

MINUTES

ZONE 3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION ASSOCIATION June 13, 2008 Carstairs

- IN ATTENDANCE:** Tracy Lebedynski – Rocky Mountain House, Susan Wood – Rocky Mountain House, Brenda Hemming – Retired, Dale Mather – Innisfail, Rick Binnendyk – Penhold, Jack Ramsden – Three Hills, Carey Keleman – Ponoka, Helen Dietz – Sylvan Lake, Michelle Smith – Elnora, Jeannette Austin – Carstairs, Maureen Malaka – Trochu, Terri Wiebe – Three Hills, Connie Neuman – Blackfalds, Luana Smith – Didsbury, James Reichenbacher – Didsbury, Brittany Hutton – Didsbury, Lorraine Poth – Red Deer, Mike Mackenzie – Three Hills/Trochu, Dale Withage – Retired, Gregory Pastirik – Sylvan Lake
- Guests:** Karen Mack – Civic Solutions, Theresa Ostrum – Alberta Municipal Affairs, Travis Nosko – Alberta Municipal Affairs
- CALL TO ORDER** Zone Director Jeannette Austin called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
- WELCOME** Mayor Lance Colby brought greetings on behalf of the Town of Carstairs.
- AGENDA** The agenda was accepted as presented.
- MINUTES** The Sept 28, 2007 zone meeting minutes were accepted as presented.
- CAUCUS SESSION #1. Theresa Ostrum & Travis Nosko – Alberta Municipal Affairs**
- Theresa touched on the reorganization of the department, and that it was done to meet the needs of municipalities.
 - Advisory services are now available on-line, however several members who were present said that this system is not yet perfected.
 - She highlighted that the budget included 340 million for operating, 28.7 million for policing (8.5 Federal support for recruitment of 300 officers over the next 3 years), and affordable housing.
 - April 1/09 Ground Ambulance would become a Provincial Responsibility
 - Land User Framework – may require municipalities to amend their Land Use Bylaws
 - The question was raised about timing
 - Currently the Draft is in the consultation stage
 - Finalization by Fall
 - Then Regional Councils & plans and changes as required
 - The question was raised if it could be just an attachment to a current LUB, but it was responded that no the Bylaws themselves will need to be changed
 - Comment was made that the south area is very large, and that perhaps it would be good to have sub groups as the issues in the south and central area will be very different.
 - Theresa commented that the watershed areas were used to determine boundaries.
 - Bill 60 was tabled
 - The definition for linear were too broad and section 291 of the MGA were challenged in the courts. The second reading has been done and the 3rd reading will be in the fall.
 - There was a discussion about the urban rural imbalance with linear assessment. It was brought up that Millet and the County of Wetaskiwin are using a revenue sharing formula
 - Question regarding linear assessment, and updates being received sometimes

- monthly. Theresa commented that appeals are happening all the time, and thus there will be changes' coming forward as this process happens.
- Capital Region - 80 Billion over 12 years.
 - Was established in April, but has no taxing authority.
 - Expect to have a Land Use Plan by March of 2009.
 - Working on a inter-municipal transit system
 - Education Requisition – It was stated that this comes late causing municipalities grief, Province needs to look at the timing of this. Theresa commented that in non election years the budget does come sooner.
 - MSI – 500 million available, the process has been streamlined, and there is not the sharing requirement.
 - Comments made that the list of projects fundable is very broad, is there really a chance of being turned down
 - Theresa commented that there is still an accountability framework, and they must ensure that the objectives are being met.
 - Comment made that it is a lot of work and there is too long of a wait time.
 - Theresa commented that they have added more staff and are hoping to have quicker turn a rounds. She stated that the process is to ensure that the money is being spent the way it was intended.
 - Tangible Capital Assets – Due in all municipalities Jan 1/09
 - Theresa highlighted that the associations have developed tools to help and the there was \$283 per capita to prepare available in the form of a grant.
 - The evaluation manual is complete on their website
 - Municipalities should have their inventories complete at this stage
 - Auditors will be receiving an update on Sept 24/25
 - LGAA running an additional course on June 23rd
 - MSP can be used for TCA
 - TILMA (Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement) has been signed by BC and AB. It goes into effect April 1/09. It will have an impact on how municipalities secure tenders and bids. The agreement states that if the project is over a certain dollar figure, a RFP process that is open to all is required. The agreement also works to bring a similar standard to both provinces for trades, procurement and investment. <http://www.tilma.ca/>
 - Internship 2008
 - Administration and Land Use Planners (2 year), and the Assessors program which is still a pilot
 - There are 15 Administration interns, and 9 LUP
 - Continuing the education program in the grade 11 CALM program hoping to bring more students to the field.
 - Question raised as to what is the Province doing to ensure that there are no further infrastructure deficits in the future. Theresa commented that the Province will not force municipalities to save money for the future, but it is the belief that the TCA will give municipalities the insight into what the future requirements will be.

CAUCUS SESSION #2

LGAA President and Zone Director Reports

1. Jeannette handed out and reviewed the LGAA President report from Norm McInnis.
 - a. Discussion regarding the possible amalgamation of associations brought some cautious optimism about the possibility
 - b. Discussion about the need for a citation program for Admin staff as well as the LGAA program
 - c. Discussion regarding the need for the LGAA courses to be offered more than once, or at other times of the year. Seems to be large class sizes and waiting lists.

2. Jeannette Austin reviewed the Joint Marketing Strategy Project. There was a general consensus that this would be beneficial to the municipal sector
3. Carey Keleman nominated Michelle Smith to be the Zone Director for Zone 3. Michelle Smith accepted the nomination. Calling for additional nominations from the floor three times, and hearing none, Jeannette Austin declared Michelle Smith the Zone Director for Zone 3.
4. Brenda Hemming and Dale Withage were honoured for their contribution to the field of Local Government

LUNCH Recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m., sponsored by Civic Solutions

RECONVENE The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

CAUCUS SESSION #3 **Update on the MSI working group**
The group was given a copy of the Terms of Reference and the recent minutes from a meeting held in May. This initiative is to establish a formal Provincial-Municipal Agreement that includes a permanent transfer mechanism and a partnership/engagement mechanism. This is a proposal and is still very much in the working stages. Norm McInnis will keep the group informed.

CAUCUS SESSION #4 **Open Discussion**

- Collection process for taxation on trailers
 - Several municipalities have made agreements with the owners. This was created through a procedure. Higher success rate
- Endeavor to assist on Development projects
 - There was a general discussion about how different municipalities are handling this issue. There is a need to ensure that developers are planning for the future development and sizing the utility lines appropriately. Having ensuring that they are reimbursed for the over sizing cost is necessary. Suggestions were to ensure that this information is included in the development agreement, and registered to title. The time frame should be forever to ensure that the original developer receives reimbursement.
- Auditing Fee Increase?
 - There was no consensus here, many have seen an increase every year for the last 3 years, totaling 300%, and others have actually seen a decrease that they credit to have a CA on staff.
- Minimum Tax on Vacant lots & Older lots/homes
 - Consensus was that all municipalities have one. The provincial average is \$400. Trochu & Three Hills were both at \$250, Penhold is at \$100. Other municipalities tax vacant lots 2 mils higher by class, and vacant non-residential higher as well.
- Linear Assessment changes were discussed again as well

NEXT ZONE MEETING It was decided the next zone meeting would be held in the Village of Elnora on Sept 19, 2008. Door prizes were then given out to those in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.