

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF MACKENZIE NO. 23

Briefing Notes

Wednesday, April 14, 2004

10:00 a.m.

**Council Chambers, Municipal District of Mackenzie Office
Fort Vermilion, Alberta**

PRESENT:

| | |
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| Bill Neufeld | Reeve |
| John W. Driedger | Councillor |
| Odell Flett | Councillor |
| Greg Newman | Councillor |
| Pat Kulscar | Councillor |

ALSO PRESENT:

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Harvey Prockiw | Chief Administrative Officer |
| Barb Spurgeon | Executive Assistant |

Briefing Notes of the working session held on Wednesday April 14, 2004 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal District of Mackenzie office, Fort Vermilion, Alberta.

BUSINESS:

Review of Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan was reviewed and updated. A general discussion was held on having a full strategic planning session to set the direction for the next few years. Several questions arose and it was decided to take the following questions to Council for decision.

Question: Should the Strategic Planning Session be held before elections or after?

- Holding it before would ensure continuity of existing plan
- Holding it after elections would bring new ideas and perhaps new priorities

Question: Should the Strategic Planning Session be facilitated by a staff member(s) or should an outside facilitator be contracted to facilitate?

- Inside facilitator – understands the particular issues but may also have biases of their own.
- Outside facilitator – Would bring no biases to the table and would be neutral and not influence Council in any direction.

These questions will be brought forward to full Council.

Cambridge Strategies – Delegation

Reeve Neufeld welcomed Ken Chapman from Cambridge Strategies and Mike Osborne from Mackenzie Economic Development Corporation to the working group at 11:30 a.m.

Ken Chapman introduced himself and explained what he was doing and why. He advised that there are some political issues going on that will have significant implications for Alberta's north. He was commissioned by Minister Calahassen to do a study for government to better understand the north and their unique needs. Ken Chapman advised that the northern development side has previously been ignored by the provincial government, while most of the revenue comes from the north.

Ken Chapman advised that there were 4 main policy decisions that will have an impact on the North:

1. Rural Development Strategy
2. Value added Strategy
3. International Strategy, and
4. 20 Year Business Plan Strategy

The first is the Northern Development Strategy. He advised while most of the growth and investment is in the north there is little being done to support development. There will be a population shift to the north in time. He stated the true diversity of the north is not well understood in government and the strengths and weaknesses are different from other parts of the province. The provincial government need to understand this in order to help "kick-start" the development.

Council and Administration gave him several example of decisions made by government that has not benefited the north.

- Amalgamation of the RHA's
- RCMP staffing
- Amalgamation of Children's Services
- Mosquito Control

The group discussed per capita funding does not meet needs of the north and what is needed is a baseline funding to provide basic services. Ken Chapman noted that centralization is administratively easier for government, but it doesn't meet the needs of the north.

Ken Chapman advised that outcomes are now the new measurement tools of the government. However due to different culture and different needs the basic template doesn't work for the north. There must be a minimal level of service for the north.

Ken Chapman advised the north is a strategic asset to the province and there will be fresh cash for communities to identify the needed outcomes. A discussion was held on the paving of Highway 88. Ken Chapman suggested we look at the value added, and the effects on environmental issues, bio-diversity, forestry and water. He believes other areas will support the paving if they understand what advantage it will be to them. (i.e Tourism) Ken Chapman suggested when lobbying the provincial government for projects that while facts are important, narratives are better as people are able to picture things better.

A general discussion was held on Bill 17 and the Intensive Livestock Operations. Harvey Prockiw explained the current situation and Ken Chapman suggested the MD may want to challenge the Bill.

Lobbying

Ken Chapman has been involved in lobbying and a general discussion was held on the subject of lobbying. He explained that a lobbyist can't make miracles happen, they can ensure the right information is given to the right people in the right ways. He stated it is important to define the results you want to achieve and define the timing. He further noted that in order for the MD to be successful at lobbying we must first spend time building relationships with people in the position to help us. The last helpful hint is to remember that "Rationality never trumps emotion" which means remember to tell stories that people can relate to" and that "discussion is more important than the topic" which means to keep building relationships and use every opportunity to inform people/politicians about our needs.

Reeve Neufeld thanked Ken Chapman from Cambridge Strategies.

ADJOURNMENT: 4. a) Adjournment

The working group adjourned at 2:30 p.m.