

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Council of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo held in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Offices in Fort McMurray, AB, on Tuesday, May 12, 2009, commencing at 6:00 p.m.

Present: M. Blake, Mayor
M. Allen, Councillor
D. Blair, Councillor
M. Byron, Councillor
S. Clarkson, Councillor
L. Flett, Councillor
S. Germain, Councillor
P. Meagher, Councillor
R. Rebus, Councillor
J. Vyboh, Councillor

Absent: G. Janvier, Councillor

Administration: K. Kloss, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
S. Kanzig, Chief Legislative Officer
D. Elliott, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
P. King, Assistant Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
A. Rogers, Senior Legislative Officer
J. Callahan, Legislative Officer
B. Broomfield-Andrews, Legislative Assistant/Recorder
A. Johnson, Legislative Assistant

Call to Order

Mayor Blake called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Opening Prayer

The Mayor asked everyone to join her in Prayer.

Agenda

09-105 Moved by Councillor Vyboh that the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes

1. Council Meeting – April 28, 2009

09-106 Moved by Councillor Blair that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 28, 2009 be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Delegations

2. Ms. Laurie McGowan re: Fort McMurray Environment Committee Activities

Ms. McGowan, President, Fort McMurray Environment Committee, was in attendance to provide an overview of the calendar of events planned by the Fort McMurray Environment Committee during the week of May 31 to June 6, 2009. An invitation was extended to Council to attend the various events. Ms. McGowan advised that further information on Environment Week activities within the Municipality can be found in the Fort McMurray Today newspaper, the Alberta Environment website at www.environment.gov.ab.ca/edu/eweek, or via Facebook by searching Fort McMurray Environment Week.

09-107 Moved by Councillor Vyboh that the presentation from Ms. Laurie McGowan, regarding Fort McMurray Environment Committee activities, given by Laurie McGowan be accepted as information.

Ms. McGowan provided clarification and responded to questions from Council.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Mr. Brent Stuart, Chair, Oil Sands Developers Group (OSDG) Property Tax Committee, re: Bylaw No. 09/015 – 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw

Mr. Stuart, on behalf of OSDG members, expressed opposition to the proposed tax (mill) rate increase for the rural non-residential class. Mr. Stuart commented that tax increases have more than doubled from 2006 to 2008, and a further proposed increase could affect industry support in the community. A zero tax (mill) rate increase is being requested. Details were provided for a proposed three point plan that could benefit both industry and the Municipality.

09-108 Moved by Councillor Allen that the presentation from Mr. Brent Stuart, OSDG, regarding the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, be accepted as information.

Mr. Stuart provided clarification and responded to questions from Council.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Mr. Darren Robson, 1st Vice President, Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce re: Bylaw No. 09/015 – 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw

Mr. Robson advised that the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization that represents over 600 businesses in the region. A PowerPoint presentation was presented, during which three actions were requested of Council. First, keep the tax (mill) increase at zero for all tax

classes. Second, amend the 2009 operating budget by decreasing the amount to be allocated to the Capital Infrastructure Reserve. Third, that Council commit to consultation with all stakeholders during future budget processes. Mr. Robson concluded his presentation by encouraging Council to consider establishing a “Joint Action Committee” to review property tax principles.

09-109 Moved by Councillor Allen that the presentation from Mr. Darren Robson, Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, regarding the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, be accepted as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Other Delegations

Mayor Blake asked if anyone present in the gallery wished to speak to a topic on the evening’s agenda.

Mr. Dave Kirschner, private citizen, re: 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw

Mr. Kirschner, advised that he was not speaking either in favour or in opposition to the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, and requested that consideration be given to the proposed tax increases for businesses within the region. Mr. Kirschner encouraged Council to work in collaboration with all parties in the region. Mr. Kirschner thanked Council for the opportunity to speak.

09-110 Moved by Councillor Allen that the presentation from Mr. Dave Kirschner regarding the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, be received as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mike Durocher, private citizen, re: 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw

Mr. Durocher advised of his opposition to the proposed tax rate increases, and of the impact the proposed tax increases may have on the residents within the Municipality. Mr. Durocher urged Council to think carefully before making any decisions in this matter.

09-111 Moved by Councillor Clarkson that the presentation from Mr. Mike Durocher regarding the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, be received as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Hearings

There were no Public Hearings scheduled.

Bylaws

5. Bylaw No. 09/015 – 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw

Henk van Waas, General Manager, Assessment and Taxation Department, provided a PowerPoint presentation in keeping with the presentation provided at the regular Council meeting on April 28, 2009.

09-112 Moved by Councillor Clarkson that Bylaw No. 09/015, being the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, be read a second time.

09-113 Moved by Councillor Vyboh that Administration be directed to prepare an amendment to the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw that reflects the following:

- Rural Non-Residential - 28% over 2008 tax revenues, plus new growth;
- Urban Non-Residential - 5% over 2008 revenues, plus new growth; and
- Urban/Rural/Other Residential - decrease of 17% over 2008 revenues, plus new growth.

Councillor Vyboh provided an explanation for the amending motion with regard to Bylaw No. 09/015, and requested Council's support for this amendment. A discussion on the proposed tax rates occurred.

CARRIED

For: Blair, Byron, Flett, Germain,
Vyboh

Opposed: Allen, Blake, Clarkson,
Rebus

09-114 Moved by Councillor Vyboh:

- THAT Bylaw No. 09/015 be tabled to allow Administration an opportunity to prepare an amended bylaw; and
- THAT the agenda be amended by adding the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw as Item No. 8 to be dealt with immediately following Updates.

CARRIED

For: Allen, Blair, Blake, Byron, Flett,
Germain, Rebus, Vyboh

Opposed: Clarkson

The 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw will be addressed later in the meeting as Item 8 following Updates.

Recess

A recess occurred from 7:57 p.m. to 8:18 p.m.

Reports

6. Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation Amended Memorandum of Association

09-115 Moved by Councillor Allen:

- THAT the existing Memorandum of Association with Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Corporation, dated April 25, 2001 be repealed; and
- THAT the amended Memorandum of Association with the Wood Buffalo Housing Development Corporation, dated May 12, 2009 be approved.

CARRIED

For: Allen, Blair, Blake, Clarkson,
Flett, Germain, Rebus, Vyboh

Opposed: Byron

New and Unfinished Business

7. Notice of Motion – Councillor Vyboh

Councillor Vyboh served Notice of Motion at the April 28, 2009 regular Council meeting regarding the creation of parking spaces designated for families with young children. He provided background information on the matter.

09-116 Moved by Councillor Vyboh that Administration be directed to explore the feasibility of creating parking spaces designated for families with young children.

Arrival

Councillor Meagher arrived at the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

A short discussion ensued with regard to the practicality of this item. Kelly Kloss, the Acting Chief Administrative Officer, responded to questions from Council.

Voting then occurred on the motion.

DEFEATED

For: Blair, Byron, Flett, Germain,
Vyboh

Opposed: Allen, Blake, Clarkson,
Meagher, Rebus

Updates

Mayor's Update

Mayor Blake reported on the following:

- Servus Credit Union Grand Opening
- Farewell Event for the Executive Director of the Hub
- Classroom on Wheels Luncheon sponsored by the Hub
- Lower Athabasca Regional Advisory Committee meetings
- Keyano Convocation Ceremony
- Polynesian Night held at the Sawridge Inn
- House of Commons Environmental and Sustainable Development Committee

Reporting of Councillors on Boards and Committees

Councillor Clarkson reported on the following:

- Intercity Forum on Social Policy

Councillor Germain reported on the following:

- MacDonald Island Park Board Corporation Meeting

Councillor Vyboh reported on the following:

- Airport Commission Meeting

Councillor Allen reported on the following:

- McDonalds' McHappy Days
- Canadian Society of Safety Engineering

Councillor Blair reported on the following:

- Planning for a Pandemic Meeting
- Land Issues Meeting in Fort MacKay

Administrative Update

There was no administrative update.

Recess

A recess occurred from 9:05 p.m. to 9:19 p.m.

8. 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw

09- 117 Moved by Councillor Rebus that Bylaw No. 09/015 be raised from the table.

Administration advised that if the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw were not approved at this meeting, then a further meeting needs to be held as soon as possible to avoid any penalties associated with late billings.

DEFEATED

For: Allen, Blake, Clarkson, Meagher,

Rebus
Opposed: Blair, Byron, Flett, Germain,
Vyboh

A discussion occurred with regard to the scheduling of a Special Council Meeting.

09-118 Moved by Councillor Germain that a Special Council Meeting be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at 6:00 p.m., for the purpose of continuing deliberations on the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw.

CARRIED

For: Blair, Blake, Byron, Flett,
Germain, Meagher, Vyboh

Opposed: Allen, Clarkson, Rebus

Adjournment

09-119 Moved by Councillor Allen that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Mayor

Chief Legislative Officer