

**Town of Drumheller  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES**

December 19, 2016 at 4:30 PM  
Council Chamber, Town Hall  
224 Centre Street, Drumheller, AB, T0J 0Y4



**PRESENT:**

MAYOR:

Terry Yemen

**COUNCIL:**

Jay Garbutt

Lisa Hansen-Zacharuk

Patrick Kolafa

Tara McMillan

Sharel Shoff

Tom Zariski

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/ENGINEER:**

Ray Romanetz

**DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE:**

Darryl Drohomerski

**DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES:**

Barb Miller

**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:**

Paul Salvatore

**DIRECTOR OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES:**

Greg Peters

**RECORDING SECRETARY:**

Linda Handy

**ABSENT:**

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Terry Yemen called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

**2.0 CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**2.1 Bylaw 17.16 being the "Utility Rate Bylaw" - second and third readings**

R. Romanetz advised that Bylaw 17.16 received first reading at Council's Regular Meeting of December 12<sup>th</sup> and at that time, questions were raised with regards to reducing the water rate from 5% to 3% and how this would impact revenues. He explained that the rate reduction from 5% to 3% would be a reduction of \$40,000 –

\$50,000 in revenues. He further advised that other questions raised related to the rate reduction from 5% to 3% for water and 2% to 1.5% for wastewater on individual households and he asked Director of Corporate Services Barb Miller to speak to this matter. B. Miller advised that based on a 20 cubic meter average per household at an increased rate of 3% for water and 1.5% for wastewater their monthly bill would increase by \$2.03 and at an increase of 5% for water and 2% for wastewater their monthly bill would increase by \$3.16. She explained that on an annual basis the 5% water rate and 2% wastewater rate increase would equate to \$37.88 for the year and the 3% water rate and 1.5% wastewater rate increase would equate to \$24.35 for the year; this total is the combined for water and wastewater as well as the administrative fee.

**SP2016.03** Shoff, Hansen-Zacharuk moved second reading of Bylaw 17.16

Councillor J. Garbutt stated that he was opposed to reduce the proposed rate increases from 5% for water and 2% for wastewater and would prefer to see the previous draft of the bylaw reinstated. He explained that Council has been on a total recovery journey for 10 years and have acknowledged that the previous billing system had flaws. He stated that the previous system was unfair as some customers were not paying their fair share for the treatment and distribution of the water and wastewater. He reiterated that current and past Town Councils have made a commitment to move towards a system that increases the fairness and the long term sustainability of the utilities and that the current Council should not sway from this decision. He explained that the annual savings between the two proposed rate scenarios is less than \$14 dollars per year per household and would not impact the customer's ability to pay.

Councillor S. Shoff stated that the residents are dealing with a lot of fee increases as well as the impact of the carbon tax and Town Council needs to consider what some residents are experiencing right now. She further stated that it does not mean that she is not supporting full cost recovery of utilities, rather that the Town needs to reconsider fee increases for this year.

Councillor P. Kolafa asked how many more years are required to be at full cost recovery for the utilities if the revenues are reduced by \$40,000 - 50,000. R. Romanetz explained that an additional two years is required to be at full cost recovery based on the increase at 3%. He stated that the Town's goal to become fully self-supporting would be delayed by two years.

**SP2016.04** Garbutt, McMillan moved to amend the bylaw and reinstate the previous proposed increases - 5% for water rates and 2% for wastewater rates.

In favour 4 – Yemen, Garbutt, McMillan, Kolafa

Opposed 3 – Hansen-Zacharuk, Shoff, Zariski

Carried

**SP2016.05** Garbutt, Kolafa moved second reading of Bylaw 17.16 as amended.

In favour 4 – Yemen, Garbutt, McMillan, Kolafa

Opposed 3 – Hansen-Zacharuk, Shoff, Zariski  
Carried

**SP2016.06** Garbutt, McMillan moved third reading of Bylaw 17.16 as amended.  
In favour 4 – Yemen, Garbutt, McMillan, Kolafa  
Opposed 3 – Hansen-Zacharuk, Shoff, Zariski  
Carried

## 2.2 2017 Service Fees Schedule

R. Romanetz presented the Service Fee Schedule for 2017 and asked that each Director present the proposed fee increases for their department. Director of Corporate Services - B. Miller stated that the common theme are proposed increases for a 0% or 2% or 5% increase with the recommended increase being highlighted in blue. She explained that the fee increases proposed for corporate services department are 0% with an exception for custom work (which is related to wages for the true cost for providing the service). Councillor J. Garbutt asked for the fees charged for late payment of property tax as he would like to discuss a sliding scale. B. Miller stated that the fee payment schedule is within the Property Tax Bylaw. Councillor P. Kolafa asked if the fees are in line with the assumptions for the 2017 budget discussions. She further stated that the budget was built on a 2% increase and not all fees are being increased.

Director of Infrastructure Services – D. Drohomerski stated that the fees for the airport hangers are too low and the airport is cash-strapped to do improvements because the Town is not charging enough. He further stated that Drumheller's fees were compared with similar sized airports and Drumheller has one of the lowest rates. Administration recommends an increase of more than 2% for the hangar lease fees.

B. Miller stated that Administration is recommending a 0% for animal control fees.

Director of Community Services – P. Salvatore stated that Administration is recommending an overall 2% fee increase based on comparisons of other communities' facilities. He further explained that the recommendation is based on the cost recovery rationale as well. He stated that some recreational rate increases do not apply until July 1st.

Councillor T. Zariski asked if the Town would continue with the Fee Assistance Program. P. Salvatore explained that the Town's Fee Assistance Program is at 50% of the entrance fee and it would carry forward into 2017 as well as the relief to the Fort McMurray fire victims. He further explained that currently there is no cap on Drumheller's Fee Assistance Program. Mayor Terry Yemen stated that the BCF drop-in fees are too high and stated that he would like to see a decrease in this area as the purpose is to encourage use of the facility. P. Salvatore explained that one option Council might want to consider is to make more family times available at a reduced rate. Councillor T. Zariski stated that the purpose of the drop in fee is to entice people to get a membership. P. Salvatore agreed and stated that a membership monthly payment program is available and it is well used. Mayor Terry Yemen asked Administration to

look at a scheduled toonie drop in program. P. Salvatore agreed to look into the BCF toonie for use program. Councillor J. Garbutt asked if the rental rates of the BCF banquet halls are competitive compared to the local facilities. P. Salvatore explained that the BCF may be a little higher because of the high quality effect on the events that are hosted; the capacity and service are there in support of the events and this is shared with clients when they are seeking a facility.

B. Miller explained that bulk rates for wastewater dumping. She explained that the base rate was set last year with phased in increases throughout the next two years.

B. Miller presented the Business License Bylaw Schedule A with no recommendation for increase. Councillor P. Kolafa asked if the Town has a regional license with neighboring municipalities. R. Romanetz advised that arrangements are in place with Munson and Carbon and the Town has offered it up to other communities who have not taken advantage of it. He further explained that an additional fee is based on the difference between the rates charged by the respective municipalities.

D. Drohomerski explained that two costs greater than 2% increase for the cemetery are the open and close fee on the weekend. He further explained that columbarium fees were increased more than 2% so that the Town recovers their cost for providing the service and that the Town is competitive with other communities.

P. Salvatore explained that the fees charged for the Summer Fun and Flex Day Program are based on cost recovery to provide that service and 0% increase to the Before and After School Program. Councillor T. Zariski asked if the Fee Assistance Program can extend to the Summer Fun and Flex Day. Council agreed that the Fee Assistance Program be extended to the Summer Fun and Flex Day Programs.

R. Romanetz explained that a RFP for safety codes services was called and Council approved the award of the contract to Superior Safety Services for three years with an option of an extension for an additional two years. He further explained that following a review of Superior's fees, a number of adjustments were made to the municipal safety code fees, particularly in two areas. He explained that the safety codes services fee for building were low and Superior has now closed the gap and the Town / Palliser is proposing a 15% increase in that area. As a result the Town is increasing the fee from \$7.00 to \$8.00 per \$1000 of construction value. The second area of adjustment was for electrical fees as the current fees did not compare to the rest of the Province so Superior has made some adjustments. He explained that the fees have not been increased since 2012. He noted that Palliser Regional Municipal Services has reviewed and approved the new rates. The rates will become effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**SP2016.07** Garbutt, Hansen-Zacharuk moved to approve the 2017 Service Fee Schedule as presented. Carried unanimously.

Council thanked Administration for their hard work to keep costs as low as possible.

### **3.0      ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.