the project and address safety concerns related to public access within a pipeline operation. Vehicle traffic will be diverted through alternate routes around the site and away from pipeline operations.

**David Stock, Senior Land & ROW Specialist, Enbridge Pipelines Inc.** provided an overview of the company's requirement for the road allowance, noting that it has a licence of occupation agreement for the area, which is fenced to limit access.

It was noted for the record that a written submission had been received from Northland Forest Products Ltd. opposing the closure.

In his closing statement, David Stock noted that extensive consultation with multiple stakeholders occurred prior to being granted the licence of occupation agreement.

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/002 closed at 7:15 p.m.

7. [Land Planning and Transportation Committee Recommendation – Bylaw No. 17/003 – Undeveloped Government Road Allowance Closures within the Total E&P Canada Joslyn North Mine Project](#)  
(7:15 p.m. – 7:36 p.m.)

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/003 open at 7:15 p.m.

**Jamie Doyle, Director, Planning and Development**, gave an introduction from Administration, indicating that the road allowance closure will facilitate development of the project and address safety concerns related to public access within a mining operation. Vehicle traffic will be diverted through alternate routes around the site and away from mining operations.

It was noted for the record that a written submission had been received from Northland Forest Products Ltd. opposing the closure.

**Jim Rogers, resident**, spoke to the proposed road allowance closure, but did not indicate support or opposition.

**Paul McLeod, resident**, spoke to the proposed road allowance closure, but did not indicate support or opposition.

Exit and Return

Councillor S. Germain exited the Chamber at 7:32 p.m. and returned at 7:34 p.m.

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/003 closed at 7:36 p.m.

Pecuniary Interest

Councillor T. Ault declared a pecuniary interest for the following agenda item due to an employment relationship and exited the Chamber at 7:36 p.m.

8. [Land Planning and Transportation Committee Recommendation – Bylaw No. 17/004 – Closure of Forestry Road FRD 640002 within the Fort Hills Oil Sands Project Area](#)  
(7:37 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.)

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/004 open at 7:37 p.m.

**Jamie Doyle, Director, Planning and Development**, gave an introduction from Administration, indicating that closure of the forestry road, which is no longer required for its intended purpose, will facilitate development of the project and address safety concerns related to public access within a mining operation. Vehicle traffic will be diverted through alternate routes around the site and away from mining operations.

It was noted for the record that a written submission had been received from Northland Forest Products Ltd. opposing the closure.

Mayor M. Blake declared the Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 17/004 closed at 7:45 p.m.

Return

Councillor T. Ault returned to the Chamber at 7:45 p.m.

Recess

A brief recess occurred between 7:46 p.m. and 7:53 p.m.

**Reports**

**9. [2017 Tax Relief Request – 242 Kennedy Crescent, Fort McMurray](#)  
(7:53 p.m. – 7:59 p.m.)**

**Phillip Schofield, Regional Assessor**, provided an overview of the tax relief request.

Return

Councillor A. Vinni returned to the Chamber at 7:54 p.m.

Moved by Councillor T. Ault that the request for cancellation of two months' tax arrears payments, in the amount of \$1,600, for the property located at 242 Kennedy Crescent, be denied.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**Councillors' Motions**

**10. [2017 Property Tax Relief](#)  
(8:00 p.m. – 8:22 p.m.)**

Moved by Councillor S. Germain:

Whereas the Council considers it equitable to

- (a) cancel the municipal portion of property taxes that will become due and payable upon enactment of the 2017 Property Tax Bylaw in respect of residential properties that were destroyed or irreparably damaged by the wildfire of May 2016 and that remained uninhabitable as of January 1, 2017, and
- (b) take other steps as set out in this resolution to further support affected residential property taxpayers in a fair and equitable manner and to seek financial support from the Government of Alberta for the loss of municipal revenue resulting from providing relief to such taxpayers;

Now therefore be it resolved that Council, in the exercise of its discretion and authority under Section 347 of the Municipal Government Act, hereby approves cancellation of the municipal portion of property tax on residential properties in accordance with the following, to become effective immediately after enactment of the 2017 Property Tax Bylaw:

For every residential property that continues to be uninhabitable as of January 1, 2017 because it was destroyed or irreparably damaged by the wildfire, cancellation of the amount representing the pro-rated daily amount of the whole municipal portion of 2017 property tax, including land and building, multiplied by the number of days in 2017 until the first to occur of:

- (a) Completion of reconstruction of the residence on the property as determined through the issuance of a Permit Service Report;
- (b) Sale of the property to a new owner, or;
- (c) The end of the calendar year 2017;

And be it further resolved that Administration is directed to implement the aforesaid tax cancellations when they take effect, in a manner that allows those who wish to voluntarily pay the full amount of their 2017 property taxes, to the extent that the software, systems and procedures of the Taxation and Assessment Department will so allow;

And be it further resolved that Council ask the Mayor to make a request to the Government of Alberta on Council's behalf to waive that portion of the provincial education requisition for 2017 that would ordinarily be payable by property owners for whom the municipal portion of property tax is to be cancelled in accordance with this resolution;

And be it further resolved that Administration be directed to make application to the Government of Alberta for funding support to the Regional Municipality in an amount equal to the municipal portion of property taxes to be cancelled in accordance with this resolution;

And be it further resolved that Administration be directed to prepare for Council's consideration a bylaw to over-ride the provisions of the Tax Penalty Bylaw in order to effect cancellations or refunds of penalties that were applied on January 1, 2017 and would otherwise be applied at later times in 2017 to residential property taxes in arrears, to the extent that such penalties arise from the portion of tax arrears that relates to the 2016 provincial education requisition, such overriding bylaw to be drafted to be effective if and when and to the extent that the Government of Alberta pays a refund to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) for all or a portion of the amount paid by the RMWB to the Government of Alberta on account of the 2016 provincial education requisition.

**Arianna Johnson, resident**, spoke in support of the motion, noting that the tax relief should only be applied to the primary residence of the homeowner.

**Jim Rogers, resident**, spoke in support of the proposed tax relief.

Voting then occurred on Councillor S. Germain's motion.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**Adjournment**

As all scheduled business matters had been concluded, Mayor M. Blake declared the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

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Mayor

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Chief Legislative Officer