

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN OF STETTLER COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2014 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
Corporate Secretary C. Smith

Press (1)

Absent: None

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

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

Motion 14:05:01 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 May 6, 2014

Motion 14:05:02 Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Council held on May 6, 2014 be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(b) Business Arising from the May 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes

None

(c) Minutes of the Committee Meeting held May 13, 2014

Motion 14:05:03 Moved by Councillor Brown that the Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on May 13, 2014 be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(d) Business Arising from the May 13, 2014 Committee Meeting Minutes

None

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

5. **Delegations:** (a) 6:35 P.M. – Employee Recognition – Society of Local Government Managers of Alberta – 2014 CLGM Professional Designation – Laurie Tait, Leann Graham & Graham Scott

Laurie Tait, Office Administrator, Leann Graham, Director of Planning & Development and Graham Scott, GIS/Coordinator Tech entered the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Mayor Richards welcomed Laurie Tait, Leann Graham & Graham Scott to the meeting.

Mayor Richards congratulated Laurie Tait, Leann Graham & Graham Scott for receiving their CLGM professional designation as a Certified Local Government Manager. The CLGM designation is awarded to senior managers in Alberta recognizing the successful completion of the Society of Local Government Managers of Alberta professional education program combined with a minimum of five years experience as a senior manager in local government.

CAO G. Switenky highlighted that all three employees have previously completed the required academic courses (13) to qualify for the National Advanced Certificate in Local Authority Administration Levels 1 & 2 from the University of Alberta. This being part of the CLGM education requirements program.

Mayor Richards commented that having professionals working for our organization is beneficial given their related knowledge and ethical responsibilities.

Members of Council took a moment and departed from the Council Table to individually congratulate L. Tait, L. Graham & G. Scott for achieving their professional designation.

L. Tait departed the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

6. **Administration:**

(a) **Discussion re: Portable Signs**

Assistant CAO G. Switenky advised that there have been various concerns regarding the clutter and distraction of portable signs in our community.

Leann Graham, Director of Planning & Development explained that in 2010 a public survey was distributed and Bylaw 2018-11 was amended accordingly.

L. Graham advised that she has been in contact with AB Transportation to discuss a partnership on how to proceed with the density issue of these signs. She acknowledged that one sign company operating in Stettler has been very good at following the established rules.

L. Graham explained further that each property is entitled to utilize one portable sign, that there is no fee and that a permit is required. At this time, Administration is not issuing formal permits rather simply providing verbal approvals of suitable locations.

Discussion ensued regarding the rules established and being followed by some and not by all. It was noted that authorized signage is allowed upon Town owned lands, Highway ROW's and private lands.

It was suggested that Bylaw Enforcement may need to become more involved with signs that have not been approved.

It was clarified that each property, including non-abutting highway properties are allowed to have one authorized portable sign. However they all can't be placed along the same general stretch of road.

It was mutually decided that another public survey will be distributed and a comparison will be brought to a future Committee Meeting.

Mayor Richards thanked L. Graham for her informative presentation.

L. Graham departed the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

(b) Use of Bat Houses to Help Control Mosquito Population

Graham Scott, GIS/Coordinator Tech advised that in the Town's 2014 Strategy Session, after the votes had been tallied, "Mosquito Management/Bat Houses" weighed in at #7 on the list. If one were to look strictly at Council votes, "Bat Houses" was #3, which further emphasized this items importance to Council. Following the Strategy Session, direction from Administration was to begin by featuring bat houses on the Town website.

In order to do this, he began by researching the houses and looking for a link to provide information to our community. Below is the summary of what was found.

Results of Research:

Some key findings if we are looking at the type of bat houses and where to install them:

- Bat houses should be installed at heights of over 12-15 ft., preferably on poles or on buildings. (bats like clear paths, not tree branches etc. obstructing their shelters).
- Bat houses should be installed facing south or southeast to gain sun exposure. Additionally, in Canada, they should be painted black to absorb more heat.
- Bat houses that can hold more are more likely to be occupied (ie. houses that can hold 300 bats are better than houses that hold 70).
- It is best to install them fairly close to water sources since bats need a drink every night.

Overall, Administration recommends that Council approach utilizing and promoting bat houses with some caution. I believe this caution is warranted since the public generally has a dislike/fear relationship with bats, and of course anyone has a similar dislike/fear relationship with perceived waste in municipal budgets.

CAO G. Switenky advised that the memo does not include costs associated with the bat houses.

Option #1:

Undertaking a pilot study as a feasible plan of action. This way, we could assess where we can install bat houses, if they are occupied by bats after they are installed, and if a bat house has any effects (good or bad).

Option #2:

Dropping the concept altogether while perhaps looking at alternative solutions.

Option #3:

Proceeding with full promotion and installation of bat houses in multiple locations throughout the community.

Round table discussion was held and Council mutually agreed to proceed with Option #1 to have a pilot study as a feasible plan of action and that a suitable location for the bat houses will be determined internally.

Mayor Richards thanked G. Scott for his informative presentation.

G. Scott departed the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

(c) 2014 Operating Budget and Tax Rate Bylaw

CAO G. Switenky presented the 2014 Operating (Tax) Budget and reviewed the information presented in the package.

The 2014 Operating (Tax) Budget has been prepared based on the approved 3 year 2014 – 2016 Interim Operating Budget (December 3, 2013), the approved 2014 Capital Budget (January 21, 2014) as well as several subsequent individual budget adjustments that are considered necessary to improve forecasting accuracy.

CAO G. Switenky highlighted that Stettler property values for 2014 assessment purposes increased by \$29.60 million (4.11%) over 2013 including \$18.50 million (2.57%) due to new construction/linear growth and \$11.10 million (1.54%) due to inflation.

The inflationary increase is comprised of the following breakdown by property tax class: existing residential properties appreciated by an average of 1.53% while pre-existing non-residential properties appreciated by a similar average of 1.56%.

CAO G. Switenky noted that given the methodology used in the calculation of tax (mill) rates, inflation does not result in any new taxation for the Town. Rather only new construction growth and the approved percentage increase over the amount of taxes collected in the prior year will result in new taxes being generated.

Town Council considered a number of taxation options at its 2014 Operating Budget and Tax Rate session held on May 15, 2014. At this session a Summary of 2014 Property Tax Options were reviewed which quantified cumulative financial/budgetary impacts at various alternative percentage tax increases over 2013 levels.

The 2014 Operating (Tax) Budget and Tax Rate Bylaw are based on the following municipal tax percentage increase over 2013 amounts collected:

Residential	+3.00%
Non-Residential	+4.00%

These 2014 property tax increases will generate an additional \$158,016 for municipal purposes from pre-existing 2013 taxpayers, and an additional \$133,353 will be generated for municipal purposes from new construction growth.

CAO G. Switenky explained further that Municipal Taxes are the primary component comprising roughly 2/3rds of the annual property tax notice amount. However the other major component is the Education Property Tax Requisition, being roughly 1/3rd which also has a significant impact on the overall amount of property taxes collected from both classes. The average percentage changes/increases necessary from pre-existing 2013 property tax classes as follows:

	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Non-Residential</u>
Municipal	3.00%	4.00%
Education	-4.16%	4.49%

The proposed municipal tax rate percentage increases when combined with differing school tax rate percentage changes for each class will result in unequal combined average percentage increases between both tax classes.

CAO G. Switenky noted that for the first time in quite a few years the 2014 School Tax Requisition from the Province of Alberta was more favorable on Residential properties than on Non-Residential properties. He also noted that the 2014 County of Stettler Housing Authority requisition has also increased, however is a relatively minor component of property taxation representing approximately 3% of the combined levy.

CAO G. Switenky highlighted that the average financial "Real Dollar" impact on each property class based on the combined property tax increase from all tax authorities is:

Residential	+1.11%
Non-Residential	+4.24%
Combined	+2.20%

CAO G. Switenky briefly reviewed the forecasting changes that Administration has incorporated in this Tax Operating Budget compared to the previous Interim Budget. He noted that \$968,660 is now estimated to be available for capital purposes in the Tax Operating Budget as presented.

In conclusion, CAO G. Switenky highlighted that the Town's sample residential property with an assessed value of \$265,140 will see a combined 2014 property tax and utility increase of \$70.

Round table discussion ensued respecting impacts to the amount available for capital purposes and the optics of a responsible tax increase given the current economic climate in the community. Council was mindful of the importance in generating an adequate amount of funds available for capital purposes annually.

It was noted that the Financial Indicator Graphs as prepared by Alberta Municipal Affairs show that Stettler continues to compare favorably (below average) against other similar sized municipalities with respect to taxation levels.

Discussion continued regarding the necessity for this level of municipal tax increase. It was mutually supported that the net impact on overall tax levels within both classes of property for 2014 is reasonable and responsible under the current economic circumstances.

Members of Council expressed their appreciation towards Administration for presenting Council with a clear and comprehensive set of taxation options to consider and debate.

Motion 14:05:04

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council adopt, per Section 242(1) of the Municipal Government Act, the 2014 Operating Budget for the Town of Stettler as presented with combined expenditures and transfers totaling \$16,305,260 and with average municipal property tax class increases as follows:

Residential	3%
Non-Residential	4%

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Mayor Richards with the mutual consent of Council varied the order of the agenda to appropriately consider related Agenda Items 10(a) & 10(b) Bylaws.

10. **Bylaws:** (a) 2055-14 re: Tax Bylaw

Mayor Richards explained that Bylaw 2055-14 is to authorize the rates of taxation to be levied against assessable property within the Town of Stettler in the Province of Alberta for the 2014 Taxation Year.

Motion 14:05:05

Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler Council give first reading to Bylaw 2055-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:06

Moved by Councillor Campbell that the Town of Stettler Council give second reading to Bylaw 2055-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:07

Moved by Councillor Brown that the Town of Stettler Council give permission for third and final reading to Bylaw 2055-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:08

Moved by Councillor Bachman that the Town of Stettler Council give third and final reading to Bylaw 2055-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(b) 2056-14 re: Tax Penalty Bylaw

Mayor Richards explained that Bylaw 2056-14 is to provide a penalty to be applied to unpaid taxes and to provide for monthly tax payments.

Motion 14:05:09

Moved by Councillor Nolls that the Town of Stettler Council give first reading to Bylaw 2056-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:10

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council give second reading to Bylaw 2056-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:11

Moved by Councillor Campbell that the Town of Stettler Council give permission for third and final reading to Bylaw 2056-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:12

Moved by Councillor Brown that the Town of Stettler Council give third and final reading to Bylaw 2056-14 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

6. Administration Con't: (d) Committee Recommendation

Boundary Road Chip Seal Cost-Sharing

CAO G. Switenky explained that the County of Stettler has put together a chip seal program for several of their roads. 38th Street (Ring Road) and 57th Street (Tower Road) are two boundary roads that have been included for chip seal treatment in their tender. Historically the Town and County jointly fund boundary roads.

The total project costs are expected as follows:

38 Street – \$74,000 plus GST.

57 Street - \$29,000 plus GST.

Cost sharing at 50%, we expect the Town's portion to be \$51,500 plus GST.

Administration is interested in extending the chip seal up to the rail tracks on Tower Road. Plans are to complete asphalt repairs on the failed sections of tower road within the Town's limits using funds already included in the 2014 Operating Budget. Administration supports that adding a chip seal layer to the entire road surface, after asphalt repairs are completed will help prevent water from penetrating the surface of the asphalt, extending the wear life of the road.

Expected costs to extend the chip seal to the rail tracks is \$12,500. This extra cost can also be covered utilizing existing 2014 road maintenance budgets.

Motion 14:05:13

Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler agrees to jointly fund, with the County of Stettler, the chip seal improvements to the Tower Road and Ring Road at an expected cost of \$51,500 from General Reserves.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(e) Discussion re: Curbside Composting/Survey

CAO G. Switenky advised that Mark Pederson, Can Pak Grace Fix, HBC & Lee Penner, Director of Parks & Leisure Services were present at the May 13, 2014 Committee of the Whole Meeting to request Council's decision to proceed with an awareness program regarding curbside composting and also recommend that a survey be sent out requesting feedback and input from residents.

Round table discussion ensued regarding the Town's existing composting program and the acceptance of residents to buy into another program. Council noted that the community has embraced the recycling program and are not convinced that curbside composting has reached that level.

Council applauded the voluntary efforts of Grace Fix for all her hard work and dedication to championing Stettler as an environmentally and friendly community.

The mutual consensus of Council was to accept the information as presented and not move ahead with a curbside composting program or a related community survey at this time.

(f) Memo re: Seniors Week

Town Council reviewed the memorandum regarding Seniors Week activities to be held June 2-8, 2014.

It was highlighted that on May 23, 2014 at 11:30 a.m. the Mayor and Reeve will sign the proclamation at Heart Haven with representatives from the seniors in the community.

Members of Council coordinated their attendance throughout the week regarding representation at Heart Haven Lodge, Willow Creek Lodge, Paragon Place and the Hub as follows:

Paragon Place Jun 2 12:00 Noon
(Councillor Sernecky)

Heart Haven Lodge Jun 3 12:00 Noon
(Councillors Sernecky, Fischer & Nolls)

Willow Creek Lodge Jun 4 12:00 Noon
(Councillors Sernecky, Fischer & Brown)

The Hub Jun 5 3:00 P.M.
(Councillors Sernecky, Fischer, Campbell & Brown)

(g) Memo re: Truck Route Changes

CAO G. Switenky explained that at the September 3, 2013 meeting, Council approved changes to the Municipal Development Plan. Part of that plan includes the approved Truck Routes through Town. Council suggested at that time prior to ticketing offences, the Town would send out an educational package informing of the changes and why.

Administration plans the following:

1. Mail out the attached information letter and map to all businesses in the Town and the surrounding County area to inform them of the changes on May 30th.
2. Replace and/or install the necessary street signage on the affected roads to be in place June 2.
3. Issue a news release to Q93 radio station, effective June 2.
4. Issue a news release to the Stettler Independent and East Central Alberta Review for the June 4th and June 6th editions respectively.
5. Use the Town's website and facebook page to post the information and map.
6. Work with Bylaw, RCMP and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to educate trucks travelling on the banned routes to use approved routes.
7. Educate until June 30th, at which time any trucks continuing to use unapproved roads would be subject to the applicable fines from the RCMP and DOT.

Administration respectfully recommends that Council supports the Municipal Development Plan and directs Administration to implement the action plan proposed.

Motion 14:05:14

Moved by Councillor Sernecky that the Town of Stettler Council supports the Municipal Development Plan and directs Administration to implement the action plan proposed as follows:

1. Mail out the attached information letter and map to all businesses in the Town and the surrounding County area to inform them of the changes on May 30th.
2. Replace and/or install the necessary street signage on the affected roads to be in place June 2.
3. Issue a news release to Q93 radio station, effective June 2.
4. Issue a news release to the Stettler Independent and East Central Alberta Review for the June 4th and June 6th editions respectively.
5. Use the Town's website and facebook page to post the information and map.
6. Work with Bylaw, RCMP and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to educate trucks travelling on the banned routes to use approved routes.
7. Educate until June 30th, at which time any trucks continuing to use unapproved roads would be subject to the applicable fines from the RCMP and DOT.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(h) Memo re: Arena Ventilation Upgrade/Pool Rooftop Unit Replacement

CAO G. Switenky advised that the two tenders for the replacement of rooftop units for the SRC have been received.

All companies were required to provide pricing for an Engineered Air unit or equal. Airtran has provided an option #2 price for an ICE unit which has been reviewed as equal or better.

The Blue arena ventilation upgrade was budgeted at \$100,000.00 and the following quotes were received:

Action Plumbing and Excavating:		\$112,890 + GST
Keith's Refrigeration:		\$102,500 + GST
AK Climate Control:		\$104,500 + GST
Airtran:	Option #1	\$110,770 + GST
	Option #2	\$ 94,830 + GST
Coil Pro		\$110,000 + GST

The pool roof top replacement unit was budgeted at \$15,000. We received one quote from:

Action Plumbing and Excavating \$19,500.00

Administration is recommending the following:

1. That the Town of Stettler Council award the Arena Ventilation Upgrade Tender to Airtran for an equal unit at a cost of \$94,830 + GST.
2. That the Town of Stettler Council award the Pool Rooftop Unit Tender to Action Plumbing and Excavating at a cost of \$19,500 + GST.

Discussion ensued regarding the Town's local preference provisions within the Purchasing Policy. CAO G. Switenky advised that there is a 10% local preference differential allowed on purchases up to \$15,000 and then a flat maximum of \$1,500 on purchases over that amount.

It was concluded that the savings realized on the lowest price acceptable tender is beyond the local preference consideration amount.

Motion 14:05:15

Moved by Councillor Fischer that the Town of Stettler Council award the Arena Ventilation Upgrade Tender to Airtran for an equal ICE brand unit at a cost of \$94,830 + GST.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

Motion 14:05:16

Moved by Councillor Bachman that the Town of Stettler Council award the Pool Rooftop Unit Tender to Action Plumbing and Excavating at a cost of \$19,000 + GST.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

(i) Accounts Payable in the amount of \$305,630.22

Motion 14:05:17

Moved by Councillor Nolls that Accounts Payable in the amounts of \$195,143.06, \$120,978.83, \$388.00 (VOID) & \$10,103.67 (VOID) for the period ending May 16, 2014 for a total amount of \$305,630.22 having been paid, be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

7. Council:

Mayor and Councillors outlined highlights of meetings they attended.

(a) Mayor Richards

- May 7 - McHappy Days.
- May 15 - Operating Budget Meeting.
- May 16 - Town Office cheques/agenda.

(b) Councillor Bachman

- May 9 - MPC Meeting.
 - Rob's farewell luncheon.
- May 13 - Committee Meeting.
- May 14 - Library Board Meeting.
 - Stettler Pheasant Hunt Planning at Ag. Soceity.
- May 15 - Parkland Regional Library
 - Operating Budget Meeting.

(c) Councillor Brown

- Apr 28 - Stettler District Ambulance Meeting.
- May 1 - Heartland Beautification Meeting.
- May 13 - Committee Meeting.
- May 15 - Operating Budget Meeting.

(d) Councillor Campbell

- May 9 - MPC Meeting.
 - Rob's farewell luncheon.
- May 13 - Committee Meeting.
- May 14 - Canadian Badlands Media/Advertising Kick-off in Drumheller.
 - Canadian Badlands Product Development re: Pheasant Hunt.
- May 15 - Red Deer River Municipal Users Group Meeting.
 - Operating Budget Meeting.
- May 16 - Red Deer River Watershed Alliance Breakfast.

(e) Councillor Fischer

- May 8 - Campus Alberta Open House.
- May 9 - MPC Meeting.
 - Signed cheques and reviewed agenda as Deputy Mayor.
 - Rob's farewell luncheon.
- May 13 - Committee Meeting.
- May 14 - Rotary's 90th Anniversary.
- May 15 - Operating Budget Meeting.

(f) Councillor Nolls

- May 9 - MPC Meeting.
 - SWMA Special Meeting.
 - Rob's farewell luncheon.
 - Board of Trade Meeting.
- May 13 - Committee Meeting.

- May 15 - Operating Budget Meeting.
- May 19 - Museum Board Meeting.

(g) Councillor Sernecky

- May 9 - Rob's farewell luncheon.
- May 13 - Committee Meeting.
- May 15 - Operating Budget Meeting.

8. Minutes: (a) None

9. Public Hearing: (a) None

10. Bylaws: (a) 2055-14 – 2014 Tax Rate Bylaw

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting under 6(a).

(b) 2056-14 – Tax Penalty Bylaw

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting under 6(a).

11. Correspondence: (a) Local Government Education Meeting

(b) Guaranteed Disposable Income for Seniors in Continuing Care to Increase

(c) Canadian Badlands

Motion 14:05:18

Moved by Councillor Bachman that correspondence items 11(a) to 11(c) inclusive be accepted for information.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

12. Items Added: (a) None

13. In-Camera Session: (a) There was no In-Camera Session at this meeting.

14. Adjournment:

Motion 14:05:19

Moved by Councillor Campbell that this regular meeting of the Town of Stettler Council be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous at 7:50 p.m.

Mayor

CAO