

Minutes of the Red Deer River Municipal Water User Group, September 18th, 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: Redford Peebles – Town of Stettler, Bryce Nimmo – Town of Drumheller, Ray Romanetz – Town of Drumheller, Patt Churchill – Town of Innisfail, Ross Rawlusyk – County of Starland, Ron Wilson – Town of Three Hills, Jim Loughheed – Red Deer County, Al Kemmere – County of Mountain View, George Taylor – Town of Sundre, Wayne Richardson – County of Paintearth, Warren Smith – Town of Olds, Dennis Kuiken – Village of Acme, Earl Marshall - County of Stettler, Code Berggren – Mountain View Water Commission – Cathy Perry – Village of Alix; Doug Lehman – Town of Oyen; John Koster – Town of Hanna, Chris Reeds – Town of Trochu, Buck Buchanan – Red Deer City; Dug Major – Special Areas; Earl Graham – Clearwater County and Keith Ryder – Director.

2.0 Introductions

Welcomed new member: Earl Graham, Clearwater County

3.0 Adoption of Agenda

Addition to Agenda: 9.1 Letter from Hon. Ted Morton, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development

Smith that the agenda for the September 18th, 2008 Red Deer River Municipal User Group Meeting be adopted as amended. Carried

4.0 GUEST SPEAKER – Update from the Alberta Water Council

Terry Sly, Senior Project Manager, Alberta Water Council (AWC) provided an overview of their operations as follows:

- The AWC is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 25 members from governments (including AUMA & AAMD&C), industry and non-government organizations. Their main purpose is to monitor and steward implementation of the *Water for Life* strategy, and to support the strategy's three outcomes: *Safe, secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy* which can be achieved with research, partnership and conservation. Consensus decision making is a core value of the AWC.
- The AWC is one of three types of partnerships that work together to make recommendations to the government, stakeholders and the public on improving water management throughout the province.
- The AWC also advises on government policy and legislation and on priorities for water knowledge and research.

- The AWC reports directly to the Minister of Environment, and is accountable for its decisions to its members, its partners and the people of Alberta.
- Project Committees which investigate, provide information and make recommendations on particular water issue to the AWC: Water for Life Implementation Review, Wetland Policy, Intra-Basin Water Movement, Water Allocation Transfer System Upgrade, Shared Governance & Watershed Planning Framework, Water Conservation, Efficient and Productivity.
- Wetland Policy - the AWC submitted recommendations on September 16th to the Minister of Environment regarding a new provincial wetland policy and plan, which will assist the Province in developing and finalizing a provincial wetlands policy. When issues of non-consensus result, parties are requested to identify alternative solutions that would be acceptable. Letters of non consensus are also forwarded to the Minister of Environment.

5.0 Adoption of Minutes

Correction: "**8.2 Letter re Provincial Land Use Framework AND 8.3 County of Red Deer Open House(s) re Gleniffer Lake Reservoir Shorelands Proposed Area Structure Plan**" should be part of the minutes of July 17th.

Richardson that the Red Deer River Municipal User Group Meeting Regular Meeting minutes of July 17th, 2008 be adopted as amended. Carried

6.0 Business arising from Minutes

7.0 New Business

7.1 Water Assurance Study

7.1.1 Review Meeting with Hon. R. Renner

K. Ryder reviewed the membership's September 2nd meeting with Hon. R. Renner, Hon. L. Ouellette, Hon. M.A. Jablonski, Hon. J. Hayden, MLA's Ty Lund, C. Dallas, R. Marz, R. Prinz; and Alberta Environment's representatives - D. McGee and A. Lamb.

- Future Storage Requirements and Crown Reservation were the most important proprieties identified in the Water Assurance Study which were brought to the Provincial Government's attention. The membership requested government direction in the implementation of these recommendations.

Positive responses from the Ministers included:

Future Storage: The government realizes the need for future storage on the Red Deer River and is currently reviewing several options. At present no new on or off stream storage is in the immediate works. The Minister would like to see a stronger conservation plan within the basin to ensure the most efficient use of water is being made.

Crown Reservation: Minister acknowledged the need to ensure a stable supply of water for municipal future uses; main question that arose was, if a Crown

Reservation was established, how would it be fairly allotted to the municipalities? The priority system that is described in the Study was presented to the group and there appeared to be a positive understanding. Hon. R. Renner stressed the importance of conservation and asked the group to continue to show leadership in this area.

Hon. R. Renner thanked the RDRMUG for their leadership in commissioning the Water Assurance Study and he encouraged the group to continue with their endeavors.

7.1.2 Discuss Next Steps

Minister recommended that RDRMUG should have representation into the Southern WPAC's (nomination process). Individuals who also sit on the RDRMUG have put their names forward with no success in being appointed.

Minister asked that the RDRMUG work closely with the RDRWA and other groups and stakeholders with the Red Deer River Basin on the issues presented.

Minister would like to see the groups work together to develop a method or formula for distribution of fair allocations.

7.1.2.1 Establish Committee to work with RDRWA

- Ensure the RDRMUG Water Assurance Study has consensus;
- Focus Area: Future municipal allotment (not correcting past allotment mistakes);
- Create a framework / template to show need; participating municipalities may be reviewed to ensure they meet Conservation Efficiency Plan (CEP) criteria; January 2009 CEP may contain templates (which is a ministerial direction).

Taylor moved that the Executive Director works with a committee from the executive and other interested members to bring back an action plan and recommendations to be discussed at the next regular meeting. Carried.

8.0 Financial Reports

8.1 Balance Statement

8.2 Revenue and Expenses

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

Balance Sheet - Total Current Assets \$111,034.69. Accrued Liabilities - \$18738.16 (deferred membership accounting function (4 months remaining) – if RDRMUG dissolved, these dollars would have to be sent back to the municipalities)

Revenue and Expenses – Membership Commitment is \$56,141.25 (based on \$0.25 per capita) – Revenue from membership based on 8 months is \$37,403.09.

Statement of Revenue and Expense: Revenue year to date \$39,568.39; Actual Expenses year to date is \$63,262.20. Surplus (Loss) to date is (\$23,693.81).

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

9.0 Correspondence

Letter received from Hon. Ted Morton, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, thanking the RDRMUG for providing comments on the draft Land Use Framework. In his letter, Hon. Morton stated that the RDRMUG's concern regarding the size of the proposed planning regions identified in the draft framework has been raised by other parties, and his department will give it careful consideration as they move toward finalizing the framework.

10.0 Executive Director Report

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

- Correspondence / preparation for the Ministers / MLAs meeting held on September 2nd;
- Lethbridge Office Visit;
- Correspondence for Provincial Land Use Framework;
- Correspondence for County of Red Deer Open House re: Gleniffer Lake Reservoir Shorelands Proposed Area Structure Plan
- Correspondence for Dickson Dam.

K. Ryder announced that the Red Deer River Municipal User Group is now a legal entity.

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

11.0 Review of Municipal Projects

Updates from members on water projects in their respective communities

- **Town of Sundre / Mountain View County / Clearwater County** – Meeting scheduled with Hon. Renner on September 22nd - would like the Province to take responsibility for river erosion (eroding at 50 ft. per year). Another issue of discussion is the unacceptable river flow reporting which has an eight hour delay. Mountain View County continuing to work on new waste water line.
- **South Red Deer Regional Wastewater Commission** - working with the City of Red Deer and the Province to transmit the wastewater from six municipalities (Olds, Mountain View County, Bowden, Innisfail, Penhold, and Red Deer County) south of Red Reed to the City for treatment. The intent is to use the existing Waskasoo Regional Sewer System, which the Waskasoo Regional Services Board has agreed to sell to the South Red Deer Regional Wastewater Commission. The Commission is aiming to acquire the assets and operations of the sewer system effective January 1, 2009. The Commission has requested

that an agreement to treat the wastewater be negotiated with the City prior to that January 1st deadline. The City has determined that the engineering and cost implications of the City's role in this project are significant and require more consideration prior to negotiations.

- **Town of Drumheller** - Following disappointing tender results on the upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant, a contractors meeting was held to work towards attracting more contractors and more competitive bids. The project was repackaged into smaller components. Tenders will close on September 25th for upgrades to the 19th Street Lift Station and Forcemain. Drumheller is hoping for funding approval under the Municipal Water & Wastewater and Water for Life for a water line extension from Rosedale to Cambria / East Coulee.

- **Starland County** – further water line extension to rural users (80 farms). It will involve over 500 km of pipeline and tendering will be out in two weeks. The project will cost \$8.5M. Study underway to identify potential dam sites – project commissioned by MPE Engineering. Working with Kruger Water Commission for water reservoir expansion in Craigmyle and Hanna. Study underway with Stettler and Kneehill Regional Water Services Commission for a joint commission for cross training, emergency equipment sharing, etc. Solar power to be switched on for their Morrin pump station.

- **Town of Hanna** – Kruger Water Commission doubled their clearwell capacity. Sewer lift station in operation by the end of October. Shirley McClellan Water Line now has 60 miles of pipe in ground with the remainder to be installed by the end of November.

- **County of Paintearth** – engineering report on rural water distribution system being reviewed.

- **Village of Alix** – new water metres installed last June with leak detection resulting in an average increase of \$15.00 per household. Mirror will receive water from Hwy 12/21 project by the end of October.

- **Town of Stettler** – upgrades to water plant proceeding.

- **Red Deer County** – Area Structure Plan meetings being held.

- **Mountain View Water Commission** – Commission wide water restriction. Lobbying government for \$40 – 50M for the Regional Waste Water System.

- **County of Stettler** – two reservoirs proceeding.

10.0 Adjournment:

The next meeting is scheduled for **November 27th, 2008 at 1:00 PM at the Civic Centre, Drumheller**, Alberta. (Reason for date change: AUMA Municipal Water Conservation Workshop being held in Red Deer on November 20 & 21, 2008).

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 PM