

Flagstaff Inter-Municipal Partnership Committee

**Regular Meeting
Monday, May 29, 2017
Flagstaff County Office
At 7:00 pm**

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Presentations

1. Deputy Minister Brad Pickering re: Regional Governance Project

C. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular Meeting May 1, 2017
2. Regional Governance Public Meeting Dry Run Session – May 23, 2017

D. Information

1. Synopsis of Correspondence Received
2. Ongoing Items

D. Business

1. Regional Governance Project – Review of May 23, 2017 Public Meeting
 - a. Chris Fields, 13 Ways Inc. and Michael Schiedl, Alberta Municipal Affairs
 - b. Letter from Flagstaff County Council

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, July 10, 2017 – Flagstaff County Office

Adjournment

FLAGSTAFF INTERMUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP
MEETING WITH DEPUTY MINISTER, BRAD PICKERING

MAY 29, 2017

A little history on FIP:

- Created in 2003 by Flagstaff County, Towns of Daysland, Hardisty, Killam and Sedgewick and the Villages of Alliance, Forestburg, Galahad, Heisler, Lougheed and Strome.
- 2005 they partnered to create a regional emergency communications system which is still in place and utilized today
- 2006 they hired a Regional Emergency Services Coordinator, this position rolled into Flagstaff County when the remaining partners would not fund the position after the grants were completed
- 2009 they purchased a building for the Flagstaff Food Bank which is still be utilized today
- 2011 they installed a regional SCADA system for water treatment plants and lift stations. There have been considerable issues with this project, primarily due to operator lack of understanding, but we are still working on it and 8 of the 10 plants are still utilizing the system.
- 2015 we undertook Phase I of the Regional Governance Project which was an exploration of the collaboration options available for us.
- 2016 we received additional funding from the province to undertake Phase II of the Regional Governance Project and to also do a regional infrastructure assessment.

Why are we looking at regional governance?

- We are a region of relatively small population, approximately 8,400 people, and when we started this process we had 55 elected officials.
- In 2014/15 the Villages of Galahad and Strome undertook viability reviews, the Villages became hamlets on January 1, 2016. This reduced the number of elected officials to 49, still a large number for the population and with
- We saw what happened in Ontario and Manitoba with forced amalgamations and decided that we would rather steer the boat, rather than just row it. It is difficult to steer, row and bail all at the same time which is what the majority of us are doing on a daily basis.
- We do not have the individual capacity to grow our communities but working together we might be more successful.

Where are we today?

- The FIP Committee, determined in October, 2016 that the status quo was not working and that we needed to look at exploring a single regional government.

- We have worked closely with Alberta Municipal Affairs (Michael Scheidl and his team as well as with Kai So) throughout this process and their assistance has been invaluable. They were excellent on keeping discussions on point, ensuring that all discussions are respectful to all parties and for providing insight into options that might be available for us as we moved forward.
- Through the ACP Program, Alberta Municipal Affairs provided grant funding in the total amount of \$540,000 which has allowed us to hire a facilitator to explore the options for regional governance and to also undertake a regional infrastructure assessment. Without this funding we would not have had the capacity to undertake this project. The support of Alberta Municipal Affairs is greatly appreciated.
- In 2015 we retained 13 Ways Inc. to undertake the regional governance project and last year we hired Urban Systems to undertake the regional infrastructure assessment project.
- Since December, 2016 the committee has been working diligently to develop a plan to take to the general public as to our vision of the new municipality. We are planning on presenting this at a series of public engagement sessions throughout the month of June.

What makes us special?

- We are unique, a voluntary amalgamation involving nine (9) municipalities has never before been contemplated in Alberta
- This project commenced prior to the amendments to the MGA being brought forward and was not done as a result of the amended MGA
- We recognized our need for change and more formal collaboration in order to meet the needs of our citizens going into the future

Issues for Deputy Minister Pickering to address

- Are there any further amendments to the MGA that could affect this project?
- What level of cooperation is the Province hoping to get from the changes to the MGA and have we done enough?
- How will we be able to compete for grants if we do not have external partners or opportunities for multiple municipalities to apply for grants because of an amalgamation?
- Is there an opportunity to develop a “special” funding model for a new, voluntarily amalgamated municipality so that we do not lose provincial funding as we move forward?
 - Year 1 – additional \$1.5 million in transitional funding available
 - Year 2-5 – no change to current grant funding model
 - Year 6-10 – anticipated loss of \$1 million per year going forward

**Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership Committee
Regular Meeting held Monday, May 1, 2017 at 7:00 pm
Flagstaff County Administration Building**

Attendance:	Voting Members	Bob Coutts, Chair Gerald Kuefler Brenda McDermott Leo Lefebvre Dennis Steil James Robertson Wilma McLeod Perry Robinson	Village of Forestburg Flagstaff County Town of Killam Town of Hardisty Village of Heisler Town of Daysland Village of Alliance Town of Sedgewick
	CAOs	Debra Moffatt Amanda Howell Sandy Otto Shelly Armstrong Jacquie Zacharuk	Village of Forestburg/Coordinator Village of Heisler Town of Hardisty Flagstaff County Village of Alliance
	Observers/Presenters	Peter Miller Jolene Sinclair Michael Scheidl Jennifer Paton Doug Griffiths	Village of Forestburg Village of Alliance Alberta Municipal Affairs Alberta Municipal Affairs 13 Ways Inc.
	Absent:	Debra Smith Amanda Davis Kim Borgel Karen O'Conner Rod Krips	Village of Lougheed Town of Sedgewick Town of Killam Village of Lougheed Town of Daysland

Chair Bob Coutts called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda
Mtn # 17-05-007 Moved by Member Gerald Kuefler the adoption of agenda as presented. **CARRIED**

Presentations

Minutes for March 6,
2017 Regular Meeting
Mtn #17-05-008 Moved by Member Gerald Kuefler to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held March 6,
2017 as presented. **CARRIED**

Information
Mtn #17-05-009 Moved by Member James Robertson to accept the following for information purposes:

- Financial Reports
- CAO Meeting Notes – March 13, 2017
- CAO Meeting Notes – April 25, 2017
- Regional Public Works Meeting Notes – April 20, 2017
- Project Updates
- Correspondence and Information

CARRIED

Regional Governance
Project Doug Griffiths of 13 Ways Inc., reviewed the status of the Regional Governance Project:

- The working sub-committee has developed the first draft of the master document

- Additional sub-committee meetings will be held May 2nd, 4th, and 10th to further review the master document
- All elected officials and administration will be invited to a meeting to be held in mid-May to review and gather feedback on master document
- Public consultations will commence in June

Mr. Griffiths reviewed the potential impact of the election on the project. He stated that the Provincial agenda is very full which will cause delays in getting a response back from cabinet if a request is sent in for amalgamation. He is also reviewing how we would go about placing a referendum question on the ballot, there are timelines to be considered, although it was stated that Council must pass a motion to pose a referendum question before the end of June. He also recommended that if one municipality wishes to have a referendum question, then all should have the question. In the event that nothing is determined prior to the election, nominees would run as for a normal four (4) year term and if amalgamation is moved forward by the new council's then a potential date for amalgamation would be requested in the submission to the Province.

Michael Scheidl of Alberta Municipal Affairs reviewed the process for referendum:

- Advertising
- Council approval of the question
- A referendum is not required for amalgamation, but there is a requirement for public engagement
- Need to ensure that the public is well informed before posing a referendum question as an uninformed vote is usually negative

Mr. Griffiths then reviewed the public engagement process:

- 13 Ways Inc. has engaged an individual to facilitate the public engagement sessions
- There will be a session in each municipality
- Facilitators (elected officials) at each event will record all verbal and written feedback received
- Mr. Griffiths stated that he would not be present as the elected officials need to answer the questions, not him
- All sessions will be open to all members of the public, regardless of which municipality they reside in and elected officials from all municipalities should attend the sessions to be able to answer questions and hear comments
- The County has requested that there also be a session held in their municipality, this was agreed upon by all

Regional High Speed
Internet
Mtn #17-05-010

Moved by Member Perry Robinson to table this item for six (6) months pending further information. **CARRIED**

Meeting with Deputy
Minister Brad Pickering

A discussion was held regarding questions and information to be provided to Deputy Minister Brad Pickering in preparation for his meeting with the Committee on May 29, 2017:

- Provide a synopsis of what we want him to know about FIP:
 - Overview of FIP history
 - Overview of Regional Governance Project including that it was started prior to the MGA amendments being brought forward, our understanding of the future benefits of the project, what we have already received from the project (infrastructure assessment, deficit planning tools), the importance that the Alberta Municipal Affairs team has been in assisting with the project
 - Overview of the uniqueness of our region and the project being undertaken
- Provide a listing of the issues we wish him to speak on:
 - Does he anticipate any further changes to the MGA that could affect the project?

- What level of cooperation is the province hoping to get from the changes to the MGA, have we done enough?
- How will we be able to compete for grants if we do not have external partners or opportunities for multiple municipalities applying for grants because of an amalgamation?
- Does he anticipate any "reward" for us moving forward, other than the internal benefits that we expect to see?

Discussion was held as to the meeting process:

- The chair will act as the main speaker on behalf of the committee
- There should be a balanced rural/urban voice at the table
- There must be a cohesive/concise viewpoint going forward – cannot send mixed messages

Regional Water Operations Program and SCADA Integration
Mtn #17-05-011

Moved by Member Gerald Kuefler that the Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership recommend to all member municipalities to proceed with the regional water operations program conditional to the Town of Daysland, Flagstaff County and Village of Forestburg agreeing to utilize up to \$60,000 from their Regional Water Operator Project to engage ATAP to undertake the following:

- Facilitation and development of Regional Operations Program to develop policies and a draft agreement for retaining a Regional Water/ Waste Water Coordinator; and,
- To provide oversight and testing of the SCADA improvements which will include changing the regional server into a backup system for each individual site and building in control mechanisms to allow for remote control of plants and facilities.

And further moved that the Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership recommend to all member municipalities to agree to a five (5) year commitment to fund the position of a Regional Water/Waste Water Coordinator at a cost of approximately \$150,000 per year.

CARRIED

Regional Council Orientation
Mtn #17-05-012

Moved by Member Perry Robinson to host a one day council orientation conducted by Brownlee Fryett on the roles and responsibilities of council and administration and on the role of the Municipal Government Act in regard to council.

CARRIED

Regional Board Orientation
Mtn #17-05-013

Moved by Member Brenda McDermott to host a one day board orientation session conducted by the managers/staff of regional boards to provide an overview of the purpose of the board and any ongoing projects. The boards are to include:

- Flagstaff Regional Solid Waste Management Association
- Flagstaff Intermunicipal Partnership
- Flagstaff Regional Housing Group
- Flagstaff Family & Community Services
- Citizen Action Committee

CARRIED

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be Monday, May 29, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Flagstaff County Administration Building.

Adjournment

As all agenda items had been completed, Chair Bob Coutts declared the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Chairperson

Coordinator

**FLAGSTAFF INTERMUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP
REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PUBLIC MEETING DRY RUN SESSION**

Meeting Notes – May 23, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

Held at Killam Community Centre

Attendance

Bob Coutts	FIP Chair
Peter Miller	Village of Forestburg, Mayor
Dayna Oberg	Village of Forestburg, Councillor
Gerald Kuefler	Flagstaff County, Reeve
Wade Lindseth	Flagstaff County, Councillor
Gunnar Albrecht	Flagstaff County, Councillor
Rick Manning	Flagstaff County, Councillor
James Matthews	Flagstaff County, Councillor
Gary Matthiessen	Flagstaff County, Councillor
Dell Wickstrom	Village of Alliance, Mayor
Wilma McLeod	Village of Alliance, Councillor
Gail Watt	Town of Daysland, Mayor
Leona Dickau	Town of Daysland, Councillor
James Robertson	Town of Daysland, Councillor
Ed Kusalik	Town of Daysland, Councillor
Dennis Steil	Village of Heisler, Deputy Mayor
Anita Miller	Town of Hardisty, Mayor
Leo Lefebvre	Town of Hardisty, Councillor
Dean Lane	Town of Hardisty, Councillor
Connie Beringer	Town of Hardisty, Councillor
Debra Smith	Village of Lougheed, Mayor
Susan Armer	Village of Lougheed, Councillor
Perry Robinson	Town of Sedgewick, Mayor
Grant Imlah	Town of Sedgewick, Councillor
Stephen Levy	Town of Sedgewick, Councillor
Greg Sparrow	Town of Sedgewick, Councillor
Kel Tetz	Village of Heisler, Mayor
Brenda McDermott	Town of Killam, Councillor
Diane Gordon	Town of Killam, Councillor
Carol Kinzer	Town of Killam, Councillor
Brenda Grove	Town of Killam, Councillor
Darcy Eskra	Town of Killam, Councillor
Debra Moffatt	FIP Coordinator/Village of Forestburg CAO
Shelly Armstrong	Flagstaff County CAO
Karen O'Connor	Village of Lougheed CAO
Rod Krips	Town of Daysland CAO

- Prepare those in attendance to be ambassadors for the project
- Do a dry run of the public meetings process
- Chair Coutts is to do the welcome, introduce the subcommittee, consultant and facilitator, and provide a project overview
- Bill Diepeveen will facilitate the remainder of the evening
- Indicated that they had added a third question to each section of the workbook requesting that attendees rate the guidelines provided
- Indicated that the purpose of the session was to provide more information to the committees in order to move the project forward
- Stressed that the session was about listening and gathering information and it was not the committee member's role to give direction or answers to questions.
- Stressed that the committee members should be asking attendees for their opinions, concerns, suggestions.

Session broke for dinner at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Session reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

Bill Diepeveen and Bob Coutts worked through the workbook with the attendees.

Chair Coutts wrapped up the session:

- Indicated that there would be more public meetings
- The results of those meetings would be put into a report for the committee
- Each Council would be presented with the proposal and requested to make a decision as to whether they wish to go forward with the single tier governance proposal

The session adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

FLAGSTAFF INTERMUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP

SYNOPSIS OF CORRESPONDENCE

FOR MAY 29, 2017 REGULAR MEETING

- a. Regional Water Operator Project Funding
 - i. Flagstaff County – Conditional Approval subject to all other municipalities approving five (5) year commitment
 - ii. Village of Forestburg – Conditional Approval subject to other municipalities approving five (5) year commitment
 - iii. Village of Heisler – Approved
 - iv. Town of Killam – not approved
- b. Regional Water/Waste Water Coordinator Position – Five (5) Year Commitment
 - i. Flagstaff County – Conditional Approval to all other municipalities commitment
 - ii. Village of Forestburg – Approved subject to other municipalities approving five (5) year commitment
 - iii. Village of Heisler – not approved
 - iv. Town of Killam – not approved
- c. Appointment of Assessment Review Board Members – Kari Fox-Newby and Ken Bullock
 - i. Flagstaff County – Approved
 - ii. Village of Forestburg - Approved
 - iii. Town of Hardisty – Approved
 - iv. Village of Heisler - Approved
 - v. Town of Killam - Approved

**FLAGSTAFF INTERMUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP
ACTION LIST AS PER COMMITTEE DIRECTIVE**

2017

Ongoing Items

Date	Directive	Who	Action Taken	Status
May 1, 2017	Regional High Speed Internet	Coordinator	Table to October 2017 - coordinator to find additional information re providing regional broadband service	Ongoing
May 1, 2017	Prepare for meeting with Deputy Minister Brad Pickering	Coordinator	May 2, 2017 - Draft discussion points developed and sent to Chair and Doug Griffiths for Review May 2, 2017 - contact Minister Pickering's office for length of meeting - maximum 2 hours has been set aside	Ongoing
May 1, 2017	Regional Water Operations & SCADA Integration	Coordinator	May 2, 2017 - letters sent to Daysland, Forestburg and Flagstaff County requesting use of grant funding May 2, 2017 - letters sent to all member municipalities requesting ratification of project Waiting for responses from membership	Ongoing
May 1, 2017	Regional Council Orientation	Coordinator	Contact Brownlee Fryett and set date for Council Orientation Contact regional boards and request attendance at a regional board orientation	Ongoing
Nov 7, 2016	Regional Economic Development Plan	CAO Armstrong	Managing Partner will be Flagstaff County Submit an ACP grant application to develop a Regional Economic Development Plan April 25, 2017 CAO Meeting - grant application will be submitted when next grant is announced	Ongoing
Sep 12, 2016	Regional Safety Program	CAOs	Recommended to all members (except Daysland and Flagstaff) to participate in a safety assessment to be done by SDI Group Forestburg, Hardisty, Heisler, Killam and Sedgewick agreed to undertake safety assessment Apr 20, 2017 - assessments reviewed with SDI Group, they are to develop a proposal for a regional safety plan	Ongoing

County Council discussed the “dry run” public consultation event of Tuesday night. We received feedback from our participation at each of the tables, in addition to feedback from some of our staff members who attended the event.

We continue to support the principle of Regional Governance but we feel the Public Consultations scheduled for June will not achieve the intended purpose. The current format creates more questions, that as a committee for the past year, should have some answers.

Some of the feedback received:

There was not significant value in attending the dry run as people did not acquire any information on what regional governance might look like in the future.

There was an expectation the committee would provide more concrete ideas or examples. These ideas could be based on experiences of other amalgamations in the province.

We feel we are heading in a direction that will not lead to public support for an amalgamation, if we do not address in more detail the implications of the principles, with specific focus on Governance, Taxation and Debt and Levels of Service. Can we create information that provides possible scenarios of what the benefits are of regional governance?

What would happen to my tax rates? How will they be determined? Will my service levels change? What services will be reviewed? How will transitional council and administration be determined? What happens to staff?

After discussion, County Council, is suggesting the CAO’s review the service levels and try to determine what the possible services would look like in a regional government. What would tax rates look like for these services? How much debt is in each community and how do they continue to pay for it? What designated reserves are available in each community and how is the use of them determined in the future?

If assistance can be provided to the CAO group (either by Municipal Affairs or a consultant) similar to the process when a viability study is undertaken, we believe this detailed level of information would be extremely beneficial for the PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS. It was indicated by Kai So, we have significant work to do prior to an amalgamation application. We would suggest this work be completed prior to public consultation, which would better prepare elected officials to answer any questions from the citizens.

Therefore, County Council feels they cannot support the public consultation process in June, as we have not been diligent in preparing a “future vision” to assist the citizens in understanding the benefit of forming a Regional Government

Gerald