

NORTH RED DEER RIVER WATER SERVICES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
September 21, 2020

In Attendance: Chair Ken Wigmore, Lacombe County Councillor
Councillor Mark Matejka, Ponoka County
Mayor Richard Poole, Town of Blackfalds
Mayor Grant Creasey, City of Lacombe
Mayor Rick Bonnett, Town of Ponoka
Denise Bellabono, Administrative Assistant

Others Present: Sandra Lund, Acting CAO, Town of Ponoka
Tim Timmons, County Manager, Lacombe County
Matthew Goudy, CAO, City of Lacombe
Preston Weran, Director of Infrastructure, Town of Blackfalds
Michael Minchin, Director of Corporate Services, Lacombe County
Mauricio Reyes, Sr. Manager of Financial Services, City of Lacombe
Amber Mitchell, Engineering Services Manager, City of Lacombe

Guests: Todd Simenson, VP, Stantec
Joel Sawatzky, Managing Leader, Water, Stantec

Regrets: Jordan Thompson, Acting NRDRWSC Administrator
Myron Thompson, CAO, Town of Blackfalds
Chris Huston, Utilities Manager, City of Lacombe

1. Call to Order:

Chair Wigmore called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

2. Adoption of the Agenda:

Councillor Matejka requested that "Correspondence email from Mayor Bonnett on the Waterline Extension" be added to the agenda as 8.2.

MOVED by Mayor Creasey that the agenda for September 21, 2020, be adopted as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Adoption of the Minutes:

Mayor Poole requested an amendment to motions for 7.2 to correct the order of readings and the member name to *"MOVED by Mayor Poole that the Commission give first reading to Bylaw 3.5 Water Rate as per Option 1 (\$2.09/m³)", "MOVED by*

Mayor Creasey that the Commission give second reading to Bylaw 3.5 Water Rate as per Option 1 (\$2.09/m3), "MOVED by Councillor Matejka that the Commission to move to third reading of Bylaw 3.5 Water Rate as per Option 1 (\$2.09/m3)"

MOVED by Mayor Poole that the minutes for June 22, 2020, be adopted as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Presentation

5. Reports

5.1. Administration Report

CAO Goudy present the September 21, 2020 Administration Report underlining that there has been no response from the Province on the Commissions questions that were sent in February regarding the waterline extension to Ermineskin Cree Nation (ECN). There have been three meetings between ECN representatives, representatives from the Province, the Chair Wigmore and Acting CAO Thompson. Financials with 2020 water volumes comparison to 2019 levels are consistent and operationally locates requests have decreased from 2019. The City of Red Deer has commenced the relocation of the main vault with an estimated time of completion of October 1, 2020. The Commission operators continue to work on the asset management plan with Stantec.

MOVED by Mayor Bonnett that the Commission accept the September 21, 2020 Administration Report as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5.2. Chairperson's Report

Chair Wigmore's verbal report updated the Commission that the waterline extension is in a holding pattern until it receives a response from the Province.

6. Old Business

6.1. Commission Administrative Templates

Administrative Assistant Bellabono presented the Administrative Templates that were presented at the June 22, 2020 Commission meeting for final approval. A preview of the new NRDRWSC website was provided prior to the meeting to members and municipal representatives with an anticipated launch date of September 23, 2020.

MOVED by Mayor Creasey that the Commission approve the changes to the administrative templates.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. New Business/ Emergent Items

7.1. MGA Changes: Regional Service Commissions

CAO Goudy presented a summary of the Municipal Government Act changes for municipal Commissions. Changes to the concept of a balanced budget has been changed to follow the same guidelines as municipalities, this change has no impact on this Commission. Changes to Regional Service Commissions came into effect September 1, 2020 and in general affect the administrative maintenance and tidying of documents.

MOVED by Mayor Poole that the Commission accept Administration's work plan as proposed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7.2. City of Red Deer Regionalization

CAO Goudy presented information and a graph circulated by the City of Red Deer of the benefits on the return and cost savings of wastewater regionalization for the Red Deer River, highlighting that the beneficial impact from regionalization has been positive. The primary beneficiary of that infrastructure from regionalization has been the City of Red Deer, water quality and availability for all members has improved with the regionalization. The utility rate structure used for the Commissions municipalities is the same as Red Deer, but the rates are not the same and in the coming year through a partnership with other Commissions, it could be worth pursuing an independent audit of the utility rate.

MOVED by Councillor Matejka that the Commission accept the City of Red Deer's information on the Benefits of Wastewater Regionalization for the Red Deer River Regionalization as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED by Mayor Bonnett that the Commission accept the City of Red Deer's graphs on the Benefits of Wastewater Regionalization for the Red Deer River as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. Correspondence/Information

8.1. Extension of NRDRWSC Water Line to Ermineskin Cree Nation

MOVED by Mayor Poole to accept the July 22, 2020 Letter from Ermineskin Cree Nation as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8.2. Email from Mayor Bonnett on the Waterline Extension

Mayor Bonnett email for the record:

*Good day commission members,
I have been pondering thoughts on the waterline commissioned from us to Ermineskin First Nation.*

Going thru meeting notes again and seeing the Provincial Governments unwavering commitment to this project of 39 million for only one of the bands at Maskwacis.

I find it an awful large amount of Government taxpayer funding for only one of the potential recipients at this given time with all the other issues we are enduring thru these uncertain times (our new normal).

So after lots of time to digest this I am still having concerns about the potential extra-incurred costs to current member municipalities going forward. The whole water commission from the onset in 2004 has increased costs of delivery of water to member municipalities exponentially since its inception.

- 1) It was oversized at the time to accommodate the 4 First Nations communities which has not occurred for now 16 years which members are on the debenture hook for.*
- 2) The purpose of the oversize was to be able to accommodate all 4 nations.*
- 3) The lack of Federal Government commitment on their crown land of which the nations fall under jurisdiction to me is a huge concern.*

So with much contemplation and concern I have developed an alternative to the current membership excepting new members going forward and I would like members to consider as we prepare for the Province continuing on the path to building this extension line

My proposal would be to have the Province and Ermineskin First Nation at this time to build the line as they seem fit for what they require now and potentially in the future. We place a meter chamber at the site at which they hook up to at Ponoka and we only operate as a Transmission line with a formula (which will need to be configured based on amount of supply, over time ,similar to that of power transmission) to deliver water to the new line at that point.

That way the can pay City of Red Deer for water consumption and can design configuration of concerns of pumping stations for lack of water use and so on with other concerns that were in Stantec's feasibility report.

This way the First Nations can collaborate with Province, Feds and the other Nations to create their own First Nations based water commission.

It gives us a return on our oversizing and limits the amount of exposure we place our member municipalities' taxpayers in for any issues that may occur north of Ponoka. We have operated for 16 years without extra revenues. This way if we don't receive full compensation for use from the future all members know what their costs are on a forward going basis.

If all goes well and they start using and fulfilling large use of the water our transmission costs will help with our ROI. Member communities may have some costs returned on a go forward basis.

In my Councils opinion this is the most effective way to ensure that the first Nations Communities of Maskwacis can receive much needed water and be able to ensure that current NWRDWC members' communities are not exposed to possible overruns in costs that maybe incurred from the future development of line north of Ponoka.

Mayor Bonnett summarized his email correspondence as a proposal for consideration. In the 16 years of the waterline extension project preliminary discussions, the Commission has picked up some of the extra costs associated with these discussions and in proceeding with the extension, there could be some substantial costs to the Commission. The Province had not communicated with the Commission of additional funding prior to their press release in June 2020 and have not been able to provide answers to the questions that have been asked in the past and again in February 2020.

MOVED by Mayor Creasey that the Commission accept the email from Mayor Bonnett on the Waterline Extension on the record as information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. Next Meeting:

Monday, November 9, 2020 at 9:00 am, City of Lacombe Council Chambers.

10. Adjournment:

MOVED by Mayor Bonnett to adjourn the meeting at 9:49 am.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Original Signed

Chairperson

Original Signed

Administrator