

# **Town of Drumheller COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**September 28, 2009 at 4:30 PM**  
**Council Chamber, Town Hall**  
703-2nd Ave. West, Drumheller, Alberta



## **PRESENT:**

**MAYOR:**

Bryce Nimmo

**COUNCIL:**

Andrew Berdahl

Karen Bertamini

Blaine McDonald

Don Guidolin

Sharel Shoff

Terry Yeman

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/ENGINEER:**

Ray Romanetz

**DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE**

Allan Kendrick

**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES:**

Michael Roy

**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:**

Paul Salvatore

**RECORDING SECRETARY:**

Linda Handy

## **1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

## **2.0 MAYOR'S OPENING REMARK**

2.1 Mayor B. Nimmo declared the week of October 4 to October 10, 2009 as Fire Prevention Week.

2.2 Mayor B. Nimmo declared October 7th as National Safe Communities Day.

## **3.0 PUBLIC HEARING**

## **4.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MO2009.177 Shoff, McDonald** moved to approve the agenda as presented.  
Carried unanimously.

## **5.0 MINUTES**

### **5.1. ADOPTION OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

- 5.1.1 Regular Council Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2009  
**MO2009.178 Yemen, Guidolin** moved to approve the regular Council meeting minutes of September 14, 2009 as presented. Carried unanimously.

### **5.2. MINUTES OF MEETING PRESENTED FOR INFORMATION**

### **5.3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

## **6.0 DELEGATIONS**

- 6.1 Drumheller Valley Ski Club  
Zeke Wolf, Ski Club President stated that he is the voice for the Board of Directors. He stated that winters in Drumheller are not profitable for most commercial businesses and the ski hill is a much needed winter attraction for the community. He stated that Zrinko's vision to attract 50,000 skiers per year may not be viable but there will be guaranteed failure if nothing is done. He stated that the Ski Club has appreciated the Town's assistance in the past and it should continue. He stated that the offer of land sale should be back on the table and a break should be given on the past due water bill. He explained that Drumheller residents want their taxes to support recreation facilities - including the ski hill.

Zrinko Amerl, General Manager, Badlands Ski Hill Ltd. would like to take over the ski hill and make it a viable business in Drumheller. He explained that the ski hill niche would be the driving distance from Calgary, scenery, client potential, regional and local economy, adequate vertical slope distance of the ski hill, decent infrastructure and the large volunteer base. He explained that there are capital concerns with equipment at the end of its life, i.e. pump station, baby lift, guns, design issue with the pipes and additional equipment needed. He stated that there is an agreement in place with the Passion Play regarding the use of the ski lodge and parking lot. He explained the operational pitfalls would include no backup plan if the ski lift breaks down (T-bar to be installed); snow making equipment not working (needs a second pump at a cost of \$60,000); grooming equipment lacking (an additional cat needs to be purchased); and the ski hill needs year round operations (summer attractions such as zip line, dirt biking, etc.). He stated that a ski hill needs about 30 - 35 other activities to be financially viable. He

further stated that regional marketing of the ski hill may be within 100 km radius which includes NE Calgary. He stated that these residents find it easier to drive to Drumheller than COP - this may lead to overnight stays in Drumheller. He stated that Saskatchewan residents looking for a weekend getaway go to Banff or somewhere in Alberta. This avenue is being worked on with Ray Telford, Economic Development Officer for the Town of Drumheller, businesses owners and the tourism industry.

Z. Amerl stated that he has background experience in ski hill management, equipment operator, business development and financial management. He explained that since coming on board with the ski hill as of December 10, 2007, there have been several improvements carried out at the ski hill. He further explained that Town water is not the best for making snow and river water pumped to the ski hill would be the preferred option. He stated that he is in negotiations with Husky Oil Ltd. for an abandoned pipeline. He stated that the ski hill needs a storage facility for water and the best location would be behind the pumphouse.

Z. Amerl explained that the 30 day notice of the June 2009 cancelation of the agreement to sell the land did not allow sufficient time to comply with the conditions of the agreement such as proof of insurance or address the \$30,000 unpaid water bill. He stated that the proof of insurance has been provided for one year, November 2008-November 2009. He explained that the water bills from 2003 onwards are stale dated. He further explained that the 2008-09 water bill shows projected not actual costs as the water meter at the pumphouse has not been operational for the last two years. He stated that the water bill should be 40% reduced due to more efficient snow making equipment.

Z. Amerl explained that the ski hill is valuable to the community, offering 30 plus youth their first job opportunity, local membership of 400, offers programming to schools, and has the potential for attracting winter tourists which will boost the economy. He asked Council to reconsider their decision and sell the ski hill as their decision has affected several residents and groups. He further stated that the contract was signed with specific conditions set out for both parties and 30 days was not sufficient to meet the obligations.

#### Questions and Comments from Council:

A. Berdahl asked if the legal status would be changed to "for profit". Z. Amerl stated yes, if he purchases the land there will be a transition from non profit to for profit status.

D. Guidolin asked for an explanation on the non profit operations. Z. Amerl stated that the ski club board of directors hired a general manager however there is a large volunteer base as well. Z. Amerl stated that other communities where the ski hill is operated under the non profit status, the

Town provides maintenance of the ski hill and the infrastructure as well as covering any expenses resulting from breakdowns.

K. Bertamini stated that the Town's water was given at a reduced rate. She further stated that the agreement is a legal document which outlined conditions of which the ski hill had defaulted on its responsibilities. She further stated that it is not Council's intent to close the ski hill but Council had to act when the obligations were not being met. She stated that Council must be responsible to all residents. Z. Amerl stated that there is a caveat registered on the title which makes the agreement a legal binding agreement. He further stated that without the land there is no ski hill.

T. Yemen asked Z. Amerl if he has made an offer to purchase to the Town of Drumheller that has been rejected. Z. Amerl stated no.

B. McDonald asked if there has been any efforts towards a public / private partnership. Z. Amerl stated that discussions have been held on an action plan since 2007 and selling the ski hill privately is the best alternative as there are no funds to go any other way.

R. Romanetz confirmed previous discussions with Z. Amerl where he has asked for the transfer of land for the sum of \$5,000.00 with no encumbrances / strings attached. A. Amerl stated that there could be strings attached. He further explained that to borrow money there needs to be ownership of the capital assets. R. Romanetz stated that any strings attached to the sale would make it more difficult to get a loan to make the improvements.

K. Bertamini stated that every member of Council and the residents see value in the ski hill. She stated that Zrinko has never formally made an offer to the Town. R. Romanetz stated that Zrinko has forwarded Emails expressing an interest in the property. T. Yemen stated that Council is looking for a formal offer to purchase from Badlands Ski Hill Ltd.

Mayor Nimmo thanked Zeke and Zrinko for their presentation.

## **7.0 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **8.0 REQUEST FOR DECISION REPORTS**

### **8.1. CAO**

### **8.2. Director of Infrastructure Services**

#### **8.2.1 Information - Concrete Crushing Tender Award**

A. Kendrick advised that the tender for the concrete crushing was opened on September 24th with five tenders received. He further advised that the low tender was received from Lafarge in the amount of \$165,965.63. There will

be a slight variance to these numbers. In accordance with the new purchasing policy, the CAO is authorized to award the tender to the low bidder. This item was presented to council for information..

### **8.3. Director of Corporate Services**

### **8.4. Director of Community Services**

#### **8.4.1 RFD (Direction) - Alberta Main Street Program**

P. Salvatore advised that Town Council heard a presentation from Elizabeth Kuhnel (Alberta Tourism) and Michael Thome (Culture and Community Spirit) at their Committee of the Whole meeting on September 21, 2009. He stated that Mr. Thome's presentation highlighted the necessary "next steps" that would be required in order to proceed with participation in the Main Street Program. He stated that the following must be agreed to for membership:

1. Completion of a Heritage Inventory with an opportunity to share costs with the Municipal Heritage Partnership Program. Mr. Thome suggested that the cost per property for the completion of a heritage inventory would be approximately \$1,000 per building. The range of financial commitment for the inventory depends on the number of properties included (downtown area could have as many as 200).
2. Confirmation of Historical significant and integrity with at least 50% of the buildings in the proposed "Main Street Footprint" area. Mr. Thome suggested that Drumheller's downtown district would likely represent over 80% historical significant buildings however Council will need to identify an area.
3. Employment of a Main Street Coordinator which would need to be approved by the provincial Main Street Program. The cost of hiring a coordinator would be in the range of \$50,000 to \$65,000 per year for a minimum of three years.

**MO2009.179** Yemen, Shoff moved that the Town of Drumheller apply for membership in the Alberta Main Street Program, working towards becoming an accredited Main Street Community.

Discussion held on the Motion:

Councillor K. Bertamini stated that there may be an opportunity for partnerships, such as the Drumheller District Chamber and other property owners in the area. P. Salvatore explained that individual heritage designation is different from the historical designation under the Main Street Program. Council agreed to proceed with the basic application without financial implications and for Administration to prepare a report for Council's consideration.

Councillors Yemen and Shoff agreed to a friendly amendment as follows:

**MO2009.179A** Yemen, moved that the Town of Drumheller apply for *a basic (no monetary obligation)* membership in the Alberta Main Street Program, working towards becoming an accredited Main Street Community. Carried unanimously.

## **9.0 PRESENTATION OF QUARTERLY REPORTS BY ADMINISTRATION**

## **10.0 PUBLIC HEARING DECISIONS**

## **11.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## **12.0 NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

## **13.0 COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

## **14.0 INCAMERA MATTERS**

**MO2009.180** McDonald, Guidolin to go in camera at 6:00 PM. Carried.

### **14.1 Land Matters**

**MO2009.181** Guidolin, Berdahl to revert to regular Council meeting at 7:15 PM. Carried.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

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MAYOR

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CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE  
OFFICER