

County of Barrhead No. 11 Annual Ratepayers Meeting held March 18, 2015 at the Glenreagh Community Hall was called to order by County Manager Mark Oberg at 7:02 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

Ben Kellert  
Emil Smecko  
Norah Smecko  
Donna Woods  
Dawson Butler  
Ray Meunier  
Nicolaus Langeveld  
Cliff Sutherland  
Bill Chapman  
Harold Begert  
Art Arndt  
Don Reidford  
Helmut Ehrenholz  
Brian MacGillivray  
Dale Greig  
Dale Bentz  
Margaret Burton  
Ike Burton  
Meagan Pecjak, Barrhead Leader  
Matthew Pohl, 97.9 The Range

**Council, Auditor, Staff**

Reeve Bill Lee  
Councillor Doug Drozd  
Councillor Marvin Schatz  
Councillor Bill Lane  
Councillor Ron Kleinfeldt  
Councillor Darrell Troock  
Councillor Dennis Nanninga  
Mark Oberg, County Manager  
Diane Begert, Director of Finance and Administration  
Linda West, Administrative Assistant  
Blaine Clarahan, Auditor  
Barry Billey, Utilities Officer  
Cal Fischer, Public Works Superintendent  
Rick Neumann, Development Officer  
Ken Hove, Assistant Public Works Superintendent  
Kyle Meunier, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman

**MEETING CHAIRMAN**

County Manager Mark Oberg called for nominations for meeting Chairman. Ben Kellert was nominated by Don Reidford and Ben Kellert accepted the nomination. Mark Oberg called three further times for nominations for meeting chairman. No more nominations came forth and Mark Oberg declared Ben Kellert Meeting Chairman.

Ben Kellert took over the Chair.

**MEETING SECRETARY**

Chairman Kellert suggested that Linda West be appointed as the recording secretary for the meeting and there were no objections. Chairman Kellert appointed Linda West as meeting secretary.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Reeve Lee introduced the County's Auditor, Blaine Clarahan, and also introduced the County Manager, Mark Oberg.

County Manager Mark Oberg introduced the County staff members that were present.

The individual members of Council present introduced themselves, reporting on the Electoral Division they represent and also reporting on the various Committees, Boards, and Commissions they sit on.

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL RATEPAYERS MEETING HELD APRIL 3, 2014**

The minutes of the April 3, 2014 annual ratepayers meeting were distributed to those in attendance and Chairman Kellert provided time for those persons to peruse the minutes.

Dale Greig moved that the minutes of the Annual Ratepayers Meeting held April 3, 2014 be accepted and Helmut Ehrenholz seconded the motion. Brian MacGillivray asked if the County is proceeding with the paving of Township Road 604 in the Bloomsbury/Mellowdale area in year 2015 and Public Works Superintendent Cal Fischer reported that the paving is scheduled to commence in June of 2015. The motion was voted on and carried.

**REEVE'S REPORT**

A copy of the Annual Report brochure was available to all those present. Reeve Lee reviewed his written report as contained in the Annual Report document which included:

- a) The proposed aquatic centre in the Town of Barrhead;
- b) The Town of Barrhead's decision in September 2014 to provide notice to the County proposing the amalgamation of the Town and County to form a new municipality;
- c) Shared services provided in partnership with the Town of Barrhead, including Fire Services, Regional Landfill, Airport, Social and Seniors Housing, Library, School Resource Officer, and Family and Community Support Services;
- d) County financial contributions and/or work in kind during past years to the Town of Barrhead Agrena facility, the Town's sportsgrounds redevelopment project and the Town's recycling building and equipment;
- e) The Council's decision to contribute a maximum of five million dollars through a debenture to the Town's new aquatic center, following the direction of residents from the County's March, 2014 plebiscite;
- f) The work of 27 known volunteer organizations and/or facilities that deliver recreation to everyone in the Barrhead community, including the Town and the County;
- g) Entrepreneurs and businesses such as Batt Traps OHV, Golf and Campground; BUMP Motorsports Park; and Dez Family Enterprises, who provide recreation opportunities to the public.

Reeve Lee moved acceptance of the Reeve's report and the motion was seconded by Don Reidford. Bill Chapman asked what the County's plan is, given the provincial budget reductions and Reeve Lee responded that the County has received confirmation that the Municipal Sustainability Initiative funding will continue for one more year, and further, that the Council will be having 2015 budget deliberations in April following the provincial budget being announced for 2015-2016. Don Reidford asked about the cost of oiling projects in year 2014 and Public Works Superintendent responded that cost for oiling in 2014 was approximately \$20,000 for each mile. Mr. Fischer reported that the price of road oil for year 2015 project has been locked in by the County at \$0.64 per litre. The motion was voted on and carried.

**COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

County Manager Mark Oberg reviewed his written report contained in the Annual Report document which included:

- a) The March 24<sup>th</sup> vote of the electors on the plebiscite question "Are you in favor of the County of Barrhead No. 11 borrowing a maximum of \$5 Million Dollars for the purpose of providing a maximum \$5 Million Dollar contribution to the Town of Barrhead for the Town's construction of a swimming pool?"
- b) The agreement between the Town of Barrhead and the County of Barrhead for capital funding of the proposed swimming pool in the Town of Barrhead;
- c) The September, 2014 Town of Barrhead notice to the County and the Minister of Municipal Affairs that the Town has initiated the process of amalgamating the Town and County to create a new municipality;
- d) The Province's requirement in a study for a proposed amalgamation that the affected municipalities consult with the public – with the residents of each of the municipalities;
- e) The work of the County's Gravel Extraction Steering Committee to work on a plan for the future development of the aggregate resource in the County, as the potential of this industry is very large and the intention of the County is to have a plan in place in order to go forward in a logical and orderly fashion;

- f) The County's letters to residents to provide information on the proposed swimming pool in the Town of Barrhead and on the notice of amalgamation received by the County from the Town of Barrhead.

Mark Oberg moved acceptance of the County Manager's report and the motion was seconded by Ike Burton. Don Reidford asked what type of structure the Town is going to build for the swimming pool and the County Manager reported that representatives of the Council will be meeting with Town of Barrhead and Woodlands County representatives in late March where it is anticipated this topic will be on the agenda. The motion was voted on and carried.

#### **AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD (ASB) – REPORT**

Councillor Doug Drozd, past Chairman of the ASB, reviewed the written report of ASB Chairman as included in the Annual Report Brochure, which included:

- a) Development and revision of various policies;
- b) The ASB partnership with *Ag for Life* on the Agriculture Education program for urban children and their parents;
- c) The County's assistance to the Barrhead Seed Cleaning Co-op for their purchase of a colour sorter;
- d) The ASB's review of its Business Management Plan;
- e) The ASB addressing drainage issues in the municipality;
- f) Local ASB Tour;
- g) Provincial ASB Tour held in the County of Newell;
- h) Board members' attendance at conferences, workshops and information sessions;
- i) The Annual ASB Appreciation Dinner which provided recognition to the Rural Beautification Award winners and recipients of the 2014 Alberta Century Farm and Ranch Award.

Motion by Doug Drozd that the Agricultural Service Board Chairman's Report be accepted. The motion was seconded by Brian MacGillivray. Brian MacGillivray asked if the money provided to the Seed Plant was for a capital project and Doug Drozd responded that the funds were provided from the County to the Seed Cleaning Co-op for the capital purchase of a colour sorter. Margaret Burton inquired about the new Vegetation Management Policy and Assistant Agricultural Fieldman Kyle Meunier discussed how the spray program would proceed under the new policy, including that the County would spot spray on public right of ways where noxious weeds are visible to the County spray crews. The motion was voted on and carried.

#### **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

Blaine Clarahan, Auditor for the County, reviewed the 2014 Auditor's Report and the Financial Report for the year ended December 31, 2014, as contained in the Annual Report document.

Motion by Dale Greig that the Auditors Report be accepted. The motion was seconded by Helmut Ehrenholz. Dale Greig asked a question on the Deferred Revenues and Mr. Clarahan reported that the amount of the Deferred Revenues was MSI funding received but not yet spent by the County. Brian MacGillivray asked what is the amount of tax arrears owing for more than a year and Mr. Clarahan reported that that amount is identified as \$155,328 in the complete audited statement. Reeve Lee reported on the requirement for the County of Barrhead to send to the Province, the amount of property taxes levied for education purposes even in the case where those amounts have not yet been paid to the County by the taxpayer. Reeve Lee reported that there are tax accounts outstanding to the County relating to pipe and power assessments and machinery and equipment assessments where the tax payers have gone into receivership, and the manner in which the County has to proceed to try to collect on outstanding taxes. Director of Finance and Administration Diane Begert discussed the difference of linear assessment versus residential assessment. Auditor Blaine Clarahan reported that the amount of

\$153,000 has been set up for doubtful accounts in 2014, which is a significant amount. Auditor Blaine Clarahan reported that linear assessment equates to one-third of the portion of taxation for the County. The motion was voted on and carried.

**QUESTIONS AND OPEN DISCUSSION**

Dawson Butler asked a question as to what is going on with the Town and County amalgamation. Reeve Lee reported on the Town of Barrhead's September, 2014 notice received by the County advising that they are initiating amalgamation of the Town and County to form a new municipality. Reeve Lee reported on the requirement in the Municipal Government Act that the County is required to negotiate in good faith with the Town of Barrhead. Reeve Lee reported that the municipalities are required to consult with the public on the matter of amalgamation and that there will be a vote of the public.

Council Members and the County Manager reported that Council will be, on March 19<sup>th</sup>, considering an application for grant funding under the *Building Canada Program, Small Communities Fund* component, for a 'Regional Water Transmission Line from the Town of Barrhead to Campsie/Thunder Lake' project.

Dale Greig spoke of his support of having a swimming pool in the facility and also spoke of the County's provision of in-kind service to the Ag Society and community halls having a value and should be recognized when considering municipal contributions to community programs. Reeve Lee reported that the policy of Council is that the County is there to help volunteer organizations but not to take over.

Claus Langeveld asked if there would be any financial gain for the County if the Fort McMurray West 500 kilovolt Transmission Project proceeds and County Manager Mark Oberg reported that the County would gain assessment for taxation.

Dale Greig asked what the County does if there is construction of approaches or ditching done by individuals in public rights of way without the authorization of the County. Public Works Superintendent Cal Fischer reported that permission to construct approaches, install culverts or making any adjustments to drainage in a public right of way is required from the County. Mr. Fischer reported that any unauthorized approaches in public right of ways are removed by the County and the costs are charged to the landowner.

Brian MacGillivray asked what is included in the Benefits and Allowances disclosure of in the audited statement and Director of Finance and Administration Diane Begert reported that the amount includes the monthly allowances to Council Members under policy, the County's share of benefits and other payments made on behalf of a Council Member or CAO.

Cliff Sutherland reported on the state of the fence on the land adjacent to the Regional Landfill the County leases for grazing and asked why the Council did not approve reconstruction of the existing fence. Reeve Lee reported that the Council was of the opinion that if the County made improvements to the fence of the leased land just after the lease was granted to the winning bidder, it would appear to be unfair to the others that bid on the lease.

Reeve Lee reported on the preliminary engineering study that was done in early 2014 by the Barrhead Regional Water Commission for a regional water transmission pipeline from the Town of Barrhead west to the Campsie/Thunder Lake area. County Manager Mark Oberg reported that such a water transmission line would have the potential of providing water to approximately 1,000 residents, and would also have the potential for a water truck-fill station. Reeve Lee reported that the foresight of having a preliminary engineering study completed for this future project is of great benefit as the project is shovel-ready, which gives the County the opportunity to consider submitting an application for grant funding under the Building Canada program in the very short

window of opportunity given for municipalities to submit a project for funding. Mr. Oberg reported that the proposal for the regional water transmission pipeline includes that the transmission pipeline would be constructed and owned by the County and leased to the Barrhead Regional Water Commission.

Don Reidford asked on the status of the Stony Valley proposed development for gravel extraction and County Manager Mark Oberg reported that the appeal of the development approval is still in process. Don Reidford asked what the County would gain from the development proposed and Mark Oberg reported that the County would gain assessment for taxation for gravel quarry and the County would gain Community Aggregate taxes for aggregate extractions.

Chairman Kellert asked if there were any further questions or comments and there were none heard.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dawson Butler moved that the meeting adjourn at 9:09 p.m. and the motion was seconded by Emil Smecko. The motion was voted on and carried.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Linda West', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Linda West, Recording Secretary