

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN OF STETTLER COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015 IN THE MUNICIPAL OFFICE,
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Present: Mayor Dick Richards

Councillors A. Campbell, D. Bachman, W. Brown, M. Fischer,
S. Nolls & K. Sernecky

CAO G. Switenky
Assistant CAO S. Gerlitz

Press (2)

Absent: None

Call to Order: Mayor D. Richards called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1/2. **Agenda Additions/Approval:**

Motion 15:12:01 Moved by Councillor Bachman to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

3. **Confirmation of Minutes:**

(a) Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held November 17, 2015

Motion 15:12:02 Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held on November 17, 2015 be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(b) Business Arising from the November 17, 2015 Meeting Minutes

None

4. **Citizen's Forum:** (a) No one was present at the Citizen's Forum

5. **Delegations:** (a) 6:45 P.M. – Brenda Barritt, Executive Officer re: Stettler Adult Learning Council

This item was dealt with later in the meeting.

(b) 7:05 P.M. – Joan Kerbes & Juergen Ross re: Cat Spay & Neuter Follow-up

This item was dealt with later in the meeting.

6. **Administration:** (a) Heartland Beautification Committee 2016 Budget

CAO G. Switenky advised that the requested \$22,200 HBC budget is consistent with prior years and has already been included in the 2016-2018 Interim Operating Budget.

Motion 15:12:03 Moved by Councillor Brown that the Town of Stettler Council approve the Heartland Beautification Committee 2016 Budget in the amount of \$22,200 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(b) Memo re: Interim Operating Budget 2016

CAO G. Switenky advised that Section 242 of the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* requires Council to adopt an operating budget for each calendar year. Section 242 further states that a Council may adopt an interim operating budget for part of a calendar year. Since the Town's 2016 Operating Budget will not be adopted until March/April 2016, an interim operating budget is required to provide legal expenditure authority per Section 248 of the *MGA*.

The interim operating budget is not used to set property tax rates; rather it is used as the authority to provide services, programs and overall corporate continuity. It is used by Council to justify the setting of all utility rates for the subsequent year. An interim operating budget ceases to have any effect when the operating budget and tax/mill rate bylaw is adopted.

Council and Senior Administration held an operating budget session on November 24th, 2015 at which time Council reviewed the financial impacts on three consecutive years of organizational activities 2016–2018.

The three-year Interim Operating Budget forecasts the following property tax increases for municipal purposes:

2016 2% (subject to further detail review in May 2016)
2017 2%
2018 2%

And also forecasts the following municipal utility bylaw rate increases effective in 2016:

- In-Town Water consumption: +\$0.01 per m³ to \$2.73 per m³
- Flat Water fee: \$0.00 per month to remain at \$10.00 per month
- Flat Sewer fee: +\$0.50 per month to \$21.50 per month
- Residential Garbage pick-up: +\$1.50 per month to \$22.50 per month
- Residential Recycling pick-up: +\$0.00 per month to remain at \$6.00 per month

The 2016 interim operating budget estimates the combined amount available for capital expenditure purposes to be \$1,291,270 (General \$711,853 & Utility \$579,417).

Mayor Richards summarized the discussion by adding that the 2016 Interim Operating Budget is a fiscally responsible budget in light of current economic times and the quality of services residents expect from the Town. The proposed utility increase signifies the actual cost to provide services to our ratepayers.

Motion 15:12:_04

Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler Council adopt, per Section 242(2) of the *Municipal Government Act*, the Draft 2016–2018 Operating Budget Estimates with expenditures totaling \$16,184,230 and Revenues totaling \$17,475,500 for the year 2016 as an Interim Operating Budget for that part of 2016 prior to the Operating Budget being adopted by Council.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(c) Memo re: 2015 Bad Debt Write-Offs Greater Than \$300

Assistant CAO S. Gerlitz noted that Policy VII-5(b), Collection of and Write-off of Bad Debt Accounts require that a Statement of the Bad Debt write-offs is presented to Town Council prior to December 31st each year. Town Council is required to authorize the write-off of all accounts in excess of \$300.

For 2015 there are bad debts totaling \$10,731.24 to be written off. He explained there are 17 accounts totaling \$10,731.24 that should be expensed under Council's authority as bad debts in excess of \$300, and there are another 14 accounts totaling \$1,706.22 that will be expensed under Administration's authority as bad debts under \$300.

It was noted that collection activity procedures will continue after an account has been written off.

2015 uncollectible utility accounts represent a relatively small amount (approximately 0.31%) of the annual revenues generated by the four municipal utility services.

Motion 15:12:05

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council approve the 2015 Bad Debt Write-Off of seventeen (17) accounts, each in excess of \$300, totaling \$10,731.24 and further acknowledges that an additional fourteen (14) accounts, each under \$300, totaling \$1,706.22 will be written-off under Administration's authority.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(d) Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, December 8 – Committee of the Whole Meeting
- Tuesday, December 15 – Council Meeting
- Tuesday, January 5 – Council Meeting
- Tuesday, January 12 – Committee of the Whole Meeting
- Wednesday, January 13 – Strategic Planning Workshop – 3:00pm
- Tuesday, January 19 – Council Meeting
- Tuesday, January 26 – Council 2016-2019 Capital Budget Deliberations - 3:00pm
- Tuesday, February 2 – Council Meeting

(e) CAO Report

CAO G. Switenky provided departmental highlights of the monthly organizational report to Council.

Motion 15:12:06

Moved by Councillor Nolls that the Town of Stettler accept the CAO Report for the month of November.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

5. Delegations:

(a) 6:45 P.M. – Brenda Barritt, Program Manager re: Stettler Adult Learning Council

Brenda Barritt, Program Manager of the Stettler Adult Learning Council entered the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Mayor Richards welcomed B. Barritt to the meeting.

B. Barritt explained that she has been the Program Manager for 1 year and started as a tutor with the organization.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Community Adult Learning Program is funded by Innovation and Advanced Education.
- The program in Stettler provides:
 - Literacy and Fundamental Learning
 - General Education Diploma (GED)
 - Computer Basics
 - English Language Learning
 - Pursuing various grant options to assist new comers into the community
 - Family Literacy
 - Encourage programs that include child and parent
 - Community Capacity Building
 - Fundamental programs that benefit community members such as Wills and Estates Planning
 - Program offers a variety of Workplace Skills training such as Management Skills and Communication
 - Connections to Postsecondary Education
 - Partnerships with various Post-Secondary Colleges to offer 11 online diplomas and certificates including License Practical Nurse, Health Care Aid, and Business Administration
- The primary goal of the Stettler Adult Learning Program is to act has a centralized hub and connect people with various programs.
- Regular community consultation and dialog make sure program stays current and relevant
- Stettler Adult Learning Council employs 5 people and is governed by volunteers and community leaders

Mayor Richards thanked B. Barritt for her very informative presentation.

B. Barritt departed the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

(b) 7:05 P.M. – Joan Kerbes & Juergen Ross re: Cat Spay & Neuter Follow-up

Joan Kerbes & Juergen Ross entered the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Mayor Richards welcomed J. Kerbes & J. Ross to the meeting and advised that this is a follow up to the information presented to Council by J. Kerbes and J. Ross on July 21, 2015.

J. Kerbes, a resident of the County of Stettler, advised that they have had follow up meetings with County Council and Villages Councils within the County about the need for a spay/neuter program to control the overpopulation of cats.

J. Kerbes highlighted her presentation.

- Presentation included information on two (2) separate spay and neuter programs – a subsidy program and a trap – neuter and release (TNR) program.
- Subsidy Program
 - Two (2) vet services are willing to reduce their fees for a subsidy program
 - Individuals applying for a subsidy would complete an application and would use a vet that is part of the Subsidy Program
 - Town Council would set the amount of funding contribution towards the Town's portion of the vet cost
 - The revenue collected from the animal licenses can be used toward the Town's portion of funding contribution
- Trap Neuter Release Program
 - Every feral cat that enters a shelter is killed there
 - Passing a law mandating that all owners license their cats has increased the number of cats killed in pounds and shelters and is now the number one cause of death for all cats.
 - The cost to destroy a cat resulting from the bylaws could cost the town approximately \$255.00 for each cat which includes travel time for officer, maximum 3 nights boarding, euthanasia and disposal.
 - Based on statistics received from the Town of Stettler, in the past 4 years 180 cats were destroyed at a cost of approximately \$255 per cat. This cost ratepayers approximately \$45,900 or an average of \$11,475 per year.
 - If 180 cats were spayed & neutered under the TNR Program, it would have cost ratepayers \$15,750 or \$3,937 per year
- Bylaw enforcement does reunite cats with their owners, however only .04% or 10 cats in the past 4 years were reunited with the owners and 73% of cats were killed. The town collected \$5525 from cat licenses in 2015, and spent approximately \$11,475 per year to destroy cats, costing ratepayers an additional \$5950.
- If the \$25,175 from license fees was allocated to a TNR Program, 318 cats could be altered with the offered vet rates of \$115 for a female cat spay and \$60 for a male cat neuter.
- Altering 318 cats would significantly reduce the cat population as spaying and neutering is a form of "Animal Control".

J. Kerbes concluded her presentation by highlighting various components within the Town of Stettler's Animal Control Bylaws 2049-14 and 2050-14 respectively in that Municipalities often apply the same provisions to cats and dogs as both are domesticated animals. Cats and dogs are a totally different species and have totally different behaviors in the environment.

Mayor Richards thanked J. Kerbes for the research she has provided and for her very informative presentation. Each Councillor was asked for questions or comments.

General discussion took place regarding the costs associated with a spay and neuter program and the use of license fees versus tax dollars to pay for such programs.

The use of license fees to pay for a spay and neuter program would directly affect responsible pet owners paying for irresponsible pet owners. However, funding spay/neuter programs through general taxes collected would be asking all residents to cover the costs of unlicensed pet owners.

General discussion took place with regards to the benefits of communicating the importance of spay or neutering cats through the "Town Works" Magazine. It was agreed that was something Council would consider in future publications.

General Discussion took place regarding the education of a spay or neutering program through the local schools. It was noted that communication has been done through school principals and individual teachers. There has been very little success in getting the message into the schools. Mayor Richards suggested that J. Kerbes and J. Ross contact the Clearview School Division Administration office.

Mayor Richards summarized the discussion by indicating that the Town of Stettler already does participate in a version of a subsidy program in that pet owners are required to obtain yearly pet licenses. The cost of the license is half of a regular license if the pet is spayed or neutered. The Town also offers an early incentive bonus of \$10.00 off the license fee if payed before January 31. These incentives are offered to pet owners every year not just the year the pet is spayed or neutered. However, the overpopulation of cats is a Regional Community issue and confirmed that the item be placed on the agenda of the next Joint Town/County Council Meeting.

Mayor Richards thanked J. Kerbes and J. Ross again for their very informative, very passionate presentation.

Delegation members departed the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

(f) Accounts Payable in the amount of \$2,249,070.48

Motion 15:12:07

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that Accounts Payable in the amounts of \$1,898,207.92 & \$350,862.56 for the period ending November 27, 2015 for a total amount of \$2,249,070.48 having been paid, be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

7. Council:

Mayor and Councillors outlined highlights of meetings they attended.

(a) Mayor Richards

- Nov 18 - H.A.T.S. Performance.
- Nov 19 - Met with CAO re: operational budget.
- Nov 24 - Operational Budget Meeting.
- Nov 25 - Festival of Lights.

- Nov 26 - Meeting with CAO and President of AltaGas Utilities, Greg Johnston.
- Met with CAO and reviewed Council Agenda.

(b) Councillor Bachman

- Nov 19 - Library Board Meeting.
- Nov 24 - Operational Budget Meeting.
- Nov 27 - Main Street Tree Light-Up.

(c) Councillor Brown

- Nov 24 - Operational Budget Meeting.

(d) Councillor Campbell

- Nov 24 - Operational Budget Meeting.
- Nov 25 - Rodeo Meeting.
- Nov 27 - Regional Water Commission Meeting.
- Main Street Tree Light-Up.

(e) Councillor Fischer

- Nov 19 - Meeting with Brenda Barritt, Campus Alberta Director.
- Stettler Wellness Network Meeting.
- Nov 24 - Festival of Lights Breakfast with Campus Alberta Staff.
- Operational Budget Meeting.
- Nov 27 - Regional Water Commission Meeting.

(f) Councillor Nolls

- Nov 20 - County of Stettler Housing Authority.
- Nov 22 - Museum Christmas Dinner.
- Nov 24 - Operational Budget Meeting.
- Nov 25 - Steel Wheel Stampede Meeting.
- Nov 28 - Festival of Lights Gala.

(g) Councillor Sernecky

- Nov 20 - Town Office cheque signing.
- Nov 24 - Festival of Lights Breakfast.
- Operational Budget Meeting.
- Nov 27 - Town Office cheque signing.
- Festival of Lights re: Children's Events.
- Main Street Tree Light-up Ceremony.
- Nov 30 - Ambulance Association Meeting.

8. Minutes:

(a) Parkland Regional Library Board Meeting of November 5, 2015

(b) Hub Committee Meeting of September 24, 2015

Motion 15:12:08

Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler Council accept the minutes, items 8(a) & 8(b) as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

9. Public Hearing:

(a) None

10. **Bylaws:** (a) Bylaw 2074-15 – Water Rates

Mayor Richards explained that Bylaw 2074-15 is a bylaw to amend Bylaw 1856-02, being a bylaw relating to the water system of the Town of Stettler, including the fixing of rates, charges and conditions for the supply of potable water.

1. That Bylaw 1856-02 is amended as follows:

SCHEDULE "A" – WATER TARIFF

Delete Section 1 in its entirety and replace Section 1 to read as follows:

1. <u>Metered Rates</u>	<u>Jan 1/16</u>
In-Town Customer	\$2.73
- Variable Component Consumption per m ³	
In-Town Customer	\$10.00
- Fixed Component Flat Fee Per Month	
Village of Botha/Gadsby Incl. Reservoir Component	Rate as per Water Model
- Consumption per m ³ - Subject to Annual True-up	
Hwy 12/21 Agreement	Rate as per Water Model
- Consumption per m ³ - Subject to Annual True-up	
Shirley McClellan Regional Water Services Commission	Rate as per Water Model
- Consumption per m ³ - Subject to Annual True-up	

Motion 15:12:09 Moved by Councillor Brown that the Town of Stettler Council give first reading to Bylaw 2074-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:10 Moved by Councillor Nolls that the Town of Stettler Council give second reading to Bylaw 2074-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:11 Moved by Councillor Bachman that the Town of Stettler Council give permission for third and final reading to Bylaw 2074-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:12 Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler Council give third and final reading to Bylaw 2074-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(b) 2075-15 re: Sewer Rates

Mayor Richards explained that Bylaw 2075-15 is a bylaw to amend Bylaw 1604, being a bylaw to provide for the levying of sewer service rates and for the collection thereof.

Whereas pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act, Chapter M26 of the RSA and amendments thereto.

1. Delete Sections 2(a) & 2(b) in their entirety and replace Sections 2(a) & 2(b) to read as follows:

2(a) Single Family Residential Dwellings – Flat Rate
\$21.50 per month.

2(b) All Other Sewer Services – 40% of water bill/month
or \$21.50 per month whichever is greater.

In the case of a property where no meter or other exact means exist to determine the quantity of water used, or where a meter ceases to operate, the Town shall make an estimate of such quantity for the purpose of determining the sewer charge.

Motion 15:12:13

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council give first reading to Bylaw 2075-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:14

Moved by Councillor Campbell that the Town of Stettler Council give second reading to Bylaw 2075-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:15

Moved by Councillor Brown that the Town of Stettler Council give permission for third and final reading to Bylaw 2075-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:16

Moved by Councillor Nolls that the Town of Stettler Council give third and final reading to Bylaw 2075-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(c) 2076-15 re: Waste Control/Garbage Rates

Mayor Richards explained that Bylaw 2076-15 is a bylaw to amend Bylaw 1706-94.

1. That Schedule "A" of Bylaw 1706-94, the "Waste Control Bylaw" shall be and is hereby amended as follows:

(a) In Schedule "A", the Residential Premises Fee be changed from \$21.00 to \$22.50 per month.

Motion 15:12:17 Moved by Councillor Bachman that the Town of Stettler Council give first reading to Bylaw 2076-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:18 Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler Council give second reading to Bylaw 2076-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:19 Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council give permission for third and final reading to Bylaw 2076-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 15:12:20 Moved by Councillor Campbell that the Town of Stettler Council give third and final reading to Bylaw 2076-15 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

11. **Correspondence:** (a) None
12. **Items Added:** (a) None
13. **In-Camera Session:** (a) There was no In-Camera Session at this meeting.
14. **Adjournment:**

Motion 15:12:21 Moved by Councillor Campbell that this regular meeting of the Town of Stettler Council be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous at 8:25 p.m.

Mayor

Assistant CAO