

MINUTES

ZONE 3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION ASSOCIATION SEPTEMBER 29, 2006 AT OLDS

- IN ATTENDANCE:** Bernice Birtsch – Rimbey, Maureen Malaka – Trochu, Velma Keeler – Rocky Mountain House, Larry Holstead – Rocky Mountain House, Norbert Van Wyk – Red Deer, Dale Mather – Innisfail, Jodi Drozda – Lacombe, Nina Gales – Olds, Tyler Westover – Red Deer County, Elizabeth Smart – Bentley, Wanda Watson-Neufeld – Sundre, Bob Jenkins – Lacombe, Rick Binnendyk – Penhold, Kevin Miner – Kneehill County, Brenda Christie – Three Hills, Jack Ramsden – Three Hills, Curtis Herzberg – Ponoka, Darryl Joyce – Olds, Nona Housenga – City of Red Deer, Carey Keleman – Ponoka, Dale Withage – Olds, Therese Kleeberger – Eckville, Brenda Hemming – Didsbury, Mike Haugen – Caroline/Clearwater, Corinne Newman – Blackfalds, Helen Dietz – Sylvan Lake, Brenda Stange – Caroline, Michelle Smith – Elnora, Tammie Dick – Linden, Brenda Goeres – Delburne, Terry Brown – Municipal Affairs, Harold Johnsrude
- CALL TO ORDER** Zone Director Darryl Joyce called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.
- WELCOME** Mayor Judy Dahl & Reeve Al Kemmere brought greetings on behalf of the Town of Olds and Mountain View County.
- AGENDA** The agenda was accepted as presented.
- MINUTES** The June 23, 2006 zone meeting minutes were accepted as presented.
- CAUCUS SESSION #1** **Dialogue With Municipal Affairs – Terry Brown**
- Terry Brown, from Municipal Affairs, gave an update on happenings within Municipal Affairs. Highlights of the presentation included:
- Municipal Affairs has proceeded with the Targeted Funding Grant for this year and 123 Municipalities have received their funding.
 - Reference was made to the last zone meeting minutes regarding committees that were formed.
 - * Roles and Responsibilities
 - * Municipal Revenue Sources (Formed by City of Calgary)
 - * Intermunicipal Relationships (City of Edmonton)
 - * Small Urban & Rural Communities
 - Michelle thanked Municipal Affairs for the changes made to the Municipal Sponsorship Grant application process
 - * General discussion took place around streamlining the application process.
 - * A comment was made that the online application did not work for some but it was ok because there was technical help available.
 - * Like the clear lines for eligibility amount.
 - * Discussion took place around less eligibility and the smaller amounts available.
 - * Terry noted the overall grant amount has increased.

- * Discussion took place around the amount of conditions in the process, some wish to see less conditions as it is difficult when 3 municipalities come together to agree, the conditions make it even harder. Terry commented that the Province is firm on keeping the conditions in place.
- * A request was made that the information on application is provided sooner so the municipalities have time to react.
- * A comment was made that it does not help municipalities when the Province changes the agenda mid way through.
- Land Use Forum – General Discussion
 - * During Strategic Planning talks and land use sessions there was not enough emphasis on structure.
 - * The whole region had Council and Administration but there wasn't enough representation from the Province. Minutes cannot capture all that happens in a meeting and therefore the Province needs to be present to really understand the nature of the issues.
 - * All municipalities have their own challenges when it comes to Land Use Framework.
 - * It was noted the Canada West Foundation looked at existing rate of land conversion. They concentrated on the use of land for development for rural compared to urban. If this is not looked at there is danger of increased future problems. The land use framework that was removed in the 90's changed the landscape of the game.
 - * Terry asked if municipalities want this old land use framework back? If not then how do we figure out what the framework should look like?
 - * Norbert commented that the municipalities were not consulted in the 90's and the Province only acted of their own accord and took it away.
 - * It was noted, on the website assessment appeals, complaints and regulation have been addressed.
- Terry asked if the group had any other issues?
 - * Elections - Rick asked for more access to strategically placed info for candidates. Terry replied that Returning Officers will have increased training information available online.
 - * Menet well used and appreciated by the group.
 - * Dales Withage asked if the Provincial Leadership race will affect the decisions being made in Municipal Affairs. Terry replied that the current Minister is moving forward and will start at different times to accommodate the change. They will deal with the possibility of a new Minister when the time comes.
- Roads & Infrastructure – Province having difficulty with decisions due to fast economy.
 - * It was noted municipalities are in dire need of funding to keep up with the fast economy.
 - * Municipalities are frustrated that there is disconnect between the Province and the municipalities. The Province said there was money to be distributed but now there is not.
 - * Terry stated he would bring these concerns to Municipal Affairs.
 - * The group also suggested the message be taken to AUMA.
 - * Terry commented that the municipalities should be recognized as also having

increasing needs.

CAUCUS SESSION #2 Terry Brown – Municipal Affairs, Succession Planning

Terry circulated a PowerPoint presentation on Municipal Administrative Sustainability for discussion by the group. Discussion included:

- There is not as much support from the community and as a result the community sustainability is at risk. The focus is on administration for recruitment and retention of staff.
- Some of the issues include an aging population and the lack of providing adequate training for staff who will eventually take over. There is often a problem with continuity of decision making, with new staff and the resulting information gap.
- Oil and Gas taking much of the staff from municipalities because they can pay more and offer additional perks. This is a consistent problem and many municipalities comment that they have had difficulty in most areas for recruitment. The jobs that were previously easy to fill such as summer jobs and casual are now next to impossible to fill. Public Works and other Operations positions have been the hardest hit.
- Succession plans take a long time to plan and implement and the Council attitudes and other various challenges make it very difficult in this fast economy.
- It was suggested that there is a real need to educate the elected officials of the realities of the situation.
- Get Council to buy into change. Develop a training budget, and provide employees with continuous learning opportunities. Attend Career Fairs, build pride in civil service, and support the Municipal Internship Program.
- A comment was made that Municipal Affairs should help Administrations to hold Elected officials accountable to the MGA.

CAUCUS SESSION #3 Harold Johnsrude – Depreciation of Capital Assets

Harold provided a PowerPoint presentation on the use of accrual accounting in municipal accounting and the recommendation of the CICA Section 3150. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Independent auditors will be required to provide audit report in financial statements.
- In the past the infrastructure assets have not been properly recorded or accounted for and this will help to rectify and provide additional transparency.
- Addressing infrastructure deficits may not be the only answer, other measures will need to follow.
- The new process represents a significant amount of financial reporting and ignoring the requirement will only result in negative outcomes.
- Municipal Affairs decided they need to become more involved in this process and will provide education of elected officials and will work with the accounting associations.
- A special committee from GFOA has been formed to help get the word out. There are pilot studies in process and they are preparing a implementation guide. The final guide to be ready for 2007.
- Each municipality will have to provide notes on their 2007 financial statements of their current situation.

- Municipal Affairs wants to hear your questions – hjc@telus.net or Christina Parkins at Municipal Affairs.
- The deadline for compliance is 2009 and is coming fast.

LUNCH

Recessed for lunch, sponsored by KCL Consulting and Fortis Alberta Inc.

RECONVENE

The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

CAUCUS SESSION #4

LGAA President Report/Zone Director Report

As President Lavinia Henderson could not attend she submitted a written report. Darryl gave his report highlighting the following:

- Has been appointed to the Membership and Marketing Committee and one vacancy, for a member-at-large still remains. Looking for a volunteer
- Annual fall planning retreat was held September 21st and 22nd in Nisku. During the retreat the strategic plan was revised and much discussion took place over the role of LGAA and our capacity to take on more. More workshops will be held each year. The 2007 budget was discussed and membership fees will be going up by ten dollars. An increase to conference fees will be discussed at the November meeting.
- In 2007 zone elections will be held for odd numbered zones. Darryl gave notice, after two terms as zone director, he would like someone else to take on this challenge and encouraged everyone to give this opportunity some thought.

CAUCUS SESSION #5

Open Discussion

Topics included, in the open discussion, included

- Discussion about Water Line and inner basin capture area in the Town of Lacombe & Ponoka & Lacombe County. Also discussed the Kneehill, Settler and Aquatera water agreements.
- The policy for water distribution for the City of Red Deer with Norbert noting that he will distribute to all before it goes to Council.
- Discussion around the difficulty of implementing a Perks & Benefits plan that is attractive to staff and reasonable from an administrative perspective.
- Norbert commented on the Red Deer City MDP process and passed out a brochure on their "Future Directions" plan. Norbert invited everyone to attend upcoming sessions and suggested anyone interested contact Stacy at the City office. The plan suggests that the population of Red Deer will exceed 300,000 people after 60 years and provides context as to what that may look like. Norbert would appreciate feedback on this matter from anyone in and around Red Deer.

PRESENTATION

Darryl presented Norbert Van Wyk with a retirement gift in recognition of his many years in service

NEXT ZONE MEETING

It was decided the next zone meeting would be held in Lacombe and the date will be announced at a later date. Door prizes were then given out to those in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.