

MINUTES

Council Meeting Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124 April 22, 2020 Zoom Electronic Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT

Murray Kerik - Reeve
Robert Esau - Division 1
Sandra Melzer - Division 1
Becky Peiffer - Division 1
Darcie Acton - Division 2
Brian Rosche - Division 2
Brad Pearson - Division 2

IN ATTENDANCE

Allan Winarski - Chief Administrative Officer, MD LSR
Lana Spencer - Recording Secretary, MD LSR
Pat Rehn - MLA, Lesser Slave Lake
Ann Holden - Development Authority, MD LSR
Marvin Schnieder - Transportation Foreman, MD LSR
Angeline Blackmore - Safety Coordinator, MD LSR
Valerie Tradewell - Marten Beach Cottagers Association
Caroline Wagenaar - Marten Beach Cottagers Association
Joe McWilliams - Lakeside Leader

Note: *This Council meeting was a regularly scheduled meeting. All attendees participated electronically by way of Zoom with Deputy Reeve Rosche present in the Slave Lake Council Chambers, Reeve Kerik and Councillor Esau in the Flatbush Office, and other MD Councillors attending from their homes. MD Chief Administrative Officer and staff also participated through Zoom. Zoom access was provided to the press. The meeting was advertised on the MD website and Lakeside Leader that the public was invited to attend the meeting by contacting hq@mnlr.ca for access via Zoom.*

CALL TO ORDER

Reeve Kerik called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION 151-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to adopt the Agenda with the following additions:

- Delegation: Pat Rehn, MLA Lesser Slave Lake Region

CARRIED (6-0)

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOTION 152-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to adopt the April 8, 2020, Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

CARRIED (6-0)

ADMINISTRATION

CAO AND COVID-19 UPDATE

The CAO updated Council as follows:

- Provincial Updates: Clarification on OHV and Fire Bans, Tax and Utility Deferrals, Covid Stimulus Plans
- Flooding issues: Securing Tiger Dams, Sandbags at Marten Beach Transfer Station, Excavator on Mooney Creek)
- Environmental scans; detail will come
- Financial Reporting: day to day process continuing
- Utilities Department: Brian Vance transitioning into Utilities roll
- Moving forward on financial reporting
- Operations group continuing to log and track action requests/issues

MOTION 153-20

Moved by Councillor Melzer to accept the CAO and Covid-19 Update as information.

CARRIED (6-0)

ADVERTISING BYLAW 2020-06

Municipalities may choose alternative advertisement methods, including electronic advertising, by passing an advertisement bylaw.

If the municipality wishes to use alternate advertising methods, the municipality must establish a bylaw that meets the following requirements:

- council must be satisfied that the method provided for in the bylaw is likely to bring the matter to the attention of substantially all residents in the relevant area;
- a public hearing must be held on the bylaw;
- the notice of the bylaw must be advertised by newspaper or residential mail or delivery; and
- bylaws passed under this section must be made available for public inspection.

MOTION 154-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to give first reading to *Advertising Bylaw 2020-06* as amended.

CARRIED (6-0)

A Public Hearing will be scheduled for May 27, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.

DELEGATION

MLA LESSER SLAVE LAKE – PAT REHN

Pat Rehn entered the meeting to update Council on the status of Alberta's economy due to Covid-19 and questioned Council if they had any concerns.

Mr. Rehn provided no update on the status of the paving of Highways in Lesser Slave River advising that he has been in discussion with the Minister of Transportation and will be keeping the pressure up on his end. He advised Council to continue pursuing advocacy efforts on this topic.

Councillor Melzer requested Mr. Rehn to provide more details on what "Shovel Ready" projects entailed and if engineering, planning, etc. were included. Mr. Rehn advised that he would get back to Council on that.

Councillor Acton questioned Mr. Rehn on if projects that did not create a high volume of jobs would qualify for funding. Mr. Rehn advised he would have to check with the Minister and what metrics they would be using to determine what projects get the green light.

Reeve Kerik questioned Mr. Rehn on the Government of Alberta's (GOA) decision to defer Education Property Tax though municipalities collecting are not allowed to defer payments to the government. Mr. Rehn advised he would have to get back to Council.

The CAO advised Mr. Rehn that communication and consultation is lacking on bridge replacement on Highway 88 regarding the impact on flows, timeline and type of structure. Forest companies, the oil industry and the public are upset at conditions of highway(s). He advised Mr. Rehn that industries (oil/gas, forest) are banding together and a signed letter is going to be sent to the GOA. He added that Marten Beach did not receive any flood funding.

The CAO questioned Mr. Rehn on:

- the GOA's philosophy on closing Provincial parks but spending funding on a Tourism Strategic Plan?
- Why the oil/gas industry assessment was given preferential treatment on education requisitions and not residential assessment?
- Need for health care aid with the issues of losing doctors and ways to help rural communities on recruiting doctors

Mr. Rehn advised that Provincial Parks closures are temporary during this pandemic.

Councillor Rosche explained the announcement to permanently and partially close certain Parks in the Parks System happened prior to the pandemic. He went on to state that Parks belong to the people of Alberta and should be accessible.

Mr. Rehn advised that the GOA reviewed the costs to run and maintain Parks and decided that closing some would lower government expenses. He advised he was not saying they have to be closed but looking at other ways to efficiently and realistically show they are utilized. He advised that the GOA is approaching First Nations and Municipalities to take over leases of some Parks.

Councillor Rosche question if there is going to be consultation with municipalities?

Mr. Rehn confirmed he would speak with Ministers for a consultation process.

Mr. Rehn stated he did not think the CAO comments were correct in that there is a lack of doctors in the province stating that he has been advised there is an overabundance of doctors in urban centres and the trouble is in getting urban doctors to move to rural areas.

Mr. Rehn stated he appreciated the questions and comments and he will put what was discussed today into an email to Reeve Kerik to distribute out to other Councillors and Administration.

MOTION 155-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to accept the *Pat Rehn, MLA Lesser Slave River* delegation as information. **CARRIED (6-0)**

Pat Rehn left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

EMPLOYEE TOBACCO AND SMOKING REDUCTION POLICY L-7.4

The purpose of this policy is pursuant to the Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Act the Council for the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124 wants to provide a healthy environment and workplace for all employees, contractors, temporary staff, volunteers, and visitors. The Council also recognizes the risks associated with second-hand smoke and wishes to protect all its employees, contractors, temporary staff, volunteers, and visitors from this health hazard.

MOTION 156-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to adopt the *Employee Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Policy L-7.4*. **CARRIED (6-0)**

LAWRENCE LAKE, PROVINCIAL PARKS & RECREATION AREAS DISPOSITIONS

Council discussed the rationale of the Government of Alberta's decision to close down Provincial Parks with ones within the Municipal District being; Chisholm Provincial Recreation Area (removed from the parks system), Chain Lakes Provincial Recreation Area (removed from the parks system), Lawrence Lake Provincial Recreation Area (partially closed) and Fawcett Lake.

Council discussed the impact that this decision does to Albertans and how the MD can advocate and pursue ways to preserve these areas.

Council stated that these closures would cause further problems with random camping and an increased risk of wildfires. As this is a provincial concern, Council will be connecting with RMA.

Administration advised Council that Parks Management has reached out to the Municipal Districting to see if it would be interested in securing leases for campgrounds and operating them under its Rural Services Department.

MOTION 157-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to direct Administration to determine the terms for leasing Provincial Parks within the Municipal District boundaries that have been slated by the Government of Alberta to be closed. **CARRIED (6-0)**

FINANCE

MOTION 158-20

Moved by Councillor Acton that an urgent meeting be requested between Council and Minister of Environment and Parks, Honorable Jason Nixon to discuss full/partial closures of parks slated in the "Optimizing Alberta Parks" publication.

CARRIED (6-0)

CHEQUE REGISTERS

MOTION 159-20

Moved by Councillor Peiffer to accept the *Cheque Registers* as information.

CARRIED (6-0)

PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT

LAND USE BYLAW UPDATE

Administration advised Council that V3 is working on a questionnaire for Council. The questionnaire aims to get an idea about what Councillors are thinking about the Land Use Bylaw prior to the first meeting.

Administration is in the process of creating a list of possible stakeholders.

Councillor Pearson entered the meeting at 11:37 a.m.

MOTION 160-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to accept the *Land Use Bylaw Update* as information.

CARRIED (7-0)

TAXATION

TAX PENALTY BYLAW 2020-05

Administration advised Council of the actions the Government of Alberta has taken to provide a deferral of education property tax. The MD's current bylaw for deferral does not align and taxes would be due at a different time. Additionally, other classes of assessment do not receive the deferral.

Municipalities are not obligated to defer any municipal property tax. Some tax notices have combinations of different classes of assessed property. Exclusions create confusion and complexity for payment by taxpayers.

Administration presented Council with a new penalties bylaw which rescinds the previous one so notices can be mailed to preserve assessment appeal deadlines indicated on our assessment and taxation notices. Penalty revenue will be affected by the loss of one penalty period of July 1st at 6%. Otherwise rates remain consistent with the current Bylaw 96-2.

Administration confirmed that this bylaw may be rescinded and a new bylaw may be adopted to prior to the 2020 tax assessment to revise/change penalties.

MOTION 161-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to give first reading to *Imposition of Penalties on Unpaid Taxes Bylaw 2020-05*.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 162-20

Moved by Councillor Pearson to give second reading to *Imposition of Penalties on Unpaid Taxes Bylaw 2020-05*.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 163-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to proceed to third reading to *Imposition of Penalties on Unpaid Taxes Bylaw 2020-05*.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 164-20

Moved by Councillor Pearson to give third reading to *Imposition of Penalties on Unpaid Taxes Bylaw 2020-05*.

CARRIED (7-0)

LOCAL AND COMPOSITE ASSESSMENT REVIEW BOARDS

Annually, Council appoints the list of Commission Panelists, the names of the Chair of the LARB and CARB and the name of the Assessment Clerk provided to the Municipal District Council by the Capital Region Assessment Services Commission.

MOTION 165-20

Moved by Councillor Melzer to appoint Richard Barham as the Local and Composite Assessment Review Board(s) Clerk and Designated Officer for the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124 to December 31, 2020.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 166-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to appoint Local and Composite Assessment Review Board(s) Panelists; Judy Bennett, Darlene Chartrand, Tina Groszko, Stewart Hennig, Richard Knowles and Raymond Ralph for the for the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124 to December 31, 2020.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 167-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to appoint Raymond Ralph as the Chairman of the Local and Composite Assessment Review Board(s) for the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124 to December 31, 2020.

CARRIED (7-0)

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Administration provided Council with an update on:

- Frozen culverts
- Issues with TWP Rd 714.5
- Gravel haul tender closes May 8th
- Temporary bridge being delivered in a couple weeks
- Fleet update
- Shoulder pull moving forward in May

Geotechnical results on OSH sliding in area would require:

- New road design
- Purchase land from landowner
- Expropriation

MOTION 168-20

Moved by Councillor Melzer to accept the *Transportation Update* as information.

CARRIED (7-0)

SHOVEL READY PROJECTS – COVID STIMULUS - MD

Council was presented options for Municipal District projects that may qualify for Covid Stimulus funding being launched by the Government of Alberta:

- West and East Mitsue Pavement
- Marten Beach Floodwall
- Smith Bridge
- Southshore Drive to Nine Mile Point
- Leverage for the Old Smith Highway
- Next bridge(s) in bridge file
- Broadband to Southshore, Smith, Flatbush, Fawcett Lake
- Southshore Sewage Lagoon
- Smith Lagoon
- Water station at Marten Beach
- North Shore to Devonshire Beach (Enhance a tourism asset)

MOTION 169-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to direct Administration to focus on having paving and gravel projects ready for applying for the Shovel Ready Projects-for Covid Stimulus funding.

CARRIED (7-0)

SHOVEL READY PROJECTS – COVID STIMULUS - PROVINCE

The Government of Alberta (GOA) has announced it would pursue shovel ready projects that can get the economy launched following the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. On April 9th, the GOA doubled capital maintenance and renewal (CMR) funding in 2020-21 from \$937 million to \$1.9 billion by accelerating the capital plan, getting thousands of Albertans back to work resurfacing roads, repairing bridges, restoring schools, fixing potholes and more.

With this announcement and the region's efforts to get the pavement repaired or overlaid for Highways 2 and 88, Administration reached out to Municipal District industries vital to the region. Forest industry and oil and gas industry leaders were asked if they would advocate the current government to show some consideration for repairing and repaving regional primary highways. Since Highway 88 is separating along the centre line and has cracks and holes and Highway 2 has got severe potholes and cracks, these highways should be candidates for the announced funding to Alberta Transportation.

As of Friday, April 17th, Ken Vanderwell, President of the Lesser Slave Constituency Association and head of Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd has offered to coordinate a joint letter and advocacy to the Alberta Government with the Mitsue Industrial Park forest companies. Individually, they have made efforts to get improvements.

MOTION 170-20

Moved by Councillor Esau that Council for the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River join advocacy initiatives for Covid Stimulus funding with industries and other stakeholders in an effort to be approved for highway paving within the region.

CARRIED (7-0)

SHOVEL READY PROJECT – COVID STIMULUS – MARTEN BEACH

Administration advised Council that Marten Beach residents are interested in whether the flood mitigation proposal by Golder could be funded by way of stimulus funding that could be available to the Municipal District.

Previously, the Municipal District submitted a proposal before September 30, 2019 for funding under Alberta Community Resilience Program (ACRP). Flood mitigation anticipated in the application totaled to \$24 million. Following submission, no funding was provided, and the MD application is closed. The ACRP is under review.

Administration provided highlights to what was discussed in a meeting with John Singleton, property owner and Marten Beach Cottagers Association member on April 20, 2020.

MOTION 171-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to allocate up to \$50,000 for engineering services to be used for an application for Covid Stimulus funding for Marten Beach flood mitigation and to accept the \$10,000 contribution to this effort from Marten Beach Cottagers Association.

CARRIED (7-0)

Caroline Wagenaar left the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

UTILITIES

BYLAW 2020-07 - TO DEFER UTILITIES CHARGES TO JULY 1, 2020

On March 18, 2020, the Government of Alberta (GOA) ordered a 90-day utility payment deferral for residential, farm and small commercial customers who are expecting financial hardship as a direct result of COVID-19 to ensure no one will be cut off from electricity and natural gas, regardless of the service provider. This does not apply to the Municipal District (MD) utilities of water, sewer. Ninety (90) days from March 18, 2020 is June 16th. Penalty is applied to MD utility bills at the end of the month.

The MD has two bylaws pertaining to its utilities and each has a penalty rate of 1.5% per month on overdue balance after month end.

To affect a deferral of MD utility payments to June 30, 2020 for COVID-19 purposes to align with the deferral for electricity and natural gas payments, a bylaw is required to be passed. One has been provided for Council consideration. There is no requirement for advertising.

A deferral is not a nonpayment of charges. What would be waived are penalties for April and May with payment due June 30th – given the mechanics of our billing cycles. Penalties run between \$250 to \$300 per month.

MOTION 172-20

Moved by Councillor Pearson to give first reading to *Cancellation of Penalties on Update Utilities Bylaw 2020-07*.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 173-20

Moved by Councillor Rosche to give second reading to *Cancellation of Penalties on Update Utilities Bylaw 2020-07*.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 174-20

Moved by Councillor Esau to proceed to third reading to *Cancellation of Penalties on Update Utilities Bylaw 2020-07*.

CARRIED (7-0)

MOTION 175-20

Moved by Councillor Melzer to give third reading to *Cancellation of Penalties on Update Utilities Bylaw 2020-07*.

CARRIED (7-0)

BOARD REPORTS**Agricultural Service Board (ASB)**

- ASB Provincial Grant – extra portion of funding
 - Partnering efforts with Big Lakes County – Environmental Farm Plan
- 2020 last year able to purchase strychnine

Lesser Slave Regional Housing Authority

- No Covid cases reported in any of the lodges
- New directives daily from AHS – measures to combat Covid
- Determining increase in wages for staff
- MD of Opportunity is going to honor requisition. Not opening their lodge due to Covid but may use it as a treatment centre in the meantime
- Devices are being provided to residents so they can continue to keep in touch with family and friends

Lesser Slave Watershed Council

- Environmental Farm Plan
- Canadian Ag Partnership Grant
- Meghan Payne offered to help ASB

MOTION 176-20

Moved by Councillor Pearson to accept the *Board Reports* as information.

CARRIED (7-0)

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION 177-20**

Moved by Councillor Esau to adjourn the meeting at 2:14 p.m.

CARRIED (7-0)


Chief Administrative Officer


Reeve