



Town of Radisson

Success is in Our Nature



2019 Tax Payer Meeting

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



MEETING RULES

- At all times, Please be respectful of Council and others in attendance
- Cell phones must be turned off or on “vibrate” mode and please refrain from talking on cell phones, recording or taking pictures
- Questions and comments will be taken at the end of the session and we would ask that you use the microphone provided.
- Council asks that questions be kept brief to allow others opportunity to be heard as this portion of the meeting will be limited to approximately 1 hour
- Any questions that cannot be answered tonight will be noted, and the question with the response, will be posted to the website, as will the full slide presentation



Mayor's Address

Welcome to everyone. Tonight we are going to briefly review the findings of MNP Audit, discuss the Town's current financial position and how we are working to improve it.

We all know the financial situation we are in did not happen overnight, but rather over several years, Council terms and due to a number of factors. However, this is our community and I can assure you; this Council is dedicated to doing what is necessary to improving the financial position of this Town.

We will also be talking about "looking to the future" – what do we, all of us, want to see happen for our Town in the future and plans to get there.



Council Members & Staff

- Mayor Leona Bennett
- Deputy Mayor Marion Fehr – Stead
- Darren Harris
- Kirk Maxwell
- Robin Baker
- Andrea Ray
- Vacant

- Brenda Lockhart – Administrator
- Chris Donaldson – Assistant Administrator

- Maintenance Foreman – Kevin Hepburn
- Maintenance Assistant – Colin Armstrong
- Water Overseers – Duncan Stead & William Berg

AGENDA

- Call Meeting To Order
- Mayor's Address
- Financials
 - ❖ Financial Audit Petition – MNP Report
 - ❖ Yearly Audited Financials
 - ❖ Municipal and Education Property Tax Arrears
- Water & Sewer
 - ❖ Quality - Testing & Maintenance
 - ❖ Billing & Collection
 - ❖ W & S Policy
- Bylaws & Bylaw Enforcement
 - ❖ Pet Licensing Bylaw
 - ❖ Nuisance Bylaw
 - ❖ Zoning Bylaw
- General Information & Changes
 - ❖ Office Hours
 - ❖ Banking
 - ❖ Meetings
 - ❖ Roads & Road Maintenance
 - ❖ Tweedsmuir Hall
 - ❖ By Election
 - ❖ Community Clean Up Day
- Questions & Comments
- Adjournment



MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

As you know, MNP Accountants conducted a forensic and investigative review of the Town's finances in response to a petition filed by residents on November 28, 2018. MNP review covers the period of April 1, 2014 to Nov 28, 2018 and brought to light and clarified many issues of concern to the residents and us, as Council.

To follow is a summary of those findings, some back ground and Council's response in action to same.

MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

❖ **No evidence of fraud, theft or misappropriation of funds**

- Two incidents reported of cash payments not applied to accounts (less than \$2800 in total)
- Council abated – chose to take no further action because of the time delay and not clear proof as to what occurred to start an investigation
- MNP found no evidence to support theft or fraud in their extensive review of finances
- RCMP have recently been made aware and have advised no charges or investigation will be done

Looking to the Future - Council must be aware that these situations can occur and implement changes and safe guards to ensure that they provide effective management and guardianship of the Town's Finances

MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

❖ Evidence of ineffective administration creating significant risk to the Town and Council's failure to oversee Administration and management of finances

- Assessment Notices completed late requiring extension bylaws
- Financials completed late requiring extension bylaws
- School Tax not being filed and incorrect reporting
- Administration Staff turn over
- Inexperienced Staff
- Failure to Levy Taxes In timely manner and to effectively Tax enforce
- Council aware of financial problems and did not take appropriate steps

MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Looking to the Future – Council is committed to improving the financial position of the Town and has taken the following actions:

- Council has hired an experienced Administrator and Assistant
- 2017 Audited Financial Statement has been submitted and approved by the Ministry and will be available on the website shortly
- 2018 Audit has been completed and is in with the Auditor who will file the Financial Statement prior to year end
- 2018 and 2019 Gas Tax Funds and the first two Revenue Sharing payments for 2019, previously held by the Ministry for non compliance, has now been released in August 2019 resulting in \$132,344.50 paid to Town



MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Continued:

- Council, in 2017 and again in 2018, has hired Taxervice to enforce and collect property tax arrears. This has resulted in a decrease of tax arrears from \$412,000.00 in January 2019 down to \$247,000.00 as of the end of August 2019
- Distress and Seizure proceedings initiated on several properties.
- 2019 taxes were levied in July. Council will ensure that yearly taxes are levied early to allow tax payers sufficient time to pay.



MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Continued:

- Direct Debit has been set up to allow tax payers to have monthly payments taken directly from their account.
- As of June 2019, Council has an agreement with the Ministry of Education to pay back the School Arrears at \$10,000 per month.
- The arrears started at \$262,000 and are currently at \$ 226,046.30
- Monthly remittances are now submitted monthly and on time as required and this is reported to Council at each meeting.



MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Continued:

- Administration has updated the Munisoft program and tracking of School tax collection and payments is more efficient and transparent
- Monthly financial statements are reviewed at each meeting
- Council, as a whole, participated in a workshop hosted by Municipal Relations, to better understand the roles and responsibilities of the office they hold



MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

❖ **16 to 43 Waste Management**

- Council entered into a regional waste management project in 2017 with Hafford, Blaine Lake, RM of Douglas and Maymont as a result of increasing costs with Loraas disposals
- The project has met with some challenges, but like any new business, they are looking at ways to be sustainable and expand
- The communities of Waldheim and Borden are looking to join in 2020 when their contracts are up with Loraas. This will provide much needed infusion of funds

MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

- ❖ **Councilor Marion Fehr-Stead was found to have declared conflict of interest and recused herself from discussion on water & sewer contracts**

Looking to the Future – Council continues to comply with conflict of interest procedures whenever one exists.

- They understand the importance of transparency and have reinstated the Town Website and all Audited financial statements are posted once completed, as well as, approved minutes
- Council has adopted a Procedure Bylaw and a Code of Ethics Bylaw which guides their conduct in Council matters and proceedings

MNP – FORENSIC & INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

- Konchuk Land “Corn Maze Project”
- Purchased for \$60,000 with a \$5,000 Donation back to the pool
- Land found not to be suitable for intended project
- Title was not transferred to Town and land was subsequently resold

Looking to the Future – Council has contacted new owner who is agreeable to resolving this matter by purchasing the land back from the Town once done surveying and subdividing of same

Water & Sewer

- ❖ Accounts in arrears were added to property taxes at year end
- ❖ No collection efforts led residents to believe that, as they are billed every 3 months, that they had 3 months to pay and there was \$88,000 in arrears as of March 2019

Looking to the Future – Council realizes the importance of timely collection of arrears as bills do not get easier to pay if allowed to grow.

- Staff has implemented a process by which bills are sent, if unpaid after 31 days, a reminder Overdue Notice is sent with a disconnection date
- Staff attempt to contact residents by phone to make payment arrangements
- If unsuccessful, disconnection of services is done, as arrears will not be added to taxes



Continued:

- Bylaw has been amended to include 5% penalty for water accounts in arrears after 31 days – awaiting approval from Sask. Municipal Board. This will help change the perception that there is 3 months to pay. As well, a fee of \$50.00 will be charged for disconnection and reconnection of services
- Maintenance Staff are doing maintenance and repairs of the water treatment plant and have attended to the cleaning of the reservoirs. The foot valve needs replacing and that will be done this fall. If there is any anticipated impact to water service or supply, the Office staff will provide advance notice to residents
- Maintenance Staff are working toward the training and certification necessary to operate the water and wastewater system in Town
- Council has adopted a Water and Sewer Policy which clearly outlines the responsibility of the Town and resident with respect to mains and service lines



Bylaws and Bylaw Enforcement

Council has the power to pass bylaws within the Town. They have also resolved to hire Commissionaires to assist in the enforcement process. Some examples would be bylaws dealing with;

- Peace, order & good government
- Safety, health & welfare
- Traffic control and nuisance control
- Public utilities
- Pet ownership

Council is in the process of reviewing bylaws currently in place and in some cases made amendments or adopted new bylaws.



Bylaws Continued:

▶ Animal Control Bylaw

- Changes have been made with respect to licensing, the ownership of dogs which are dangerous in nature, the fines and fees etc.
- Maintenance Staff will act as cat and dog catchers
- New licensing fees and fines for offences are in place
- New Bylaw is available for review on the Town Website
- Will come into effect immediately for new registrations and January 1, 2020 for renewals
- Advance notice and information will be posted on Town Website – www.radisson.ca and on the Town Facebook page



Bylaws Continued:

- Nuisance Abatement Bylaw

- This bylaw gives Council authority to deal with property maintenance issues; ex: untidy lots, overgrown grass or weeds, dilapidated buildings, junked vehicles etc
- First contact will be from the office – letter or phone calls
- Commissionaires will be hired to deal with situations that persist if attempts to deal with a resident fail
- Costs associated with bylaw enforcement and eventual clean up costs incurred by the Town are recoverable from the resident and added to taxes if not paid



Bylaws Continued:

➤ Water & Sewer Bylaw

- This Bylaw sets the fees and charges for sewer, water and waste/recycling collection and the terms on which services are provided.
- As indicated earlier, Council has adopted a new bylaw which allows for the adding of penalties on outstanding balances
- Bylaw will come into effect once approved by the Sask. Municipal Board and will be posted on website
- Prior notice and information will be provided to residents by way of mailer with water bills, website and facebook



Bylaws Continued:

▶ Zoning Bylaw

- Controls building and development, construction of fences, decks and all other structures, outlines areas for different types of use of property ie: commercial, residential areas, and more
- This fall, Council will be meeting with Prairie Wild, the engineers involved in our Zoning Bylaw to review and update same
- Again, more information will be provided in advance of implementing the changes



General Improvements and Changes

Office Hours

- As the Town is now up to full staff, the Office Hours effective July 29, 2019 are Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4pm – Open to Public and Friday 9am to 4pm-Closed to Public to allow for catch up work

Banking

- With the Closing of the CIBC Council has moved their banking to the Affinity Credit Union and will continue to run two bank accounts until all loans and overdrafts with the CIBC have been satisfied

Council Meetings

- Council changed their meeting days from the 1st Tuesday of the month to 3rd Tuesday. This allowed staff time to prepare the month end financial statements. The time and location remain the same – Council Chambers at 7pm



Continued:

Roads & Road Maintenance

- Maintenance staff continue to work at grading and repairing the streets and request everyone's cooperation by ensuring that they park their vehicles off the streets during the work day

Tweedsmuir Hall

- Toppings Engineering Ltd reviewed the structural condition of the hall in November 2017 and made the following assessment; *“ Despite the fact that there has been obvious efforts to cosmetically clean up the interior, the leaning and deflected shape of the primary structure indicate that this building is at the end of it’s lifespan. We cannot safely condone the continued use of this building”*
- Council appreciates the important role this hall played in our community and will be exploring options in regards to a new facility and will be looking to the public for input



Continued:

By Election

- By Election date is Wednesday October 16th, 2019 with Nomination Date of Wednesday, September 11th, 2019. Nomination Forms are available on the website and in the office and must be received by 4pm on Nomination day

Tweedsmuir Hall

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- Council appreciates the important role this hall played in our community and will be exploring options in regards to a new facility and will be looking to the public for input



Continued:

Community Clean Up Day

- Saturday, September 21, 2019 from 9 am to 5 pm, the Town will be holding a Clean Up Day and looking for Volunteers to help beautify our Town.
- Please contact the Town Office to sign up
- BBQ will be held after for all Volunteers – Thank you in advance!

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS





On behalf of Council and myself, I wish to thank everyone in attendance

As Mayor for the Town of Radisson, I call this meeting Adjourned.



➤ Have a Great Evening