

Minutes of a 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, November 24, 2009, commencing at 6:00 p.m.

Present: M. Blake, Mayor
M. Allen, Councillor
L. Flett, Councillor
S. Germain, Councillor
G. Janvier, Councillor
P. Meagher, Councillor
R. Rebus, Councillor (via teleconference)
J. Vyboh, Councillor

Absent: D. Blair, Councillor
M. Byron, Councillor
S. Clarkson, Councillor

Administration: K. Kloss, Acting Chief Administrative Officer
A. Rogers, Acting Chief Legislative Officer
P. King, Assistant DCAO
W. Holodniuk, Assistant DCAO
B. Broomfield-Andrews, Recorder/Legislative Assistant
A. Wojtkiewicz, Legislative Assistant

Call to Order

Mayor Blake called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Opening Prayer

The Mayor asked everyone to join her in Prayer.

Agenda

09-281 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes

1. Council Meeting – November 10, 2009

09-282 Moved by Councillor Vyboh that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 10, 2009 be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Delegations

There were no delegations scheduled.

Presentations

There were no presentations scheduled.

Public Hearings

3. Public Hearing re: Bylaw No. 09/033 – Single-Use Plastic Shopping Bag Bylaw

09-283 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the meeting move into Public Hearing.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Public Hearing commenced at 6:06 p.m.

A. Opening Statements

Darcy Elder, Public Works Director; Shane Hogan, Director Environmental Services; and Shannon Charney, Manager, Public Works Administration and Environmental Services

Mr. Elder advised that the intent of this bylaw, at the direction of Council, is to introduce legislation that would prohibit the use of plastic shopping bags within the community, and reiterated it is Administration's position that they support the reduction of plastic and waste going into the municipal landfill. Administration is in favour of implementing public awareness rather than implementing a legislated process.

Mr. Elder noted that the Municipality has started several recycling initiatives as part of the Recycling Education and Awareness campaign.

B. Written Presentations

It was noted that the following correspondence had been received from:

- Cheri McGuigan, dated November 13, 2009 - In Support
- Brent Lawson, dated November 13, 2009 - In Support
- Patricia Marie Budd, dated November 13, 2009 - In Support
- Helen MacLeod, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Sherry Kathleen Freeman, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Amy Kilburn, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Jeff Cadegan, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Anasiasiya Sadvoska, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Ayleen Corred, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support

- Jessica Jackson, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Robert Vargo, Alberta Motor Products Ltd., dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Denise Quinn, dated November 17, 2009 - In Support
- Chantelle Tatum, dated November 17, 2009 - In Support
- Michael Muir, dated November 17, 2009 - In Support
- Joanna Scanlon, dated November 17, 2009 - In Support
- Adriana Viale, dated November 17, 2009 - In Support
- Sarah MacLeod, dated November 17, 2009 - In Support
- Lori Capstick, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- Sarah Lang, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support
- James Thompson, dated November 16, 2009 - In Support

C. Verbal Presentations

There were no verbal presentations received.

D. Other Verbal Presentations

Mr. Willie Engelbrecht, Business Owner

Mr. Engelbrecht indicated opposition to the proposed bylaw and amendment. He is the owner of a small shop in the downtown area serving the ethnic communities. The people who come into his shop are from a poorer part of the community and they need plastic shopping bags to carry their items as they usually walk, travel by bus, or take taxis. If they forget to take their cloth bags for example, these people do not have the resources to return to their residence and then travel back to the shop. The proposed bylaw will affect the poorer parts of the community more drastically than is realized.

Arrival

Councillor Janvier arrived at the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Allen Langdon, Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors

Mr. Langdon indicated opposition to the proposed bylaw and amendment. A PowerPoint presentation on grocery retail activity on plastic bags was presented. The Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) is a national industry association representing grocery retailers, grocery wholesalers, and food service distribution. Retailers have been increasingly looking at reduce and recycling options as concerns over the environmental footprint increases. One of the recommendations included in the presentation is that the CCGD is prepared to work in partnership with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo to help achieve a reduction in the use of disposable shopping bags and assist with efforts to educate consumers.

Sean Graham, resident

Mr. Graham indicated support for the proposed bylaw and amendment, and advised that the proposed bylaw and amendment should be changed from “single use plastic shopping bag bylaw” to “single use shopping bag bylaw”, which would include plastic, paper and biodegradable bags. Paper bags should not be provided as a substitute to plastic bags as paper bags require 40% more energy to create; require 70% more air pollution; 50 times the water waste in production; and five times the fossil fuels to transport the paper bags. In his opinion, if paper bags are not included in the proposed bylaw, it may open the bylaw to criticisms. As well, the objectives of decreased waste to the landfill; the “throw away single use” attitude; decreased amount of litter in the community; and decreased community environmental footprint would not be met. Mr. Graham commented on the positive recognition the Municipality has received since March 2009 when Council passed a resolution to proceed with drafting legislation and establishing a budget to ban plastic shopping bags by 2010.

In conclusion, Mr. Graham urged Council to approve the proposed bylaw and the amendment to include paper bags.

Ms. Dawn Farrell, resident

Ms. Farrell was in attendance to indicate support of the proposed bylaw and amendment. Ms. Farrell advised she is a member of the Fort McMurray Environment Committee and commented on some of the feedback received from the community during the Municipal Bag Program.

Mr. Michael Lang, resident

Mr. Lang was in attendance to indicate support of the proposed bylaw and amendment. Removing single use shopping bags from the shopping routine would be simple and cost effective, is an easy way for the Municipality to reduce its net environmental impact, and to set an example for other communities in Alberta and Canada. Mr. Lang encouraged Council to continue on its path to a greener community. Banning all single use shopping bags would be best for the environment, the landfills, and the wildlife. Mr. Lang advised he hopes Council approves the proposed bylaw and amendment.

Mr. Greg Cleal, resident

Mr. Cleo was in attendance to indicate support of the proposed bylaw and amendment. Mr. Cleo advised he hopes Council approves the proposed bylaw and amendment.

Joseph Hoffman, resident

Mr. Hoffman was in attendance to indicate support of the proposed bylaw and amendment. Paper bags are even worst for the environment than plastic bags. Having a ban on all single use shopping bags is a good venture, and would make an impact on the ecological footprint within the Municipality, and other cities in the Province. Mr. Hoffman strongly urged Council to accept the proposed amendment.

Arrival

Councillor Germain arrived at the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Ms. Catherine Lynch, resident

Ms. Lynch advised she is in attendance to express an opinion on a ban against single use shopping bags. By encouraging the amendment, it would benefit both the community and the environment. In supporting the bylaw, the region would be seen as a leader and as an example to other communities to follow with their own bylaws to ban single use shopping bags. Ms. Lynch advised she fully supports the proposed amendment to Bylaw No. 09/033 to include all single use shopping bags.

E. Questions of Council

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Graham provided clarification on an experiment he conducted to determine the volume of plastic in various sized plastic bags, elaborated on banning biodegradable bags, and the inclusion of polyethylene bags in a proposed single use shopping bag ban.

In response to questions from Council, Administration provided information and clarification with regard to timelines for the implementation of a ban, and the rationale behind choosing a date for implementation.

F. Closing Statement

Mr. Hogan reiterated that Administration supports the reduction of all plastic and any type of recyclables going into the landfill site, and also reiterated Administration would like to promote education and awareness rather than to legislate.

09-284 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the Public Hearing be closed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Public Hearing concluded at 6:56 p.m.

Recess

A recess occurred from 6:56 p.m. to 7:09 p.m.

Bylaws**4. Bylaw No. 09/033 – Single-Use Plastic Shopping Bag Bylaw**

09-285 Moved by Councillor Allen that Bylaw No. 09/033, being the Single-Use Plastic Shopping Bag Bylaw, be read a second time.

09-286 Moved by Councillor Allen that Bylaw No.09/033 be amended as detailed in Attachment 2 (Summary of Proposed Amendments – Bylaw No. 09/033, dated November 24, 2009).

A short discussion occurred with regard to the fee structure contained within the bylaw.

Voting then occurred on the amending motion.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The following amendment was introduced by Councillor Vyboh: “THAT Bylaw No. 09/033 be amended by:

- Deleting the word “PLASTIC” from the first paragraph;
- Deleting the word “plastic” from the third WHEREAS statement;
- Adding the words “and paper” immediately following the word “plastic” in the fourth WHEREAS statement;
- Deleting the existing text from Section 1 and inserting the following: “The purpose of this bylaw is to eliminate the distribution of single-use shopping bags within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, thereby decreasing the plastic and paper impact on the environment.”
- Deleting the word “Plastic” from Section 2;
- Adding the following text at the end of Section 3b): “but does not include the following, as defined in Land Use Bylaw No. 99/059, or any successor legislation:
 - food service, drive-in or drive-through;
 - food service, major restaurant;
 - food service, minor restaurant;
 - food service, mobile catering;
 - food service, take out restaurant;
- Deleting the existing text from Section 3e) and inserting the following: “single-use shopping bag” means:
 - any bag made with less than 2.25 mils thick polyethylene, including a biodegradable bag;
OR
 - any bag made of pulp used mainly for the transporting of goods from outlet to home, but does not include reusable bags;
- Deleting the word “plastic” from Section 4; and
- Deleting the existing text from Section 9 and inserting the following: “Bags provided by pharmacists to contain prescription drugs shall be exempted from this bylaw”.

Councillor Vyboh provided the rationale for his amendment.

After a lengthy discussion during which the contents of the amendments were discussed, dialogue occurred as to the value of delaying the amendment.

09-287 Moved by Councillor Meagher that Bylaw No. 09/033 be deferred until December 8, 2009.

CARRIED

For: Blake, Allen, Flett, Janvier,
Meagher, Rebus

Opposed: Germain, Vyboh

Reports

5. Archie Simpson Arena – Synthetic Ice Surfacing Scope Change

09-288 Moved by Councillor Meagher:

- THAT the 2009 Capital Budget be amended as summarized in Attachment 1 (Capital Budget Amendment Request - Archie Simpson Arena, dated November 24, 2009) which includes funds for the purchase and installation of synthetic ice; and
- THAT the provisions of Attachment 1 (Capital Budget Amendment Request - Archie Simpson Arena, dated November 24, 2009) remain confidential pursuant to sections 16 and 25 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.A., 2000 c.F-25, as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

New and Unfinished Business

Notice of Motion

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

“THAT Administration be directed to develop a Land Management policy that allows the Municipality to release non-required land to non-profit organizations that provide community benefits and services in the amount of \$1.00.”

Voting on the matter will occur at the December 8, 2009 regular Council meeting.

Updates

Mayor’s Update

Mayor Blake reported on the following:

- Thanked Councillor Meagher for representing the Municipality at the Remembrance Day Ceremony
- Participation in the Roots of Empathy Program
- All Staff Gathering held at MacDonald Island Park

- Curbside Recycling
- Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Campaign
- State of the Region Address on November 26, 2009
- Tree Lighting and Santa Claus Parade on November 28, 2009
- Festival of Trees November 26 to 28, 2009

Reporting of Councillors on Boards and Committees

Councillor Meagher reported on the following:

- Remembrance Day Ceremony
- Heritage Park Old Fashioned Christmas on November 28, 2009
- United Way Volunteer Appreciation on November 28, 2009
- Oil Barons Teddy Bear Toss
- Citizenship Ceremonies on November 26, 2009
- Chamber Luncheon on November 26, 2009

Administrative Update

There was no Administrative update.

Adjournment

09-289 Moved by Councillor Meagher that the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Mayor

Chief Legislative Officer