

**BIG LAKES COUNTY  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
December 5, 2023**

Minutes of the Big Lakes County Special Council Meeting held at the County Administration Building and Zoom in High Prairie, Alberta on Monday, December 5, 2023, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

**PRESENT WERE:**

Reeve:	Tyler Airth, HP East/Banana Belt
Councillors:	Jim Zabolotniuk, N. Gilwood/ Triangle Jeff Chalifoux, Grouard Roberta Hunt, Kinuso Richard Mifflin, Jousard Ann Stewart, S. Sunset House/ Gilwood Robert Nygaard, Faust
Absent:	Lane Monteith, Enilda/Big Meadow Garrett Zahacy, Prairie Echo/ Salt Prairie
Administration:	David Reynolds, Interim Chief Administrative Officer / Executive Director of Corporate Services Kevin Cymbaluk, Executive Director of Operations Ian Willier, Utilities Manager Eunice McCauley, Human Resources Manager Janelle Carlson, Executive Assistant Pat Olansky, Executive Director of Community Services and Planning Jason Cottingham, Fire Chief Luci Martinson, Deputy Fire Chief Kimberly Moore, Communications Coordinator Joe Zdeb, IT Administrator Joey Sutton, Finance Manager Samantha Smith, Grants Officer Jessican Plante, Legislative Services Manager Nicole Hanna, FCSS Manager
Press:	Richard Froese, South Peace News

**CALL TO ORDER:** Reeve Airth called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Ms. Olansky and Ms. Hanna presented the FCSS budget. Administration noted a correction that was presented on December 4, 2023, with regards to the total expenses for the FCSS program. Ms. Hanna advised Council about the 2024 proposed net operating budget increase to the program the increases were due to the following: seniors week and family week increase in food prices, three outreach workers to attend the Healthy Aging conference, new signage for the High Prairie FCSS office as its location has changed within the library building and new branding was implemented as whole.

Councillor Zabolotniuk and Councillor Stewart raised concerns about the Big Lakes County barbeque being under the FCSS budget. Administration noted the concern and will move the County BBQ budget from the FCSS budget.

Council requested that administration bring forward a level of services workshop on the FCSS programming in the new year.

Mr. Reynolds advised Council that a workshop would be set up.

A break was taken at 9:56 a.m. and returned at 10:02 a.m.

**PUBLIC DELEGATION VIA TELEPHONE:**

**DIANA OLIVER:** Mrs. Oliver called in via zoom to address the following issues:

- Poor road conditions throughout our County along with faint highway lines.
- The installation of streetlights at the intersection of highway 749 and Township Road 750. Mrs. Oliver suggested that Council reach out to a minister for additional supports in these matters.
- The encouragement of administration to instill rules and regulations on retarder brakes to coincide with signage throughout the County for noise control.
- Council to investigate long term amalgamation with the Town of High Prairie.
- That administrators of Big Lakes County are to reside within our County.
- The suggestion of walking trails on Resources Road (Township Road 750 and Range Road 170).

Mrs. Oliver thanked Mr. Nygaard for representing our County in a positive manner and to Council for allowing rate payers to voice their opinions.

Council discussed the possibility of installing lights to illuminate the intersection of Highway 749 and Township Road 750.

Administration noted Mrs. Oliver's concerns and will bring forward additional information.

Councillor Stewart stepped out of the meeting at 10:26 a.m. and returned at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Cymbaluk presented to Council the 2023 Capital Budgets.

Mr. Cymbaluk provided Council with clarification on the Bridge File 77445 and Bridge File 08499 Culvert Replacement. It was noted that both bridge files have been previously approved and are in the design stage.

Mr. Reynolds advised that he would provide details on revenue for the Spruce Point Park – Breakwater project.

Mr. Cymbaluk advised Council to consider the RR 172 Grade Line adjustment project, be brought forward into the preliminary design stage to present the County with options. It is suggested to set up a meeting with the Town of High Prairie to discuss this matter for cost sharing.

Mr. Cymbaluk will obtain numbers on the Bridge File 77445, Bridge File 08499, Spruce Point Park – Breakwater and RR 172 Grade Line projects for Council's clarification.

A break was taken from 11:31 a.m. and returned at 11:34 a.m.

Ms. Smith presented and provided Council with clarification the 2024 Grants Budget.

**2023-27-555**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR STEWART** that the funding request from the Kinuso Community Association for the application amount of \$69,000 be approved for 2023.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-556**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NYGAARD** that the additional funding request from the Kinuso Community Association for additional funding in the amount of \$66,800 be approved for 2024.

**CARRIED**

Councillor Hunt left the meeting at 12:00 p.m. and did not return.

**2023-27-557**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MIFFLIN** that the additional funding request from the Joussard Homesteaders in the amount of \$10,000 be approved for 2024.

**DEFEEATED**

**2023-27-558**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MIFFLIN** that a grant in the amount of \$8,000 be approved for the Joussard Homesteaders for 2024.

**CARRIED**

A meeting recessed for lunch break at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Smith continued presenting the 2024 Grant Budget.

**2023-27-559**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABOLOTNIUK** that Council denies the additional request for funding to the Central Slave Lake Ag Society to maintain fair treatment of all community groups as per 55-ADMIN.

**CARRIED**

Councillor Chalifoux returned to the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

**2023-27-560**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NYGAARD** that the additional funding request from the High Prairie Ag. Society be approved in the amount of \$12,500 for 2024.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-561**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR CHALIFOUX** that the additional funding request from Prairie Echo Community Hall be approved in the amount of \$11,500 for 2024.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-562**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR STEWART** that the Children's Resource Council's funding request in the amount of \$45,000 be denied and that administration be directed to invite the Children's Resource Council in for presentation to Council to provide clarification on their funding request.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-563**                    **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MIFFLIN** that the funding request from the High Prairie Curling Association's be approved in the amount of \$20,000 for 2024.

**CARRIED**

It was recommended that the High Prairie Curling Association apply for recreation grant funding moving forward.

As per discussions at the Joint Budget Review Committees, administration advised that the Recreation Budget can see an increase from \$650,000 to \$710,000.

Mr. Reynolds confirmed that the Little Smoky Ski Hill budget will be included under the administration budget, under cost-sharing agreements moving forward.

Ms. Smith clarified that the High Prairie and District Golf Course received an approved \$15,000 from 2020-2024, at \$15,000 per year. Administration to bring back additional information to the December 13, 2023, Regular Council meeting.

Ms. Smith continued presenting the 2024 Capital Grants.

**2023-27-564** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NYGAARD** that the funding request from the Salt Prairie Community Club in the amount of \$55,000 be approved.

**CARRIED**

Ms. Smith confirmed that the Town of High Prairie provides approximately \$90,000 per year for operating costs to the High Prairie and District Museum.

**2023-27-565** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABOLOTNIUK** that the grant funding for the Lesser Slave Lake North Community Association in the amount of \$10,050 be approved and that administration be directed to move the funding from a Capital Grants to an Operational Grant going forward.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-566** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABOLOTNIUK** that the funding request from the High Prairie and District Museum in the amount of \$5,813.95 be denied and that administration be directed to invite the High Prairie and District Museum an upcoming Council meeting to provide a presentation with additional information on their funding request.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-567** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABLOTNIUK** that the funding request from the Joussard Community Association in the amount of \$15,860 be denied.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-568** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR STEWART** that the funding request from the Kinuso Seniors Club in the amounts of \$474.00 and \$25,000.00 be approved.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-569** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NYGAARD** that the funding request from the Kinosayo Museum Society in the amount of \$7,750 be approved.

**CARRIED**

Ms. Smith continued to present to Council the 2024 Capital carry over grants.

**2023-27-570** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZBOLOTNIUK** that the 2023 carry over requests from the Banana Belt Recreation Association in the amounts of \$31,950, \$5,500 and \$11,000 be approved.

**CARRIED**

Ms. Smith continued to present to Council the 2024 Events and Sponsorship Grants.

**2023-27-571** **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABOLOTNIUK** that all listed 2024 Events and Sponsorship grants presented to Council be approved with the exception of the \$3,800 for the All-Around Cowgirl application be

removed from the budget and that administration be directed to bring any new applications over \$5,000 to Council, as per policy.

**CARRIED**

A break was taken from 2:18 p.m. until 2:24 p.m.

Mr. Cymbaluk continued presenting the 2024 Capital Projects.

**2023-27-572**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR STEWART** that the request for road construction submitted by Anthony and Shawna Simmons in the Hamlet of Grouard NW 32-75-14-W5 be approved if the applicant is willing to cover 10% (\$7,300) with the condition that once the house is constructed, the applicant will be reimbursed the \$7,300.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-573**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NYGAARD** that the road construction request submitted by Milt Sloan for NW 30-72-9-W5 be denied.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-574**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABOLOTNIUK** that the request for road construction submitted by Chris and Patricia Halldorson NE-12-73-11-W5 be denied and that administration be directed to maintain the already existing access.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-575**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR CHALIFOUX** that the road construction request submitted by Mathias Janis SE 27 071 19 W5 be denied.

**CARRIED**

Mr. Willier presented to Council the breakdown of costs for the 2024 water and sewer capital projects.

Mr. Cymbaluk presented the 2024 Community Upgrade Capital Projects.

Administration to bring forward a request to Council in January 2024 to determine a funding formula for the Community Upgrade Capital Projects to be shared between all nine wards.

Ms. Olansky and Fire Chief, Jason Cottingham presented the 2024 Fire Services Capital Projects.

**2023-27-576**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR CHALIFOUX** that Council approves the north section (step 1 of 3) for the Grouard Joint Use Facility to be surfaced up to \$150,000 plus a 10% contingency with total project being \$165,000 in the 2024 budget. If the project is able to be completed all at once with the Hilliard's Bay project in conjunction with Public Works, administration to bring it back to Council for consideration.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-577**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR NYGAARD** that Council approves the 2024 capital purchase for the Grouard Pumper Rescue Fire Truck for a total of \$740,000 (plus 10% contingency) with an anticipated delivery date of 2026.

**CARRIED**

Councillor Stewart stepped out of the meeting at 4:05 p.m. and returned at 4:06 p.m.

**2023-27-578**

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MIFFLIN** that Council approves \$275,000 for a structure protection unit purchase in the 2024 capital budget.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-579**      **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR STEWART** that \$52,000 be included in the 2024 budget for a contractor to develop a proposal for dry hydrants within the County.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-580**      **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR MIFFLIN** that the replacement of the equipment for the most cost-effective means of \$25,000 for upgrade for the plotter/scanner be approved.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-581**      **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ZABOLOTNIUK** that Council approves the \$103,400 Networking Equipment Replacement/Upgrade.

**CARRIED**

**2023-27-582**      **MOVED BY COUNCILLOR STEWART** adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

**CARRIED**

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Tyler Airth, Reeve

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David Reynolds, Interim CAO