



AGENDA

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

Wednesday June 19, 2024 commencing at 6:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order:
2. Adoption of Agenda: June 19, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Agenda
(approve agenda as is or with amendments)
3. Adoption of Minutes:
 - a) May 15, 2024 Regular Council Meeting
(approve minutes as presented or with amendments)
4. Delegations:
 - a) Tamara Ravenwood, Empress Resident & Business Owner

Ms. Ravenwood is attending to discuss the Land Use Bylaw rewrite.
Her written submission is included in the package

(That the written submission and discussion with Tamara Ravenwood regarding the Land Use Bylaw rewrite be accepted for information.)
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) Financial Report
 - i. Cheque Listing
 - ii. Account Balance
 - iii. Revenue and Expense Report
(that the financial report, as presented verbally and in writing by Chief Financial Officer, Shelley Vaughan, be accepted for information.)
 - c) Public Work's Report

(that the public works report, as presented in writing, be accepted for information.)



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d) Development Report

(that the Development Report, as presented in writing, be accepted for information)

e) Chief Administrative Officer's Report

i. Meetings, etc

- a. Development Officer Training with Palliser Regional Municipal Services, May 21 and 23
- b. Water Operator Transition meeting, May 23
- c. Water Reservoir Detailed Design Meeting with MPE Engineer Patrick Boyd, May 28
- d. Sewer Collection Assessment kick off meeting with MPE Engineer Evan Larnas, June 4
- e. Administration Meeting, June 12

ii. LUB Rewrite

iii. Tree Removal along 6th Ave

iv. Commissioner of Oaths

v. Shower House Update

vi. Campground Complaint re: use of shower house

vii. Netago/Telus Communications Tower

(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) May 13, 2024 email from Alberta Municipalities President, Tyler Gandam, regarding their letter to Premier Smith clarifying information on provincial funding
- b) May 13, 2024 Letter from ATCO Electric regarding 2024 Franchise Fees
- c) May 15, 2024 email from Palliser Economic Partnership regarding June meeting and Executive Board Nominations
- d) May 20, 2024 letter from Municipal Affairs Minister, Ric McIver, regarding Bill 20: the Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act
- e) May 21, 2024 letter from Municipal Affairs Minister, Ric McIver, regarding the Local Government Fiscal Framework
- f) Letter from Member of Parliament Damine Kurek regarding the carbon tax
- g) May 27, 2024 letter from Municipal Affairs regarding an upcoming Municipal Accountability Program Review
- h) June 10, 2024 email from Alberta Municipalities, on behalf of Alberta Culture, regarding Alberta Day 2024

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



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7. Old Business: a) Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) Public Member Appointment

At the May 15, 2024 Regular Council Meeting, Council passed Bylaw 2024-03, Municipal Planning Commission Bylaw. This bylaw requires a member of the public to be appointed to the Municipal Planning Commission. Prior to the Bylaw being passed, this role was being filled by Mr. Leo Hensel. Administration recommends that Mr. Hensel remain the public member of the MPC until the October Organizational Meeting when Council will have the opportunity to appoint a member for a 2-year term, as per the bylaw.

(that Leo Hensel be appointed as the Public Member of the Municipal Planning Commission until the October 2024 Village of Empress Organizational Meeting,

Or,

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

b) Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Engagement Plan

At the last meeting, Council met with Palliser Municipal Services to discuss the LUB rewrite, including the engagement plan. Council was emailed the engagement plan on May 21, 2024 for further comment. No further comments were received. If Council is happy with the plan, a motion is requested to approve the engagement plan

(that the Land Use Bylaw Engagement Plan, prepared by Palliser Regional Municipal Services, be approved as presented/amended.)

8. New Business: a) Local Government Fiscal Framework Memorandums of Agreement

With the new Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) for capital and operating funding starting this year, municipalities are



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required to enter into new funding agreements regarding these grants. The agreements are included in your meeting package and cover April 1, 2024 until March 31, 2034.

(that the Memorandums of Agreement between His Majesty in Right of Alberta (Alberta Government) and the Village of Empress regarding the Local Government Fiscal Framework Capital and Operating Programs be signed and their execution authorized.)

b) Policy 12-10 Pension Participation Policy

At the May 15, 2024 Regular Council Meeting, on the recommendation of Administration, Council passed resolution 103-2024 "MOVED by Deputy Mayor Martin that amendments to Policy 12-10 Pension Participation Policy, be accepted as presented". I misunderstood a conversation with Special Areas Human Resources that led to the recommendation to amend the policy. This policy was amended in error. Council is asked to rescind motion 103-2024 and revert back to the previous Pension Participation Policy.

(That motion 103-2024 "MOVED by Deputy Mayor Martin that amendments to Policy 12-10 Pension Participation Policy, be accepted as presented" be rescinded and further that the previous Pension Participation Policy remains in effect.)

c) 2024 Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Funding

At the April 17, 2024 Regular Council Meeting, Council received an FCSS funding request from the Empress Library. Before allocating funds, Council requested Administration reach out to the Friendship Center and the Culture and Leisure Society regarding their funding needs. A response has been received from the Friendship Center. The library and Friendship Center request letters are included in the agenda package. The library is requesting \$1000 and the Friendship Center is requesting \$950. Council is asked to provide direction on 2024 FCSS funding.

(direction as provided at the time of the meeting.)

d) 2024 Tax Arrears Public Auction



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There is one property that is set to go to public auction in 2024 owing to tax arrears, 529 Center Street (5043AV, 14, 10). The auction has been set for October 1 at 2 p.m. Attached is a letter from Taxervice outlining some of the specifics, as well as recommended Terms and Conditions for the Public Auction. There are a number of motions that will need to be made related to the matter.

- Council must approve the terms and conditions of the auction
- Council must set the reserve bid for the parcel. The reserve bid is usually fair-market-value of the property. This is typically the assessed value of the property. 529 Center Street is assessed at \$6290. This lot has a partially completed garage on it that was originally meant to be an accessory structure to a house on a different parcel. Apart from being partially completed, the condition of the garage is unknown. Since there is not a principal use on the parcel, a development permit could not be issued for the completion of the garage. Therefore, it is recommended that Council set the reserve bid at land-value (\$2900) plus 50% of the improvement value (\$1695) for a total reserve bid of \$4595. Council is welcome to set a different reserve bid, at their discretion, but it should not be higher than the assessed value.
- It is recommended that a motion be made to add tax-recovery costs to the tax roll.

(that the presented Terms and Conditions of Sale for the 2024 Public Auction are hereby approved.)

AND

(That the reserve bid for at the 2024 Public Auction for 529 Center Street (Plan 5043AV, Block 14, Lot 10) be set at \$4595.)

AND

(that pursuant to 553(1)(f) M.G.A., the addition of all tax recovery costs to the relevant rolls is hereby approved.)

e) Fire Hall Generator

A load test has been completed on the Firehall to determine generator needs. During the load test, the initial draw was 130 amps and then the running draw was 115 amps. I reached out to the supplier to see if the smaller generator would work with this draw



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and they have said that we would either need to purchase the larger generator, or we would need to install modules to stagger the load or lock out certain loads if we went with the smaller generator. Council has budgeted \$25,000 for this project (\$10, 117 (MSI), \$12,500 (Special Areas), \$2383 (reserves)). Multiple quotes were requested, but this is what was received. These quotes do not include the cement pad that the generator will be placed on. The first and last options would keep us close to budget.

26/22.5 kw Generac	\$18,000	Would require staggering or locking out certain loads
40 kw Generac	\$40,000	Would meet our needs but be well beyond budget
Electrical to relocate existing generator	\$3,675	We would need to confirm that SAB is okay with this and would need to build housing as this is a portable generator and we wouldn't want it to disappear.

(that a 26/22.5 kw generator be purchased, in the amount of \$18,000, for the fire hall and public works shop and that costs for installation of a pad to place the generator on be approved,

Or,

That a 40 kw generator be purchased, in the amount of \$40,000, for the fire hall and public works shop and that costs for installation of a pad to place the generator on be approved, and further that any costs over the budgeted amount come out of accumulated surplus,

Or,

That administration confirm with Special areas that Empress may continue to utilize their generator, long term, and if they are agreeable, bring quotes back to Council for the installation and housing of the generator (or proceed with the installation and housing),

Or,

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

f) Empress & District Historical Society – request for monument

The Society is requesting Council's permission to install a monument marking the Alberta/Saskatchewan border (4th Meridian of the Dominion Land Survey) at the very east end of 3rd Avenue.



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The Marker would consist of a 6-foot-tall silhouette of a survey and a large stone with an engraved message. More information can be found in the email included in the meeting package.

(that the Empress and District Historical Society's request for a monument at the East end of Third Avenue to mark the Alberta Saskatchewan Border (4th Meridian of the Dominion Land Survey) be approved,

or,

that the Empress and District Historical Society's request for a monument at the East end of Third Avenue to mark the Alberta Saskatchewan Border (4th Meridian of the Dominion Land Survey) be denied,

or,

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

g) Splash Park Hours

The Splash Park is currently open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Last year, and again this year, there were a number of instances where the park was consistently triggered and left to run all day, leading to the water reservoir to be drained. Not only is this a significant expense, but it means that the Village may not be able to adequately handle fire flows. It also leaves the Village without a back-up water supply. The Village water operators are requesting that the park only be open Wednesday to Friday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and remain closed on Monday and Tuesday. If Council approves this change, we will purchase weather-resistant stickers with the new hours to cover up the old hours.

(that the spray park hours be Wednesday to Friday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and remain closed on Monday and Tuesday until further notice,

Or,

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

h) Record Retention and Disposition Bylaw



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As per MGA Section 214(1) and (2) a Council may pass a bylaw respecting the destruction of records and documents of the municipality. The Administration Office in the Village is overflowing with records and paperwork. We would like to start cleaning it up and organizing the office to facilitate a better working environment and make filing and the retrieval of files easier. Part of this process will be earmarking old, duplicate, or unnecessary records for destruction. In order to do this, we must have a Bylaw outlining what may be destroyed, when it may be destroyed, and how it may be destroyed. In the agenda is draft Bylaw 2024-04 Records Retention and Disposition Bylaw for Council's consideration.

(that Bylaw 2024-04, being a Record Retention and Disposition Bylaw for the Village of Empress, be given first reading as presented/amended,

Council may proceed to 2nd and 3rd reading at their discretion,

Or,

That the discussion regarding Bylaw 2024-04, being a record retention and disposition bylaw, be accepted for information,

Or,

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

i) Additional hours for office clean-up

On June 12, administrative staff for the Village met to discuss areas of concern and ways that we may be able to work more efficiently and effectively together. One of the issues that was noted was the current state of the office and filing. This issue has been developing for a number of years as the high turnover in CAO's and the current administration being remote has left this situation unchecked. The current situation means that more time than is necessary is being used to look for files and we are not always finding complete information, especially not in a timely manner. We are requesting authorization for additional hours for our two administrative staff in Empress to spend 2 Mondays organizing the files and earmarking files for destruction (assuming that Council is amicable to draft bylaw 2024-04). If Council is not amicable to draft bylaw 2024-04, then no files will be earmarked for destruction.



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(that additional overtime is authorized for administrative office staff to go through Village of Empress records and files to organize them (and to earmark records for destruction in anticipation of the passing of Bylaw 2024-04, Record Retention and Disposition Bylaw),

Or,

That the discussion regarding additional hours for office staff for an office clean up be accepted for information,

Or,

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

j) Public Administration Office Hours

One of the suggestions that came out of our administrative streamlining meeting is closing the office to the public on Wednesdays, this would also mean closing the bank on Wednesdays. The office staff make a significant effort to provide good service to those who call and come into the office, which means that when the phone rings or someone walks in, they put aside what they are working on to help. Some days the office is so busy that they get almost nothing else done. This disruption to work causes them to have to duplicate their efforts when they get back to the day's tasks. Additionally, when the bank is open, they must lock everything up before they can run to the back or the library or use the facilities. Having Wednesday as a day of uninterrupted work should allow them to tackle larger tasks uninterrupted, quicker, and more thoroughly.

(that the Village of Empress Administration Office be closed to the public on Wednesdays, but will remain open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. until 12 noon and from 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.,

Or,

That the discussion regarding closing the office on Wednesday's be accepted for information,

Or,

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k) Resident concern regarding use of Taxervice for Tax Arrears

Mayor Johnston has requested that this item be placed on the agenda based on a discussion with a concerned resident. This is the Village's first year using Taxervice, which manages tax arrears on behalf of the municipality. We have signed a two-year contract with Taxervice. All costs associated with the use of Taxervice are added to the tax roll of the property who is in tax arrears, thus ensuring that the property that has caused the cost is responsible to pay for it.

(direction as provided by Council at meeting time.)

l) 110-Year Anniversary Parade

Mayor Johnston has requested that this item be placed on the agenda based on a discussion he has had with the 110-year anniversary committee. The question is whether Council would like to put a float in the parade and whether Council would like to allocate any funds towards decorating the float or purchasing candy for the parade.

(direction as provided by Council at meeting time.)

The next three agenda items 8.k-m deal with land sales. At Council's discretion you may address these items in closed session (next item on the agenda), or you may address them in open session so long as names are not discussed.

m) Purchase Offer 625 1st Street W – Plan 5043AV, Block 16, Lots 7-10

An offer has been made to purchase 625 1st Street W. This lot was recently serviced by the Village in June 2024. 2023 assessment (prior to servicing) is \$5810 and the lot is listed for sale, as an un-serviced lot, on our website for \$8500. This lot was recovered as a tax forfeiture in 2008. As the tax sale auction was more than 15 years ago, there is no requirement to hold the funds in trust. There are no caveats on the title. The offer amount will be forwarded



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separately. Administration has spoken with the buyer regarding price, in consideration of our servicing expenses, and Administration is recommending that Council accept the offer. Council is welcome to make a counteroffer.

(direction as provided at meeting time.)

- n) Purchase Offer 301 2nd Ave W – Plan 5043AV, Block 30, Lots 9-10
AND 305 2nd Ave W – Plan 5043AV, Block 30, Lots 7-8

301 2nd Ave is un-serviced. 2023 assessment is \$5430. This lot is not currently listed on our website. The Village has owned this lot since 1986 and it is not clear why. There are no caveats on the title. The offer amount will be forwarded separately. Administration is not making a recommendation as to the suitability of this offer and Council is welcome to make a counteroffer.

305 2nd Ave is un-serviced. 2023 assessment is \$5180. This lot is not currently listed on our website. This lot was recovered as a tax forfeiture in 1986. As we have been in possession of this lot since 1986, there is no need to hold the funds in trust. There are no caveats on the title. The offer amount will be forwarded separately. Administration is not making a recommendation as to the suitability of this offer and Council is welcome to make a counteroffer.

(direction as provided at meeting time.)

- o) Purchase Offer 320 2nd Ave West – Plan 5043AV, Block 31, Lots 1-2

320 2nd Ave is un-serviced. 2023 assessment is \$5180. This lot is listed on our website for \$4900. The Village has owned this lot since at least 2005 and it is not clear why. There are no caveats on the title. The offer amount will be forwarded separately. Administration is recommending that Council accept this offer.

If Council chooses to accept any of the offers, the following motion is recommended for each offer accepted:

that the offer(s) of XXX will be accepted for the purchase of lot(s) XXX. FURTHER that a non-refundable payment in the full amount plus GST and completion of purchase documents is required within 15 business days of the purchaser being notified of the decision. FURTHER that the



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purchase is AS IS, WHERE IS, including all faults and limitations and no access to the site will be allowed until closing. FURTHER, payment will be accepted by Bank Draft or E-transfer only. Further, the purchaser is responsible to pay the equivalent of pro-rated municipal taxes for the 2024 taxation year.

9. Closed Meeting Session:

- a) Agenda items 8. m-o (Purchase Offers)
- b) Resident concern regarding letter from previous CAO
- c) Sale of 1980's Hospital
- d) Wildwillow Contract 6-month review

(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: Purchase Offers; sale of 1980's Hospital – disclosure harmful economic and other interests of a public body, FOIPP Act Section 25; Resident concern regarding letter from previous CAO – disclosure harmful to personal privacy, FOIPP Act Section 17; and Wildwillow Contract 6-month review – confidential evaluations, FOIPP Act Section 19.)

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

(further direction as given by Council at meeting time)

10. Next meeting: July 17, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

11. Adjournment: