

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 Monday, November 7, 2022, commencing at 3:00 PM.

Present:

Sandy Bowman, Mayor
Ken Ball, Councillor
Funky Banjoko, Councillor (via MS Teams)
Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor
Shafiq Dogar, Councillor
Allan Grandison, Councillor (via MS Teams)
Jane Stroud, Councillor (via MS Teams)
Loretta Waquan, Councillor (via MS Teams)
Stu Wigle, Councillor

Absent:

Lance Bussieres, Councillor
Keith McGrath, Councillor

Administration:

Paul Thorkelsson, Chief Administrative Officer
Jade Brown, Chief Legislative Officer
Deanne Bergey, Director, Community and Protective Services
Justin Canning, Acting Director, Environmental Services
Kari Donnelly, Director, Human Resources (via MS Teams)
Laurie Farquharson, Chief Financial Officer
Caitlin Hanly, Acting Director, Legal Services
Kelly Hansen, Director, Strategic Planning and Program Management (via MS Teams)
Matthew Harrison, Director, Communications and Engagement
Nasir Qureshi, Acting Director, Engineering
Keith Smith, Director, Public Works
Darlene Soucy, Legislative Officer

1. Call to Order

Councillor S. Wigle called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Entrance

Councillor L. Waquan joined the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Councillor K. Ball served notice of his intent to bring forward the following motion for Council's consideration at the November 22, 2022 Council meeting:

“WHEREAS Administration has received previous direction from Council to construct flood mitigation measures in the Lower Townsite to a protection level that would keep our community safe for a 1 in 200-year flood event. This elevation has been determined to be 250.9 m above sea level which includes engineering safety factors; and

WHEREAS the Province of Alberta has mandated that we protect our residents from flood by constructing flood mitigation measures that keep our community safe for a 1 in 100-year flood event. This elevation has been determined to be 250.5 m above sea level which includes engineering safety factors; and

WHEREAS the Fort McMurray flood of 2020 reached an elevation of 248.9m above sea level and is considered to be a 1 in 40-year flood event; and

WHEREAS Administration sought input from residents on options to complete flood mitigation measures to a 1 in 200-year flood protection for Reach 6 and work is underway to complete Reaches 2, 3 ,4, 5 and Taiga Nova South to a 1 in 200-year flood event through various projects.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT Administration examine the cost differential of constructing to 250.5 m vs. 250.9 m for the aforementioned outstanding reaches and report back to Council with the findings as soon as possible.”

Councillor F. Banjoko served notice of her intent to bring forward the following motion for Council's consideration at the November 22, 2022 Council meeting:

“WHEREAS Eid-al-Adha, also known as the “Feast of Sacrifice”, is one of the largest holidays celebrated in Islam; and

WHEREAS Eid-al-Adha is typically marked by charity, communal prayers, large social gatherings with family and friends, slaughtering of livestock and providing meat to the needy and sharing it with family; and

WHEREAS the Muslim population in Fort McMurray is four times the National average (currently at 12% of the population, with Toronto being at 8.9%) with the Municipality focusing to continually improve inclusivity for residents; and

WHEREAS the 2023 Feast of Sacrifice is Thursday, June 29, 2023.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Administration be directed to investigate and provide a report to Council by April 14, 2023, on the possibility of providing a covered space for 15 days each year to allow the Muslim community the opportunity to participate in the Feast of Sacrifice.”

MOTION:

THAT the Agenda be adopted as presented.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Ken Ball, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Shafiq Dogar, Councillor |
| FOR: | Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bowman, Bussieres, McGrath |

3. Consent Agenda**MOTION:**

THAT the recommendations contained in items 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 be approved.

3.1. Minutes of Council Meeting - October 25, 2022

THAT the Minutes of the regular Council meeting held on October 25, 2022 be approved as presented.

3.2. Minutes of Organizational Meeting - October 25, 2022

THAT the Minutes of the Organizational meeting held on October 25, 2022 be approved as presented.

3.3. Scheduling of 2023 Budget Meetings

THAT a Special Council Meeting to consider the 2023 Proposed Budgets and Financial Plans be scheduled to take place in the Jubilee Centre Council Chamber, at 9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, commencing at 9:00 a.m. each day from November 29 to December 2, 2022.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Ken Ball, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Shafiq Dogar, Councillor |
| FOR: | Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bowman, Bussieres, McGrath |

4. Presentations

4.1. Henry Hunter, Chair, and Luana Bussieres, Vice-Chair, Advisory Committee on Aging, re: Annual Report

Henry Hunter, Chair, and Luana Bussieres, Vice-Chair, Advisory Committee on Aging, presented the Committee's Annual Report, noting that one of the main priorities this year was the Age-friendly Work Plan implementation, part of which is the current Accessibility Audit. It was also noted that other age-friendly initiatives this year included Senior's Week and the Snow Angel's program.

4.2. Kevin Weidlich, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Wes Holodniuk, Board Member, Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism re: Economic Development and Tourism Update

Kevin Weidlich, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Wes Holodniuk, Board Member, Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo Economic Development and Tourism (FMWBEDT), presented FMWBEDT's progress report on the 2022 achievements to date and the 2023 priorities. The update highlighted the 2022 progress of five strategic goals including: grow local business and entrepreneurship; support innovation; attract new business and private investment; brand and market our Region; and pursue organizational excellence. It was noted that the 2023 priorities include: enable local businesses to grow: attract commercial and retail investment; rural and Indigenous tourism opportunities; and attract new talent to the Region.

Exit and Return

Councillor F. Banjoko disconnected from the meeting at 3:32 p.m. and rejoined the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Recess, Entrance and Resuming the Chair

A recess occurred from 4:14 p.m. to 4:26 p.m., at which time Mayor S. Bowman entered the meeting and resumed the Chair, and Councillor S. Dogar was not present.

5. New Business

5.1. Wildfire Mitigation Strategy FireSmart Wood Buffalo

Chief Jody Butz, Regional Fire Chief, Regional Emergency Services, and Erin Judge, Supervisor, FireSmart, presented an overview of the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy, which is a guiding document for managing wildfire risk in the Region that balances areas of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. It was noted that the FireSmart Wood Buffalo team is in the process of applying for additional grant funding for vegetation and fuel management, which is in line with the overarching program goal of reducing the risk of wildfire damage to the Region.

Return

Councillor S. Dogar returned to the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

MOTION:

THAT the updated Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Wildfire Mitigation Strategy (2022-2027) (Attachment 1) be approved for use as a guiding document for FireSmart in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo; and

THAT the Mayor be authorized, on behalf of Council, to provide a letter of support for the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta, in support of the Regional Emergency Services FireSmart Wood Buffalo team application for vegetation / fuel management funding.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Ken Ball, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

6. Councillors' Motions

6.1. Creation of Alberta Provincial Police Service - Councillor K. McGrath

Due to Councillor K. McGrath's absence, and by consensus of Council, it was agreed to defer the item to the next regular Council meeting.

6.2. Rural Water and Wastewater Utility Billings – Councillor S. Wigle

Councillor S. Wigle spoke to his motion, noting that some residents that are now connected to the rural water and sewer services have experienced increases in their wastewater utility billings, and a review should be done of the utility billing rates for all rural areas to ensure fairness and consistency. It was also noted that during the time of serving the motion to November 7, he has had conversations with Administration and residents and would like to see the report on this matter brought back before the end of the first quarter 2023. There were no concerns raised of Council with respect to this.

Sheri Gaunt, Draper resident, spoke to the current water delivery and sewer haulage system in place for Draper, noting that the scheduling of these services is inconsistent and inconvenient.

MOTION:

WHEREAS the Municipality's Rural Water and Sewer Servicing Program is open for residents in some rural communities to connect and some residents have now connected to the Municipality's piped water and sewer services;

AND WHEREAS some residents have seen an increase in their water and wastewater utility billing since the time of connection;

AND WHEREAS water and wastewater utility billing rates should be reviewed for all rural areas to ensure fairness and consistency;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Administration conduct an analysis of water and wastewater utility billings in the rural areas and bring forward this information before the end of Q1 2023.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Stu Wigle, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

6.3. Fiscal Responsibility Policy FIN-160 - Councillor K. Ball

Councillor K. Ball spoke to his motion, noting that under the current Fiscal Responsibility Policy, Administration has the ability to make certain amendments to capital project budget amounts and that this decision-making authority should revert back to Council.

MOTION:

THAT Administration review and bring forward recommendations to amend the Fiscal Responsibility Policy FIN-160 to ensure that appropriate capital budget amendments are brought forward for Council approval.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [8 TO 1] |
| MOVER: | Ken Ball, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Funky Banjoko, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| AGAINST: | Cardinal |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

6.4. Elected Officials Compensation Review - Councillor K. Cardinal

Councillor K. Cardinal spoke to his motion, noting that a review of the Elected Officials Compensation, Travel and Expense Policy would ensure that compensation is in keeping with inflation and the amount of the time required to fulfill Council duties, and indicated that any amendments would be for the next Council term beginning in October 2025.

MOTION:

THAT Administration be directed to undertake a third-party review of the Elected Officials Compensation, Travel and Expense Policy LEG-050 and bring forward proposed changes to the Policy as well as remuneration recommendations for the 2025 Council in Q3 of 2023.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [7 TO 2] |
| MOVER: | Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Stu Wigle, Councillor |
| FOR: | Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| AGAINST: | Bowman, Ball |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

Recess

A recess occurred from 5:36 p.m. to 5:53 p.m.

7. In-Camera Session

MOTION:

THAT Council close item 7.1 to the public pursuant to sections 24(1) and 25(1) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Stu Wigle, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

7.1. **Advice from Officials / Disclosure Harmful to Economic and Other Interests of a Public Body**

(in camera pursuant to sections 24(1) and 25(1) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)

| Name | Reason for Attending |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Paul Thorkelsson | Chief Administrative Officer |
| Jade Brown | Clerk/Legislative Advice |
| Kari Donnelly | Director, Human Resources |

Exit and Return

Councillor K. Ball exited the meeting at 6:46 p.m. and returned at 6:47 p.m.

MOTION:

THAT the meeting reconvene in public.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Stu Wigle, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

MOTION:

THAT Administration be directed to proceed with the proposed mandate authority as discussed in closed session.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [8 TO 1] |
| MOVER: | Stu Wigle, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Funky Banjoko, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| AGAINST: | Grandison |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

MOTION:

THAT Council close items 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 to the public pursuant to sections 17(1), 24(1) and 27(1) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Stu Wigle, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Loretta Waquan, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

7.2. Advice from Officials / Privileged Information

(in camera pursuant to sections 24(1) and 27(1) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)

| Name | Reason for Attending |
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| Paul Thorkelsson | Chief Administrative Officer |
| Jade Brown | Clerk/Legislative Advice |
| Deanne Bergey | Director, Community and Protective Services |
| Laurie Farquharson | Chief Financial Officer |
| Brad McMurdo | Director, Planning and Development |
| Caitlin Hanly | Municipal Legal Counsel |

Exit and Return

Councillor S. Dogar exited the meeting at 6:59 p.m. and returned at 7:00 p.m.

7.3. Advice from Officials(in camera pursuant to section 24(1) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)

| Name | Reason for Attending |
|------------------|---|
| Paul Thorkelsson | Chief Administrative Officer |
| Jade Brown | Clerk/Legislative Advice |
| Kelly Hansen | Director, Strategic Planning and Program Management |

7.4. Disclosure Harmful to Personal Privacy / Advice from Officials(in camera pursuant to sections 17(1) and 24(1) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)

| Name | Reason for Attending |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Paul Thorkelsson | Chief Administrative Officer |
| Jade Brown | Clerk/Legislative Advice |
| Caitlin Hanly | Municipal Legal Counsel |

MOTION:

THAT the meeting reconvene in public.

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| RESULT: | CARRIED [UNANIMOUS] |
| MOVER: | Kendrick Cardinal, Councillor |
| SECONDER: | Ken Ball, Councillor |
| FOR: | Bowman, Ball, Banjoko, Cardinal, Dogar, Grandison, Stroud, Waquan, Wigle |
| ABSENT: | Bussieres, McGrath |

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

 Mayor

 Chief Legislative Officer