

TOWN OF LUMSDEN / R.M. OF LUMSDEN No. 189

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 19TH, 2009 JOINT COUNCIL SUPPER MEETING

The members of the R.M. of Lumsden and Town of Lumsden Council met at Dallas Valley Ranch Camp, on Monday, January 19th, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. with Reeve Jim Hipkin presiding.

Present: Reeve: Jim Hipkin
Councillor: Albert Szeles, Kent Farago, Bill Marquardt
Jim Atcheson, Herman Wagner, Tom Harrison

Mayor: Verne Barber
Councillor: Gerry Tomkins, Al Sulma, Wayne MacKay
Sid Sikorski, Dan Kirby

Administrator: Wayne Zerff
Asst. Administrator: Darcie Cooper
Manager of P.W.: Don Barnett

Invited Guests: MP Tom Lukiwski (left at 6:50 for another mtg)
Honourable Bill Hutchinson
& Ministerial Asst., Morgan Bradshaw
MLA, Laura Ross

Absent: Town Councillors: Ron Hart

Minutes:

Kirby: "That we approve the minutes of the January 21st, 2008 Joint Council supper, as circulated." **CARRIED**

Reeve Hipkin welcomed all guests to the supper and indicated that MP Tom Lukiwski had a prior commitment and would need to leave around 6:45p.m. and asked if he had any comments for the group.

General Discussion:

- MP Tom Lukiwski provided the group with an update on the Building Canada Fund and potential budget items. Tom indicated that accountability measures are slowing projects down. They are looking at ways to streamline the process for quicker review and approval process.
- Minister Bill Hutchinson indicated that the 1st intake of the Building Canada fund is currently taking place and they are hopeful for a 2nd intake and encouraged municipality's to have applications ready for shovel-ready projects for the 2nd intake. He also wanted to remind the group about the SIGI interest free loans. There were about 30 projects funded last year of varying project types and funding amounts.
- Town council members touched on the following issues:
 - The borrowing capacity for a municipality, he felt, should not include a debt that is funded by a public utility that supports itself and its own debt. Debt ratio for self funded projects should be kept separate from the municipality's debt limit
 - Subdivision approval processes seem to have inconsistencies
 - Discussed the positive joint ventures between the Town and the RM
 - Minister Hutchinson indicated that he uses the Town and RM of Lumsden as examples of how beneficial Joint ventures and administrations can be for municipalities
 - Lack of relationship between municipalities and School Boards, when municipalities collect all the property taxes for them – over \$2 million dollars between the RM and the Town
 - School taxes on property is not fair and equitable for tax payers – government needs to find a better solution for funding schools
 - Concern over the aging population and their care. Government needs to consider long term plans and long term health care facilities, make plans to keep seniors in their homes longer.
 - MLA Laura Ross indicated that the Province has a strategy to address health care issues including increasing training seats for nursing, a graduate rebate program, an aboriginal component with training and teaching classes right on the reserves

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- Mayor Barber brought up his concern over the fact that Fire trucks over 10 years of age would no longer be eligible for insurance coverage. He indicated that a 10 year old fire truck would be considered quite a new fire truck for a lot of municipalities
- Mayor Barber indicated that it would be very beneficial to municipalities to have predictability when it comes to Revenue Sharing grant numbers. Typically the municipality have their budgets set before they receive the revenue sharing numbers
- Minister Hutchinson agreed that dependability in grants is important for proper planning
- Mayor Barber reported on the following town projects and issues:
 - Subdivision and growth
 - River Park Centre project
 - Partnerships with the Town and the RM
 - Joint Fire Department
- RM council members discussed the following items:
 - Old #11 Highway (Grid 734) municipality tried a test portion for repair this year and plans another for next year. The municipality has applied for the Building Canada Grant for repair.
 - Discussion took place over the portion of Old No. 11 Highway between No. 6 and No. 11 highway and it was felt that since the majority of the traffic on this portion of road is heavy haul traffic, not municipal traffic. It was felt that this piece should be taken over by Highways.
 - Minister Hutchinson discussed the Primary Weight Corridor Grant and asked if council considered applying. Council indicated that the costs to bring the road up to the primary weight standards were prohibitive and felt that the program was too restrictive
 - Reeve Hipkin discussed intermodal and the effect it may have on the municipality's roads. MLA Laura Ross indicated that the route for the traffic shouldn't impact roads in our municipality and would send council a map of the traffic route.
 - Reeve Hipkin indicated that the municipality's Official Community Plan review is on-going.
 - Councillor Harrison provided the Province with a bouquet for taking over Federal Agriculture programs ie) CAIS and Agri-stability to make funding more accessible for producers in the province. He also spoke about the new water supply program and climate change.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.


Chairman


Administrator