



Town of Edson
P.O. Box 6300
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EDSON, Alberta Canada
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For Immediate Release

Council Notes

December 15th, 2015

- 1. Community Services Board.** Council heard from Community Services Board member Jacqui Currie regarding the potential dissolving of the Board. Ms. Currie spoke to the benefits of having the board in place and ways they could improve the board's effectiveness. A change has been proposed that would replace the Community Services Board with a series of public engagement events throughout the year and the Committee of the Whole overseeing the FCSS needs to ensure grant funding requirements are met. First reading of Bylaw 2175, repealing the bylaw to establish the Community Services Board, passed in a recorded vote. Mayor Pasychny, Councillors Bevan, Chouinard, Strang and Wilkinson voted in favor of the Bylaw, with Councillor Boyce opposed. Councillor Gomuwka was absent. All of Council had stressed that this move is not a reflection of the board members, but a way of changing the process to become more effective. The proposed bylaw will be brought back at a future meeting for further readings.
- 2. Municipal Development Plan.** Council gave third and final reading to Bylaw No. 2172, adopting the revised Town of Edson Municipal Development Plan. Some minor wording changes were made following the public hearing earlier this month. The MDP is a statutory plan that governs the Town's urban direction for the future.
- 3. Revenue Sharing Agreement.** Council voted unanimously in favour of signing the proposed Revenue Sharing Agreement with Yellowhead County. Under this agreement the Town of Edson would receive approximately \$5,000,000 from Yellowhead County, in addition to the cost sharing formulas already in place. The Town of Edson recognizes the importance of working with our municipal partners to improve the quality of life for all area residents.
- 4. Council Remuneration.** A change is being made in the way Council is paid honorariums. Rather than per meeting rates, council will now be paid one even monthly sum, covering all duties such as; acting as Deputy Mayor, opening tenders, attending meetings, and representing the Town at events. This is not a pay raise, but a change in the way the funds are allocated. The change in policy was passed in a recorded vote. Mayor Pasychny, Councillors Bevan, Chouinard, Strang and Wilkinson voted in favor of the change, with Councillor Boyce opposed. Councillor Gomuwka was absent. The new honorarium rates will be \$3,000/month for the Mayor and \$1,900/month for Councillors. There is also an option for Council to make a resolution to pay additional fees for exceptional meetings or events.
- 5. Tax Levy Write-offs.** As per a letter from the Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister – Housing Division, municipal grants for property taxes paid to housing management bodies were eliminated from the 2015 budget. As a result, Council has agreed to write off the 2015 tax levies for three provincially owned assets in town (seniors housing). These properties are not subject to Municipal taxation per the Municipal Government Act.
- 6. 2015 Revised Capital Budget.** To assist in the auditing process, a revised capital budget for 2015 has been approved highlighting the original project budgets and any changes that were approved over the course of the year.

- 7. 2016 Capital and Operating Budget.** Council has approved the 2016 Capital and Operating Budgets as presented. The Budget uses a proposed 3% municipal tax increase. This rate may change in the spring depending on 2015 assessments. The actual taxes owed by a property owner is dependent on their property assessment. Residents with a lower assessment could potentially pay less in taxes, even with a tax percentage increase.

For the 2016 Capital budget, we have the annual Equipment Replacement, Bridges and Culverts, Well Exploration and Park Trails projects. There is also an allowance for the 2016 Road Rehab Program. Some ongoing projects from 2015 are listed, including the park for Hillendale Phase II, the next phase of the Christmas Light project, the intersection at Highway 748 and 40th Street. There are some new projects being presented at this time. There is an addition of a Water Tender for the Fire Department and a new SCBA air compressor for the Fire Department.

A budget recap is attached and will also be posted on our website at www.edson.ca/departments/finance-administration

- 8. Utility Rates.** Council has adopted a new Schedule "A" for Bylaw 2114 (Utility Rate Bylaw). There are three main changes to the schedule including a 2.7% increase in the rates. This brings the m³ rate to \$1.85 from \$1.80. The flat rate will remain unchanged to allow the consumer to maintain more control over actual costs. Other changes include an adjustment to the sewer consumption service charge section to help with clarification, and the meter charges section has been amended to show that meters purchased from the Town will be charged out at current industry standard rates. These changes go into effect January 1st, 2016.
- 9. Emerging Trends.** Council has approved the attendance of Council members that wish to attend the Emerging Trends Seminar in Edmonton on February 18, 2016.
- 10. Meeting Cancellations.** The December 22, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting and the January 5, 2016 Council meeting have been cancelled for the Holiday Season
- 11. Fire Rental Houses.** Council has approved the payment of \$128,500 to Yellowhead County for the County's share of the fire rental houses due to the termination of the Fire Services Agreement earlier this year. The rental houses were jointly purchased in 2006 to cover the possibility of future expansion of the existing fire hall.

A Committee of the Whole Meeting is planned for January 12th, 2016 at 10:00am in the Council Chambers of the Edson Civic Building. The next Council Meeting will be January 19th, 2016 at 7:30pm.

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