

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, April 28, 2009, commencing at 6:00 p.m.

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

Absent: M. Byron, Councillor

Administration: R. Burkard, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Kanzig, Chief Legislative Officer
D. Elliott, Deputy CAO
K. Greig, Deputy CAO
K. Kloss, Deputy CAO
J. Callahan, Legislative Officer
B. Broomfield-Andrews, Recorder/Legislative Assistant
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

09-097 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes

1. Council Meeting – April 14, 2009

09-098 Moved by Councillor Vyboh that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 14, 2009 be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Delegations

There were no delegations scheduled.

Presentations

2. Darryl Howery, Applications Consulting Management re: Fiscal Impact Model

Mr. Howery provided a lengthy presentation of the Fiscal Impact Model (FIM) developed and customized for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Mr. Howery explained that the FIM is a computer software program that determines the change in costs, revenues, and taxes of a municipality as it relates to the scope and type of development and population growth, to determine what the financial situation of the municipality might be in the future. The presentation included scenarios of a draft analysis, based on 2006, 2007 and 2008 financial information.

A lengthy discussion occurred on the draft FIM's debt service limit calculation results, and on the total tax and utility costs per dwelling unit results. The FIM draft clearly showed that residential property taxes will increase dramatically to accommodate the continued population growth; and, that significant outside financial assistance will be required for the Municipality to keep below the *Municipal Government Act* regulated debt load limit and to keep residential taxes reasonable. Using a graph to chart the total costs per dwelling unit based on 2006 property taxes and utilities, the Municipality was noted to be the fourth highest of nineteen municipalities. Further, based on the 2006 information, the Municipality will substantially exceed Lethbridge, which has the highest rate of residential taxes, over a twenty year period. It was noted by Administration that the FIM will be the rationale driving the 2009 tax rate bylaw.

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

09-099 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the presentation regarding the Fiscal Impact Model given by Darryl Howery be accepted as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. D'arcy Elliott, Deputy CAO, and Clark Riley, MacDonald Island Owner's Representative, re: MacDonald Island Park

An update was presented on the status of the MacDonald Island Park Redevelopment project, which included an overview of many of the features of the facility. When completed, the facility will house public library space, an aquatic centre, NHL-size ice arena, mini-ice and leisure ice surfaces, a child play and mind area, indoor field houses for sports and community events, a running track, and retail space. Administration advised that the budget is currently on track for the project. A schedule of timelines for the proposed opening dates for the various areas of the park facility was also provided. The presentation included photographs showing the construction progress of various areas

within the complex. Mr. Tim Reed, the incoming Chief Operating Officer, and Mr. Nick Sanders, Board Chair, were introduced to Council.

The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Mr. Riley, and Mr. Reed provided clarification and responded to questions from Council.

09-100 Moved by Councillor Germain that the presentation regarding MacDonald Island Park given by D'arcy Elliott, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, and Clark Riley, MacDonald Island Owner's Representative, be accepted as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Recess

A recess occurred from 8:05 p.m. to 8:20 p.m.

Bylaws

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

Henk van Waas, General Manager, Assessment and Taxation, provided an overview of the proposed 2009 tax rates. The Tax Rate Bylaw establishes taxation rates not only for municipal expenditures, but also requisitions from Alberta Education, Ayabaskaw House in Fort Chipewyan and Rotary House in Fort McMurray. In a 2008 urban residential total tax comparison, the Municipality rated fifth among comparable mid-sized cities in Alberta. In a 2008 urban non-residential total tax comparison, the Municipality has the lowest taxes when compared to comparable mid-sized cities. The 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw is recommending that urban, rural and other residential taxes remain neutral (this reflects the fourth year of no increases), that urban non-residential taxes increase by 5%, and that rural non-residential taxes increase by 20%. It is also recommended that a revenue shortfall be offset by reducing the 2009 Capital Infrastructure Reserve Transfer. Industry development is driving the demand for municipal infrastructure, and therefore the burden of taxation needed will be from the rural non-residential assessment class. Mr. van Waas stressed that the Municipality will collect the same tax revenue for 2009 as it did in 2008 on residential properties which existed in 2008.

09-101 Moved by Councillor Meagher that Bylaw No. 09/015, being the 2009 Tax Rate Bylaw, be read a first time.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Bylaw No. 09/016 – Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan

Councillor Allen declared a pecuniary interest in this item, as he owns commercial property in the lower townsite, and excused himself from the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Dennis Peck, General Manager, Planning and Development, advised that the designers and drafters of the Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan (Lower Townsite ARP) will be in attendance at

the public hearing to provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed bylaw. The main objective of the Lower Townsite ARP is to provide a comprehensive land use strategy addressing issues such as sustainability; intensification; land use integration and compatibility; transportation and connectivity; infrastructure and servicing; flood abatement, and the form, function and aesthetics of the area. Mr. Peck concluded his comments by thanking Council for their support and patience in the development of the Lower Townsite ARP. He also noted that Administration has scheduled the required public hearing to occur on May 26, 2009, thereby allowing residents four weeks, instead of the standard two weeks, to review the document and prepare comments/submissions.

09-102 Moved by Councillor Meagher that Bylaw 09/016, being the Lower Townsite Area Redevelopment Plan, be read a first time.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Return

Councillor Allen returned to the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Reports

6. Appointments to Council Committees

09-103 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the following appointments be approved, effective immediately:

- Library Board: Ali Syed to December 31, 2009;
- Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity and Equality: Sarah Sevinj Imran to December 31, 2009; and
- Subdivision and Development Appeal Board: Elaine Martens to December 31, 2010.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

New and Unfinished Business

7. Notice of Motion – Councillor Vyboh

Councillor Vyboh served the following notice of motion which will be brought forward at the next regular Council meeting for consideration:

“THAT Council request Administration to explore the feasibility of creating parking spaces designated for families with young children.”

Voting on the matter will happen at the May 12, 2009 Council meeting.

Updates

Mayor’s Update

Mayor Blake reported on the following:

- Community Development Advisory Board
- Meeting with new President/CEO of Alberta Health Services – Dr. Stephen Duckett
- Community Clean-Up Block Challenge
- Leadership Wood Buffalo
- Provincial and Federal Government Contributions to the Thickwood Boulevard/Confederation Drive Overpass projects
- Discovery Leadership Program in Anzac
- Proclamation for National Victims Awareness Week
- Proclamation for International Day of Mourning Ceremony
- Cerebral Palsy Proclamation

Reporting of Councillors on Boards and Committees

Councillor Rebus reported on the following:

- Saprae Creek Board Recycling Challenge
- Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Meeting

Councillor Blair reported on the following:

- Archie Simpson Arena Construction progress
- Cell Phone Service in Fort Chipewyan

Councillor Clarkson reported on the following:

- Leadership Wood Buffalo
- Distinguished Alumni Award from Athabasca University presented to Mayor Blake

Councillor Meagher reported on the following:

- Education Week

Councillor Vyboh reported on the following:

- Meeting to discuss need for long-term care facility in Fort McMurray

Councillor Germain reported on the following:

- MacDonald Island Park Corporation

Councillor Allen reported on the following:

- Second Annual Community Clean-Up Block Challenge
- Athabasca Watershed Planning Advisory Committee

Councillor Janvier reported on the following:

- Community Association meetings in Conklin and Janvier

Administrative Update

Kelly Kloss, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, provided an update on the Community Clean-Up initiative. To date, more than 21 local schools and 152 community groups, representing 8000 residents, have signed up to participate this year. Mr. Kloss commended the community for their spirit in this endeavour, and encouraged residents to adopt a road, a park, or to clean a trail.

Adjournment

09-104 Moved by Councillor Blair that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Mayor

Chief Legislative Officer