

MINUTES
Zone 6 Meeting
Local Government Administration Association
November 28, 2006 at Thorsby Village Office

Ernie Polsom – Alberta Fire Commissioners Office

The Fire Commissioner's Office is becoming a part of Emergency Management Alberta Agency and this agency will report directly to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The structure of this new agency is uncertain at present. There is a plan for holding discussions with the various local emergency service groups in 2007. It is anticipated that there will be more capacity for the EMA Agency to assist with local emergencies.

A Fire Services Advisory Committee has been established (www.FSACAlberta.ca) to make recommendations to the Minister on Emergency Services. The committee consists of six fire representatives, the Fire Commissioner, one representative from AUMA and one representative from AAMD&C.

Occupational Health & Safety has a code of practice for fire fighters. Presentations can be done for fire departments if requested. Volunteer fire fighters are considered employees for OHS purposes. The Code of Practice is available from the Human Resources and Development website.

The department is looking to increase their staff by six to expand the services they are able to provide. Investigation and Inspection programs will become more actively engaged. A team is currently being developed.

Recruitment and Retention is a serious issue for fire departments. Currently the 10,000 volunteer fire fighters look after 97% of the land base in Alberta. Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. there is a critical lack of response.

The Fire Commissioners Office is available to assist municipalities in doing a Fire Protection Review. This will evaluate the safety and the service levels of the local departments. Municipalities must ensure that the department operational policy is approved by Council with sufficient knowledge of the resources (both human and financial) that available.

Lunch Break

A delicious Chinese buffet was arranged by Martin Taylor.

Jeanine Grundberg – Off-site Levies

Jeanine Grundberg provided information on the legal challenge that the City of Leduc had faced from the Urban Developers Institute (UDI). This is noteworthy as the City of Leduc had done a very thorough analysis related to the apportionment of costs for infrastructure to new development versus regional costs. There was a very rational approach. As a result the verdict was supportive of the municipality's work and the challenge was denied.

Dennis Pommen – Human Resource Dynamics

Dennis touched on the challenges facing all businesses with regard to staffing in Alberta with the robust economy. Municipalities are no different. Demographics are also a contributing factor to the reduced number of employees available. The importance of retaining and attracting qualified employees must be emphasized and this can not be done with money alone. Having a positive atmosphere in the work place and having

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recognition practices in place are important. There are challenges in maintaining the current service delivery levels and the current quality of service.

Rick Mah – Association of Massage Therapists and Wholistic Practitioners

Rick Mah made a brief presentation on behalf of AMTWP. The association is hoping to gain a presence with municipalities and work collaboratively with regard to business licensing. There are 3,600 registered therapists in Alberta. The profession is regulated provincially in B.C., Ontario and Newfoundland/Labrador. The association would like to be recognized as a separate health care category in listings and to receive a business license, an application should be able to prove that they hold membership in the AMTWP.

LGAA Board Report

Lavinia Henderson reported that the Board had held their fall retreat.

There is a 3 year business plan in place.

The preliminary budget has been adopted

Conference fees are going up \$10.00 this year as are membership fees.

The Conference is March 14 – 16, 2007 in Red Deer.

The deadline for scholarship applications is January 31, 2007. There are 2 scholarships available for \$500.00 each.

The Board has been attending career fairs to help raise the profile of the municipal employment opportunities.

There has been a large change in the Board since the Conference. There are new Zone Directors in Zones 1, 2 and 6.

Round Table

There was some discussion about the changes happening in the Alberta Capital Region Alliance (ACRA) with Edmonton dropping out.

The impact of Industrial Heartland Development is very noticeable.

Spring Meeting:

The Town of Beaumont has offered to host the meeting.

The date was set for May 25, 2007, pending confirmation from Beaumont.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.