



AGENDA

Regular Council Meeting held in Council Chambers at #6, 3rd Ave. W, Empress, AB

On

Wednesday, January 17th, 2024 commencing at 6:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order:
2. Adoption of Agenda: January 17th, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Agenda
(approve agenda as is or with amendments)
3. Adoption of Minutes:
 - a) December 20th, 2023 Regular Council Meeting
(approve minutes as presented or with amendments)
4. Delegations: n/a
5. Reports:
 - a) Committee and Council Reports
 - i. Mayor Johnston
 - ii. Deputy Mayor Martin
 - iii. Councillor Burgess
(that the committee and Council reports, as verbally presented, be accepted, for information)
 - b) Public Works Report – there is no Public Works Report for this meeting.
 - c) Financial Report – There are 2 financial reports in the package that show the same information. Administration is trying to figure out the best format to present the financial report to Council and would appreciate feedback on the format.

(that the financial report be accepted for information.)
 - d) CAO Report
 - i. Active Motions List
 - ii. Development Officer
 - iii. Bylaws and Policies
 - iv. Canada Summer Jobs Grant
 - v. Meetings:
 - a. Assessor
 - b. Legal



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- c. Kelsey Martin & Darcy Ferguson– Special Areas
- d. Auditor – tomorrow
- vi. Munisoft
- vii. Building Resiliency for Multi-Year Drought Workshop
- viii. Email Clean-up
- ix. Grants
- x. Budget 2024
- xi. Firehall/Public Works Shop

(that the CAO report, as presented, in writing and verbally, by Chief Administrative Officer Angela Duncan, be accepted for information.)

6. Information and Correspondence:

- a) January 2, 2024 email and announcement from Oyen FCSS regarding Rural Transportation Grant.
- b) Letter from Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, Rebecca Schulz, regarding the significant drought in Alberta.
- c) Letter from Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ric Mclver, regarding the Assessment Model Review.
- d) December 15, 2023 letter from Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ric Mclver, regarding the Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF).

(that the information and correspondence items be accepted for information.)

7. Old Business: a) Village of Empress Dog Bylaw 2024-01

After reviewing the current Dog Bylaw 5-2018, I have drafted a new Dog Bylaw 2024-01. I used a different Dog Bylaw, that I know has undergone legal review, as my base bylaw, so it is a different format than what Council has reviewed in the past. I have made some adjustments and recommendations based on the current Empress Bylaw, motions made by Council, and current best practices. Areas of note and for discussion have been highlighted on the draft bylaw. For reference, I have also included current Dog Bylaw 5-2018 in the package.

Changes to Bylaws should be made between 1st and 3rd reading. So, if Council is happy with the layout and general content of the



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Bylaw, I recommend that we pass first reading, as presented, today, and then proceed to discuss changes that Council would like to see before the Bylaw is brought back to Council at a future date.

(That first reading of bylaw 2024-01, being a bylaw for the purpose of regulating dogs and promoting responsible dog ownership, be read a first time.)

And,

(that Bylaw 2024-01 be amended as discussed and brought back to Council at a later date.)

Or,

(some other direction as provided by Council at meeting time.)

8. New Business: a) Tax Arrears and Taxervice

As per the Municipal Government Act (MGA), tax roll accounts are not allowed to be more than 2 years in arrears. That means that each year the municipality is required to review its outstanding taxes and deal with them as per the MGA. This process can be confusing, requires in-depth knowledge of various pieces of legislation, and it takes years to complete the tax recovery process for each property that is in tax arrears, tying up significant administrative time and energy. There is a company, Taxervice, who will manage this process on behalf of the municipality. They are knowledgeable in the tax recovery process and they make sure that the process is done thoroughly and in accordance with legislation. While the municipality initially pays for the service, the cost is added to the tax roll and is recovered either when the taxes are paid or when the property sells via public auction. Information on costs that are added to the tax roll can be found in the meeting package. For reference, in 2023 eight property were placed on the Tax Arrears Recovery List; these are properties with taxes outstanding from 2021 or prior. To date, 4 of those properties remain outstanding. If not paid, the four outstanding properties will be up for Tax Sale in the 2024/2025 year. In total, Empress has \$37,279.15 in unpaid taxes, inclusive of properties that did not sell at Auction and Empress has taken title to.



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(that the Village of Empress authorizes the execution of an agreement with Taxervice for the management of property tax arrears recovery,

Or,

That the correspondence and information regarding Taxervice be accepted for information,

Or,

Some other direction as provided by Council at meeting time.)

b) Council Expense Policy

As per the discussion at the December 2023 Council Meeting, the current Council Expense Policy is included here for discussion. A copy of the policy can be found in the meeting package.

(Direction to be provided by Council at meeting time.)

c) Library Board Member

The library has indicated that they would like to add or change a Board Member. More information on this will be available at meeting time.

(Direction to be provided by Council at meeting time.)

d)

e)



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9. Closed Meeting Session:

a) Gravel Pit

(Pursuant to section 197(2) of the Municipal Government Act, that Council go into a closed meeting session at _____ p.m. to discuss the following: Gravel Pit - Legal – Solicitor/Client Privilege - FOIPP Act Section 27).

(that the Board come out of closed meeting at _____ p.m.)

(further direction as given by the Board at meeting time)

10. Next meeting: February 21st, 2024

11. Adjournment: