

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
HELD JUNE 11, 2013

Present: Mayor D. Richards, Councillors D. Bachman, M. Fischer, P. Simons, L. Thorogood (arrived at 4:53 pm) & S. Wildeboer

CAO R. Stoutenberg
Director of Operations M. Robbins
Corporate Secretary C. Smith

Absent: Councillor A. Campbell & Assistant CAO G. Switenky

Call to Order: Mayor D. Richards called the meeting to order at approximately 4:30 p.m.

1. Agenda Additions/Deletions

6(a) Joint Town/County Meeting

2. Agenda Approval

Moved by Councillor Bachman that the agenda be approved as presented with the following addition:

6(a) Joint Town/County Meeting

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

3. Delegation - 4:30 P.M. – Stettler RCMP Detachment Sgt. Duncan Babchuk

a. Municipal Contracts for Central Alberta District

Stettler RCMP Detachment Sgt. Duncan Babchuk entered the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Mayor D. Richards welcomed Sgt. D. Babchuk to the meeting.

Sgt. D. Babchuk presented an overview of the current manpower status and challenges at the Stettler Detachment, and provided information on how a municipality would go about building a municipal RCMP detachment.

Sgt. D. Babchuk advised that given overall Member shortages throughout the RCMP, K Division is requesting that those municipalities who desire a full compliment of Members should actually increase their number of established positions and allow for vacancies. In this way the RCMP could request funding from the Province so that more recruits get trained to support greater municipal contract requirements.

CAO R. Stoutenberg advised that the Town's contract is for 8 members. In the past two years, Stettler has been billed for 7.6 and 7.9 members.

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CAO R. Stoutenberg advised that should the Town request an additional member there is a risk that the Town could actually get this additional position filled at some point resulting in an annual budgetary impact of \$100,000. He noted further that the Town's urban compliment of 8 is satisfactory, however the number of established rural positions, being only 2 causes an unfair sharing of the Town's (paid) resources to serve/support outside our boundary.

Discussion ensued regarding the current inequity in the number of Members established for Stettler urban verses rural policing based on quantified workload:

- The current 2013 price for an RCMP Member is approximately \$143,000 @ 100% of which the Town pays only 70%, or \$100,000 per member. The Town is responsible for paying for 7 urban members and currently receives an 8th member for free (\$100,000 benefit) under the New Police Officer Grant Program.
- There are 2 positions, a Corporal and a Constable that are provided (for free) to police the entire rural area.
- The RCMP will be filling the 3 currently vacant Highway Traffic positions located in Stettler. These additional Members will be welcome policing resources at the detachment. It was noted that the Members will have to internally deal with a more crowded work environment.
- The Town receives \$245,944 per year (\$200,000 plus \$8 per capita) as a basic municipal policing grant from the Province.
- The Town also pays \$97,000 per year for a prorated share of the accommodations at the detachment; as the building/site is not owned by the Town.

It was decided that if the Province fills the vacant traffic positions and increased the rural staff compliment to 5, the Town could consider an additional member as suggested in the K. Division Municipal Contracts for Central Alberta District.

Sgt. D. Babchuk to advise Supt. Ken Turner, OIC of the above noted decision.

b. Stettler Municipal Detachment Statistical Comparison

Sgt. D. Babchuk presented the most recent statistical detachment comparisons for the period ended April 30, 2013.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the levels of various files/offenses/crimes quantified for comparative statistical purposes.

Sgt. D. Babchuk explained that the traffic complaints have increased and are top priority. He stated that 3 Highway Traffic positions will be filled shortly.

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c. Letter from Concerned Citizen

Council reviewed an anonymous letter from a concerned citizen regarding the Town's current policing situation.

Councillor L. Thorogood entered the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

Mayor Richards noted that an email (addressed to Mayor & Town Council) regarding the Town's current Policing situation has been received from a concerned citizen known only as: 4abetterpolicesservice@gmail.com.

CAO R. Stoutenberg explained that the email was well written by a person with a relatively advanced knowledge of policing in Stettler. The author ultimately expressed an argument in support of the Town leaving the RCMP (Contract) and becoming a regionalized police service by joining together with the Lacombe Police Service.

Although this correspondence is considered unsigned, discussion of the idea being proposed is worthy of some review for information, clarification and verification purposes.

Discussion ensued regarding numerous items within the email that require/warrant further clarification:

- The existing 20 year Contract with the Province and the RCMP is in its 2nd year and termination implications, if any, are unknown.
- The level of service expectation provided by the RCMP verses a local police service.
- The complete independence of the policing function under the RCMP contract.
- Exposure to all costs and risks associated with operating within a municipal (regional) policing function.
- Various pros and cons associated with having ultimate "Local" control and direction over all policing functions within your community.

Members of Council applauded Sgt. D. Babchuk on the service and education the community is receiving.

Mayor Richards concluded that the Town has a great relationship with the RCMP and their quality of service is excellent.

Mayor Richards thanked Sgt. D. Babchuk for attending the meeting and for providing valuable information.

Sgt. D. Babchuk departed the meeting at approximately 5:13 p.m.

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4. Memo re: Downtown Sidewalk Replacement Options

Director of Operations, M. Robbins advised that reconstruction of 49 Street from 50-51 Avenues and 50 Avenue from 47-49 Streets is scheduled for this summer. The curb and gutter, sidewalk, base courses and asphalt will be removed and replaced. Gravel will be salvaged and reused when possible.

CAO R. Stoutenberg advised that currently there is sidewalk on both sides of these roads. According to Town Policy XV-3(b), when major reconstruction occurs, the sidewalk will be replaced on one side only where appropriate.

The budget includes replacing the sidewalk on both sides of the road.

Director of Operations, M. Robbins advised that this area of Town is zoned C1A – which allows a mixed use of residential and commercial use. Typically in commercial areas the Town will install sidewalk on both sides, however in residential areas sidewalks are installed on one side only, or provide pathways as access.

Administration is recommending that prior to the start of construction, Administration would like to discuss the sidewalk options with Council to ensure the best choice is made for the area.

Council discussed various options of installing sidewalk on one or both sides of the streets. It was mutually agreed that if there was a sidewalk before construction that these sidewalks would be replaced after construction.

It was the consensus of Members of Council that Administration proceed with the original plan of replacing both sides of the sidewalk of 49 Street from 50-51 Avenues and 50 Avenue from 47-49 Streets.

Mayor Richards thanked M. Robbins for her informative presentation and for attending the meeting.

M. Robbins departed the meeting at 5:27 p.m.

5. Correspondence

a. Junketing Local Politicians Should Pay Back Pricey Hotel Charges

Accepted for information purposes only.

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6. Additions

a. Joint Town/County Meeting

CAO R. Stoutenberg advised that the County wishes to host a Joint Town/County Meeting to discuss recreation as well as other joint items. It was mutually decided that the Joint Town/County Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 17 from 6-8 p.m. at the County Office.

Items for discussion include:

- Recreation Funding/Challenges
- Airport Operations
- Regional Collaboration Grant
- Other

7. Adjournment

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

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous at 5:35 p.m.

Mayor

Assistant CAO