

**MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF MACKENZIE NO. 23
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**

**Seminar Room, Fort Vermilion School Division Central Office
Fort Vermilion, Alberta**

Monday, February 1, 1999

PRESENT:

Betty Bateman	Chairperson
Ernest Dyck	Vice-Chairperson
Elmer Derksen	Councillor
Bill Neufeld	Councillor
Jake L. Peters	Councillor
Frank Rosenberger	Councillor
Walter Sarapuk	Councillor
Reg Scarfe	Councillor

ABSENT:

Reuben Derksen	Councillor
Bill Fedeyko	Councillor

ALSO PRESENT:

Bryan Clark	Official Administrator
Darlene Hardy	Treasurer/Assistant C. A. O.
Eva Schmidt	Municipal Secretary
Marco Braat	Superintendent of Utilities, Parks and Playgrounds

Minutes of the Special Council meeting for the Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23, held on Monday, February 1, 1999, in the Seminar Room, Fort Vermilion School Division Central Office, Fort Vermilion, Alberta.

CALL TO ORDER: 1 a) **Call to Order**

Chairperson Bateman called the special council meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: 2. a) **Adoption of Agenda**

Chairperson Bateman asked that the agenda be amended by switching items 3.a) and 3.b) around so Council would deal with item 3.b) first before dealing with item 3.a).

MOTION 99-024 **MOVED** by Councillor Rosenberger that the agenda be adopted as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

3. b) **Bylaw 158/99 – An Amendment to Bylaw 155/99
Redefinition of Commercial Rates for Water and Sewer**

MOTION 99-025 **MOVED** by Councillor Peters that Council accept the action as recommended by Administration.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

MOTION 99-026
Bylaw 158/99
First Reading **MOVED** by Councillor Rosenberger that first reading be given to Bylaw 158/99 being an Amendment to Bylaw 155/99 by amending Section 2.d) to read as follows:
“Commercial” means any land or buildings designated under the Municipality’s Land Use Bylaw, as amended, as being in a Commercial Land Use District.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

MOTION 99-027
Bylaw 158/99
Second Reading

MOVED by Councillor Sarapuk that second reading be given to Bylaw 158/99 being an Amendment to Bylaw 155/99 by amending Section 2.d) to read as follows: "Commercial" means any land or buildings designated under the Municipality's Land Use Bylaw, as amended, as being in a Commercial Land Use District.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

MOTION 99-028

MOVED by Councillor Peters to go to third reading of Bylaw 158/99 being an Amendment to Bylaw 155/99 by amending Section 2.d) to read as follows: "Commercial" means any land or buildings designated under the Municipality's Land Use Bylaw, as amended, as being in a Commercial Land Use District.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

MOTION 99-029
Bylaw 158/99
Third Reading

MOVED by Councillor Rosenberger that third reading be given to Bylaw 158/99 being an Amendment to Bylaw 155/99 by amending Section 2.d) to read as follows: "Commercial" means any land or buildings designated under the Municipality's Land Use Bylaw, as amended, as being in a Commercial Land Use District.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

3. a) M.D. of Mackenzie Restructuring

Bryan Clark reported that he met with M.L.A., Gary Friedel, over the weekend as well as with the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Clark stated that Council should make a motion as to what they want to present to the Minister regarding the Mackenzie area restructuring.

Council will meet with Iris Evans, Minister of Municipal Affairs at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, February 5, 1999 in the Council Chambers of the Provincial Building in High Level.

Chairperson Bateman stated that she has been asked to attend the Town of Rainbow Lake Council meeting tonight. Councillor Bateman stated that both John Watt and Ron Arnason of the Town of Rainbow Lake Council are suggesting that the municipalities stay status quo until the year 2001 elections.

Councillor Rosenberger stated that he would like the restructuring proposal that Gary Friedel presented at the Elected Officials meeting to be discussed by Council. Mr. Rosenberger stated that he is not in favour of the proposal.

Chairperson Bateman stated that Council should make a decision to present to the Minister when she comes up. The Minister has had a lot of response to the proposal presented last week which is why she is coming up here.

Councillor Rosenberger stated that the people of this area have spoken and the Minister is going against it.

Chairperson Bateman presented a letter to Bryan Clark that Gary Friedel faxed to John Watt.

Councillor Neufeld stated that the restructuring proposal is way off line, the Minister has left it open for division. Councillor Neufeld stated that the Minister said she would not force amalgamation, and the Edmonton Metro issue should not be in this report at all and that Gary Friedel's report is totally unacceptable. Further, Councillor Neufeld stated he would recommend to reject Mr. Friedel's report.

Councillor Scarfe stated that the proposal as set out in Mr. Friedel's report should be taken back to the public. Councillor Scarfe found it strange that the Minister would meet in High Level and Rainbow Lake but not meet within the M.D. of Mackenzie No. 23. Further, if the Mackenzie Area Restructuring Committee (MARC) is recommending something it should go back to the people. The Minister should have a meeting in La Crete at least.

Bryan Clark stated that he was advised by the MLA that the Minister will meet with the three Councils only at this time.

Councillor Sarapuk stated that there is some merit to the proposal but it should be taken to the public.

Councillor E. Derksen stated that Mr. Friedel's proposal looks like an amalgamation process and that the majority of the MARC members were not in favour of this recommendation.

Councillor Neufeld stated there were some MARC members who wanted this, however, this should be taken back to the people.

Councillor Peters stated that this was the first he had seen of the report so he was not ready to make any decisions on it however, the proposal sounds strange to him.

Councillor Dyck stated that he finds the process confusing and frustrating. First there were petitions pointing out some of the problems in the area. Then the MARC members went to Edmonton and now this proposal has been presented. Councillor Dyck stated he was unclear of what this proposal is supposed to do. There are still the same communities and the same cultural differences. Councillor Dyck stated that he cannot support Mr. Friedel's proposal without it going back to the public first.

Chairperson Bateman stated that the Council as well as the public do not want anything shoved down their throats.

Councillor Rosenberger stated that the MARC committee went to the public with their proposal. He does not understand why they presented something to the people if the government was not going to go with that proposal.

Bryan Clark read the letter from Gary Friedel to John Watt as submitted by Chairperson Bateman. The letter was faxed on January, 29, 1999 at 10:00 p.m.

Chairperson Bateman stated that if Council comes up with a good plan then the Minister might listen to them.

Bryan Clark stated that this proposal is essentially what MARC presented to the Minister but the end result is put first. Mr. Clark stated that it is his opinion that amalgamation is the best solution in the long run but not right now.

Councillor Neufeld stated that if Council finds the MARC proposal acceptable that the feasibility study of the proposal should be concluded by October 2001.

Councillor Dyck asked why the would Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23 have a Council member on the Regional Board, the Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23 has no authority.

Chairperson Bateman stated that the Regional Council has no authority either.

Chairperson Bateman recessed the meeting at 2:11 p.m.

Chairperson Bateman reconvened the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Councillor Neufeld suggested that the Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23 go ahead with elections now and then study the feasibility of the MARC proposal starting October 1999 to be in place for the 2001 elections. Council could then go on with business as usual and Administration could study the feasibility of the proposal.

Councillor E. Derksen asked if the Towns of Rainbow Lake and High Level want to amalgamate. Bryan Clark stated that in his conversations with them they are saying yes to amalgamation eventually but not at this time.

Bryan Clark asked that each Councillor answer individually the question: Do you agree with the MARC recommendations?

Councillor Dyck stated that he agrees with the MARC recommendation but that no restructuring should take place prior to April elections.

Councillor Peters stated that Council hold elections in October and then go ahead with the Mackenzie Area Restructuring Committee's recommendation.

Councillor E. Derksen stated that he agrees with the MARC's recommendation and that elections should be held in April.

Councillor Sarapuk stated that he agrees to go along with the MARC proposal but that no ward changes be made prior to elections in April.

Councillor Scarfe stated he was in favour of making no changes until after elections in April and then go along with MARC's proposal.

Councillor Rosenberger stated that elections should be held in October and then go with MARC's recommendation.

Chairperson Bateman stated that she was in favour of the MARC's recommendation.

Bryan Clark asked for individual answers to the question: Do you believe amalgamation is the best answer in your visionary perspective?

Councillor Dyck stated that he had mixed feelings as it depends if it is going to be pushed from the top down (government forced) or from the bottom up (the people want it).
Councillor Dyck stated that he is not in favour of amalgamation at this point.

Councillor Peters answered no.

Councillor E. Derksen answered no.

Councillor Sarapuk answered no.

Councillor Scarfe answered no.

Councillor Rosenberger answered no.

Councillor Neufeld answered no, he cannot support amalgamation as long as the special levy mentioned in the proposal is not defined.

Chairperson Bateman answered no.

Bryan Clark declared that the Council voted unanimous that they are not in favour of amalgamation.

Bryan Clark asked for individual answers to the question: Do you agree with the ward structure the way it is now, or the MARC structure, or different?

Councillor Dyck stated he was not in favour of ward restructuring before elections in April.

Councillor Peters stated it did not matter either way.

Councillor E. Derksen stated the wards should stay the way they are now until April.

Councillor Sarapuk stated the wards should stay the way they are now until April.

Councillor Scarfe stated that the wards should stay the way they are now until April.

Councillor Neufeld stated he was in favour of the MARC structure.

Councillor Rosenberger stated the wards should stay the way they are now until October.

Chairperson Bateman stated that the Municipal District of Mackenzie No. 23 needs the wards to be restructured.

Bryan Clark declared that five Councillors are in favour of restructuring the wards at a later date (April or October, 1999), one Councillor is in favour of the MARC proposal, one Councillor is in favour of restructuring wards immediately, and one Councillor is of the view that it does not matter either way.

Bryan Clark asked for individual answers to the question: Are you in favour of a shared services committee with the three municipalities being made up of senior management and a member to be appointed by council?

Chairperson Bateman stated that a shared services committee should be made up of senior staff (those who prepare the budget) then it should be brought to Council.

Councillor Dyck stated he agreed to shared services.

Councillor Peters agreed to a shared services committee comprised of staff and council.

Councillor E. Derksen agreed to a shared services committee comprised of staff and council.

Councillor Sarapuk agreed to a shared services committee comprised of staff and council.

Councillor Scarfe agreed to a shared services committee comprised of staff and council but the committee should have two council members.

Councillor Neufeld agreed to a shared services committee comprised of senior staff and two councillors.

Councillor Rosenberger agreed to a shared services committee comprised of staff and two councillors.

Bryan Clark declared that a unanimous decision was made by Council for a shared services committee consisting of senior management and at least one Councillor.

Councillor Sarapuk asked what happened with the recommendation that came out of the La Crete meeting that the M. D. of Mackenzie ratepayers work out their own solutions.

Councillor Dyck asked if the MARC committee is ongoing.

Bryan Clark stated that it is his understanding that the MARC is finished.

Bryan Clark asked for individual answers to the question: Do you want an Advisory Council and keep the Official Administrator in place until the year 2001?

Chairperson Bateman answered yes.

Councillor Dyck stated that the Council needs more authority but agrees that the Official Administrator should stay to provide training.

Councillor Peters stated that he agrees with the Mackenzie Area Restructuring Committee's recommendation.

Councillor E. Derksen answered yes.

Councillor Sarapuk answered yes.

Councillor Scarfe answered yes.

Councillor Neufeld answered that there should be someone to oversee Council for now if election are in October. After elections Council should have full power.

Councillor Rosenberger answered that no changes be made until October 1999 elections then Council should have full power.

Bryan Clark declared that Council was unanimously in favour of the Official Administrator staying until October 1999, after which the Official Administrator should only have veto power if Council is in violation of the MGA or any other Act and that the Official Administrator is essential to provide training.

Bryan Clark asked for individual answers to the question: What do you want to do with the proposal as set forth by M.L.A. Gary Friedel?

Councillor Rosenberger answered they should throw out all of what Gary Friedel is saying the report was not presented properly.

Councillor Neufeld stated that he does not agree with Gary Friedel's proposal of a local improvement levy.

Councillor Scarfe stated that Gary Friedel's suggestion be scrapped. This municipality is still expanding; the infrastructure is not even in place.

Councillor Sarapuk answered that he does not agree with the report.

Councillor E. Derksen suggested that the proposal be put on the back burner.

Councillor Peters suggested that the proposal be put on the back burner.

Councillor Dyck stated that the timing is wrong, it should not be so pushy.

Chairperson Bateman does not agree with the proposal.

Bryan Clark declared that Council was divided where four Councillors wanted the proposal thrown out and four Councillors think it contains some good ideas for the future.

Chairperson Bateman will report to the Minister regarding Council's decisions at this meeting.

Bryan Clark stated that since this is such an important issue he would entertain suggestions from the gallery.

Raymond Knelsen stated that he could see a problem with the recommendation since it made provisions for too many councils and committees. The more people are involved in decision making the less decisions will be made.

Bryan Clark asked for individual answers to the question: Do you think there should be regional and community councils?

Councillor Dyck answered no, it sounds like a complicated process.

Councillor Peters answered no.

Councillor E. Derksen answered no.

Councillor Sarapuk answered no.

Councillor Scarfe answered no.

Councillor Neufeld answered no, it will be divisive.

Councillor Rosenberger answered no, it will create a war.

Chairperson Bateman answered no, it is unclear who will represent the rural area.

Bryan Clark stated that Council's decision was a unanimous no to community councils for fear of divisiveness.

John W. Driedger stated that he would like the M.D. of Mackenzie to have a strong Council with cost sharing agreements with the Towns of Rainbow Lake and High Level.

Chairperson Bateman stated that she would present Council's views at the Town of Rainbow Lake Council meeting tonight.

ADJOURNMENT:

4. a) Adjournment

MOTION 99-030

MOVED by Councillor Scarfe that the Special Council meeting be adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUS

These minutes were adopted this _____ day of _____, 1999.

Betty Bateman, Chairperson

Eva Schmidt, Municipal Secretary

Approved

Bryan Clark, Official Administrator