

Minutes of the Red Deer River Municipal Water User Group, November 27th, 2008 1:00 p.m., Civic Centre, Drumheller, Alberta

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Co-Chair Patt Churchill, Town of Innisfail and Co-Chair Reeve Earl Marshall, County of Stettler.

Present: Ray Romanetz – Town of Drumheller, Lorna Watkinson-Zimmer – City of Red Deer, Larry Pimm – City of Red Deer, Redford Peeples – Town of Stettler, Ron Wilson – Town of Three Hills, Gordon Christensen – Village of Alix, Jim Loughheed – County of Red Deer, Ryan Andrews – County of Newell, Rick Poole – Town of Blackfalds, Lynda Fiedler – Town of Sylvan Lake, Bryce Nimmo – Town of Drumheller, Annon Hovde – Kneehill Regional Water Service Commission, John Kaster – Town of Hanna, Bill Shaw – City of Red Deer, Murray Marshall – County of Starland, Chris Reeds – Town of Trochu, Dug Major – Special Areas Board, Earl Graham – Clearwater County, Warren Smith – Town of Olds, Al Kemmere – Mountainview County, George Taylor – Town of Sundre, Earl Marshall – County of Stettler, Patt Churchill – Town of Innisfail, Keith Ryder – RDRMUG, Linda Handy – Town of Drumheller, Recording Secretary.

2.0 Introductions

3.0 Adoption of Agenda

Andrews that the agenda for the November 27th, 2008 Red Deer River Municipal User Group Meeting be adopted as presented. Carried

4.0 Adoption of Minutes

Correction: Attendance: Dug Major (not Mayor) and Review of Municipal Projects: County of Stettler – remove third reservoir to Innisfail.

Major that the Red Deer River Municipal User Group Meeting Regular Meeting minutes of September 18, 2008 be adopted as amended. Carried

5.0 Business arising from Minutes

6.0 Guest Presentation (tabled)

7.0 New Business

7.1 Water Assurance Study Committee Update

- Focus is on Section 9 of the Water Assurance Study
- Compiled responses to Hon. Renner questions (copies available for membership).

7.2 Review AUMA Conservation

K. Ryder advised that the Municipal Water Conservation Workshop was held on November 20th and 21st in Edmonton and was well attended by municipalities. He provided an overview of the workshop as follows (the speakers' presentations are available on the website):

- AUMA has developed a sector plan that municipalities can use as template for creating plans for their own communities;
- Municipalities have three priorities to focus on:
 - 1) Developing individual water conservation and efficiency plans;
 - 2) Developing leak-detection programs; and
 - 3) Improving the use of water efficient fixtures.
- Information is available to municipalities to assist in their conservation plan development such as sharing of best practices, baseline information, full cost accounting for water pricing, bylaws (volunteer approach may not be working for some municipalities), marketing of conservation measures, water loss reports.
- Gaps that need attention include water use profiles for industry / commercial / residential and overall water usage.
- Discussion held on water use comparisons (price per person/day) must be compared "apples to apples" (gross number can not be divided on a population basis); use residential numbers only.
- Speakers from the City of Calgary, Okotoks and Red Deer provided information on the implementation of their water conservation measures such as the rebate program on household water, tankless water heaters, double plumbing, front end washing machines, 6 litres flush low flow toilets, regular newsletters on water conservation measures to residents and several other ideas that were shared.
- Discussion held on more efficient uses for grey water.
- Bill Gauley, P. Eng., Veritec Consulting Inc. provided a report on the myths in the field of water efficiency and some innovative products.

K. Ryder provided an overview of another workshop he attended in Canmore - speaker Bob Stanford on UN Global Water for Life. He stated that B. Stanford cautioned the attendees that the world will be looking to Canada as a major source of food. Discussion held on drainage of surface water (Province conducting a study) and more education is needed for development plans. It was noted that Ducks Unlimited will compensate property owners for the protection of water bodies. Alberta Water Council is developing a water conservation plan for the Minister. Discussion held on RDRMUG lending their support to the Watershed Alliance in the development of their plan. Alberta Environment has developed mandates however they are not consistently implemented nor can Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation provide the dollars to fund the standards.

7.3 Update Alberta Environment Water Issues

- Details on the RDRMUG website.
- Significant funding to stewardship groups (\$250,000 to Advisory Council)
- Recommendations for the Water for Life renewal.
- Five year program released to the public on November 26th.

Watkinson-Zimmer moved to accept the report as presented. Carried.

8.0 Executive Director Report

K. Ryder provided an overview of his activities as follows:

- Presented Water Assurance Study to Innisfail;
- Committee meet on October 30th to provide responses to the Ministers' questions on the Water Assurance Study;
- Spoke with Alberta Environment representatives regarding the Study and the Executive are prepared to move forward with a meeting with the Minister;
- Working with the Watershed Alliance on water conservation measures.

Wilson moved the adoption of the Executive Director's report as presented. Carried.

9.0 Financial Reports

9.1 Balance Statement

9.2 Revenue and Expenses

K. Ryder, Executive Director provided an overview of the financial status to October 31, 2008 as follows:

Balance Sheet - Total Current Assets \$105,152.95. Deferred Memberships - \$9,369.08 (deferred membership accounting function (2 months remaining) – if RDRMUG dissolved, these dollars would have to be sent back to the municipalities)

Membership Commitment is \$56,141.25 (based on \$0.25 per capita) – Revenue from membership based on 10 months is \$46,772.17.

Statement of Revenue and Expense: Revenue year to date \$49,340.54; Actual Expenses year to date is \$69,547.01. Surplus (Loss) to date is (\$20,206.47).

Fiedler moved the adoption of the financial statement report as presented. Carried.

10. 2009 Draft Budget

Membership was presented with a budget scenario with the membership fee set at \$0.25 and with the following considerations:

- Commitment for partnering with the Watershed Alliance on their Ground Water Study. D. Major to bring back a proposal at the January, 2009 meeting and he agreed to submit his name for membership to the Watershed Alliance.
- Discussion held on the Land Use Framework (need to be aware of this document);
- Discussion held on the possibility that the Red Deer River may be treated as a separate basin (boundary definition not yet released by the Province);
- Estimated closing surplus for 2008 to be 86,803.87;

- Budget scenarios were based on last years population totals;
- Any lengthy or complex lobby action could use up considerable resources; and
- Agreement to ensure a minimum of one year surplus be targeted for reserves.
- The \$0.25 per capita fee would yield \$54,953.00 of revenue (based on the former population figures). It was agreed that the 2006 Federal Census figures or current municipal census figures be used for the 2009 calculations.

Membership agreed to move forward with 11.0 prior to the budget approval.

11.0 Review Executive Director Annual Contract

Membership agreed that the current contract for K. Ryder reflects the workload and compensation in 2006 and a review of the Executive Director's activities should be carried out.

Churchill moved that Ray Romanetz - Town of Drumheller and Earl Marshall – County of Stettler meet with Keith Ryder to conduct a formal review and provide recommendations to the membership at the January 15, 2009 meeting. Carried.

Kemmere moved that the 2009 budget approval be delayed to determine the dollars required to support the Watershed Alliance Ground Water Study and until a review of the Executive Director's contract has been conducted. Carried.

12.0 Review of Municipal Projects

Updates from members on water projects in their respective communities

- **Town of Sundre / Mountain View County / Clearwater County** – Met with Hon. Renner mid October however there was no commitment from the Province to take on the responsibility for river erosion (eroding at 50 ft. per year). Another issue of discussion is the unacceptable river flow reporting which has an 8 hour delay which has now been improved with only a 2 hour delay. At their Council meeting on November 24th, it was agreed to speak the MLA for an arrangement to meet with the Premier on the erosion problem. The municipalities can not afford to fix the problem.

- **Mountain View County** – working on a new approach on proactive pariaries protection (protect water before it get to the river)

- **Town of Olds** – metre replacement program completed and results should show less water loss. Town Office installed dry landscaping as one of their water conservation projects.

- **Clearwater County** – concern with interbasin transfer from North Saskatchewan to South Saskatchewan and the resulting consequences. Berm eroded and commissioned a study at 1.8m to do a fix but no dollars to fund the project are available. There will be significant loss of infrastructure if high level water problems are experienced.

- **Special Areas** – very dry conditions in the area.

- **Town of Sylvan Lake** – if budget approval received, there will be a detailed ground water study conducted around Sylvan Lake.
- **Red Deer County** – Area Structure Plan for Glenifer Lake meetings being held. Anticipate first reading to the bylaw in January, 2009. Pipeline from Anthony to Springbrook planned for the new year (Ethenol plant north of Innisfail will determine the size of the line).
- **Town of Three Hills** – problem with effluent from lagoon – a number of designs to fix the problem however no response from the Province. Old lagoon drained completely and test results have been positive.
- **Town of Stettler** – Tender went out for the upgrades to water plant however bids were rejected and it was retendered with more flexibility build into the tender contract resulting in better pricing and more interest. Phase 1 will not be completed until December 2009 so there will be restrictions on placed on water usage. Phase 2 will be completed in future years. Increased their water rates from \$1.17 to \$1.70 per cubic metre which reflects truer costs.
- **County of Stettler** – two reservoirs proceeding.
- **City of Red Deer** – Water conservation specialist hired to review their strategy - Andrea Page. Water audit being carried out for their city buildings for improvements. They will be replacing their oversize metres. Larry Pimm will be the new RDRMUG representative and Lorna commended all the members for their hard work and efforts.
- **Town of Drumheller** - Wastewater Treatment Plant project repackaged into smaller components with more interest received from contractors.
- **Town of Innisfail** – third reservoir on line. South Regional Water Line project will be phased in (Innisfail to Olds).
- **Stettler County** – contract prices are coming in good on most projects (as much as 45% lower on some projects). Rural water distribution system is on line with Stantec as the contractor and a cost of \$80m.

13.0 Adjournment:

The next meeting is scheduled for **January 15, 2009 at 1:00 PM at the Civic Centre, Drumheller**, Alberta. K. Ryder provided notice that the Election of Officers will be held at the January meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM