

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
HELD DECEMBER 8, 2015

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

CAO G. Switenky
Assistant CAO S. Gerlitz
Director of Operations M. Robbins

Absent: None

Call to Order: Mayor D. Richards called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

1. Agenda Additions/Deletions

5(a) – Stettler Waste Management Authority (SWMA) – Draft Business Plan option for the consideration of charging lump sum extra (dumping) fees at all transfer stations.

2. Agenda Approval

Moved by Councillor Bachman that the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

3. 2015 Grants in Lieu – Alberta Social Housing Corporation/County of Stettler Housing Authority

CAO G. Switenky advised that the County of Stettler Housing Authority received notice in March 2015 that the Provincial Government, as part of the 2015 Provincial Budget, would be eliminating the Grants in Lieu of Taxes for seniors' apartments and family housing units operated by public housing management bodies. The County of Stettler Housing Authority receives this Grant of Lieu of Taxes to offset the property taxes collected by the Town of Stettler for 7 properties which are titled to the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Municipalities have been utilizing these grants in-lieu-of taxes to help offset the cost of services that are provided to all citizens and property in the municipality including seniors' apartments and family housing units. In 2015, the property taxes for the 7 properties totaled \$14,431.21. A breakdown of the property taxes are as follows: \$10,021.61 Municipal, \$3,896.37 Education, \$513.23 Housing. With the elimination of the Grant in Lieu of Taxes, the Education and Housing portion of the 2015 property tax would be collected in the subsequent year as part of the over/under reconciliation and paid by the general tax base.

CAO G. Switenky also noted that the Alberta Urban Municipal Association (AUMA) has been working with the Provincial Government on the elimination of the Grant In Lieu of Taxes Program. In July 2015 the Town received the following update from the AUMA with regards to the Grants in Lieu of Taxes program:

In response to AUMA's advocacy on the need to continue with grants in lieu of taxes for social housing, the new NDP government has agreed to suspend the previous government's actions earlier this year to terminate the grant.

AUMA will be working with the Minister of Seniors to ensure she is aware of the importance of this grant as she reviews this matter. In the interim, AUMA continues to work with the Minister of Municipal Affairs on opportunities to expand supports for all seniors housing. The ministry recently extended the Municipal Affairs Grant Regulation Schedule 2 until 2017, which authorizes a grant in place of taxes for 42 non-profit unsubsidized seniors' housing facilities. This extension provides the opportunity to fully review exemptions under the Municipal Government Act.

Also during the recent AUMA Convention held in Calgary in September, AUMA Resolution 2015.B3 which was sponsored by the City of Brooks and the Town of Black Diamond, asking for the re-instatement of the Grants in Lieu of Taxes for Social Housing was adopted. However this funding program was unfortunately eliminated in the 2015 Provincial Budget released in October 2015.

Mayor Richards summarized the discussion by indicating that the County of Stettler Housing Authority Requisition is based on an equalized assessment funding model. It was mutually accepted that these 7 provincially owned properties that were historically funded by Grants in Lieu of Taxes will now be considered exempt from municipal property tax collection until such time as the grants are restored.

4. Correspondence

- a. City of Edmonton 2016 Interim Budget
- b. AUMA Board News – Code of Conduct

Moved by Councillor Fischer that Correspondence items 4(a) & 4(b) be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

5. Additions

- a. Stettler Waste Management Authority (SWMA) – Draft Business Plan option for the consideration of charging lump sum extra (dumping) fees at all transfer stations.

Councillor Fischer highlighted the discussion from the Stettler Waste Management Authority Committee meeting he attended earlier in the day in which the option of charging extra (lump sum) fees at all transfer stations was discussed as part of the SWMA potential Business Plan. It was noted that this would be in-addition to the monthly curbside collection charge paid by residents of Stettler, and such fees would apply when waste/refuse was brought to the transfer station.

General discussion took place regarding the logistics of administering these extra fees in terms of manpower, monetary payments, safety & security, applicability to certain items only, inability to scale loads, and the potential for illegal dumping elsewhere.

Mayor Richards summarized the discussion by indicating that the Town of Stettler does not support the establishment of a potential SWMA revenue source resulting from the collection of extra fees being charged to residents at any Transfer Stations and/or the Regional Landfill.

The Town of Stettler prefers to utilize an all-inclusive monthly flat rate billing system universally applied equally upon all residential properties resulting in the recovery of all associated solid waste collection and disposal costs.

6. In-Camera Session

a. Legal re: Lagoon Update

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council proceed into an In-Camera Session with the CAO, Assistant CAO and Director of Operational Services present to discuss the In-Camera items.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous at 5:00 p.m.

Moved by Councillor Nolls that the Town of Stettler Council return to the regular meeting.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous at 5:25 p.m.

7. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Campbell that the Committee of Whole Meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous at 5:25 p.m.

Mayor

Assistant CAO