



The Corporation of the City of Grand Forks
In-Camera Meeting of Council
MINUTES

Meeting #: IC-2019-17
Date: Tuesday, August 20, 2019, 7:00 pm
Location: 7217 - 4th Street, City Hall Council Chambers

Present: Mayor Brian Taylor
Councillor Zak Eburne-Stoodley
Councillor Cathy Korolek
Councillor Neil Krog
Councillor Chris Moslin
Councillor Christine Thompson
Councillor Rod Zielinski

Staff: Diane Heinrich - Chief Administrative Officer
Daniel Drexler - Corporate Officer
Kevin McKinnon - Deputy Corporate Officer
Graham Watt – Flood Recovery Manager

NO GALLERY

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Taylor called the In-Camera Meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

a. Adopt agenda

August 20, 2019, In-Camera Meeting agenda

Resolution #: I090/2019/08/20 MOVED / SECONDED

THAT Council adopts the August 20, 2019, In-Camera Meeting agenda as presented.

3. MINUTES

4. REGISTERED PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. DMAF Action Plan (s.90(1)(e))

Council Liaisons to the DBA and Chamber of Commerce

The Recovery Manager joined the meeting at 7:01.

Council liaisons to the Downtown Business Association and Chamber of Commerce brought forward concerns from those organizations about the messaging on-the-street surrounding the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) grants. Specifically, some residents of North Ruckle are advising friends/family to boycott local businesses as a result of Council's decision to "sacrifice" their homes for the benefit of downtown.

Discussion surrounding the previous Council's decisions to endorse action plans:

- Engineers opinions led Council to endorse resolutions;
- City to advocate for the purchase of properties at pre-flood values;
- Installation of diking to mitigate 200-year floods.

Discussion moved on to the DMAF grant itself:

- Concern that changes to the projects could result in loss of DMAF funding partly or entirely;
- Request that this Council endorse the decisions of the previous Council and provide media information in support;
- Floodplain workshop is scheduled for August 26.

Discussion continued on flood mitigation:

- Choice of words: "sacrifice", abandonment, surrender, return-to-river?

- Adaptation - the heart and soul of the DMAF program. In Grand Forks' case, the adaptation component is the repurposing of North Ruckle lands;

■ [REDACTED]

- The return of North Ruckle is essential to the DMAF grant.
- The longer the plans are rehashed, the later work can be started.
- The next flood could be next year, or in 200 years.
- For every resident who wants to stay, there's another who's already boarded up their house and wants closure.

Discussion moved to the compensation offered:

- Driving factor is reduction of life risk;
- If residents received pre-flood value, they're still walking away damaged;
- Properties that were fixed up post-flood could be receiving pre-flood value or better;

There was discussion on the need for clear communications on the matter, and further comment on Councillors' individual commentary on social media and the need to present a unified front in public.

The Recovery Manager provided some history behind the engineering reports and DMAF grant application:

• [REDACTED]

- Vetting of concepts is done by either floodplain mapping or risk analysis. Nor-Ex Engineering performed a risk analysis review because floodplain mapping data was not yet available at the time, but floodplain mapping review is now being done;
- The DMAF plan was done based on risk analysis and technical decisions. There will be an Oversight Committee from the funding agencies to ensure the plan is on-track in accordance with the contribution agreement, and that Committee will be able to approve minor alterations. Major alterations would need to be proved out by

engineers and new risk assessments be completed - that portion of the funding could be significantly jeopardized where changes are made.

- The Recovery Manager has spoken to a professor in the USA who specializes in the trauma of major events; it's important to commemorate trauma in a community to allow the community to heal and move on.

Discussion moved to educating the public:

- Lots of discussion about "why", but never in a concise, succinct format;
- Could floodplain workshops be recorded and shared with the public?
 - Budget has considered this component, and Recovery funding is available.
- Create a position paper for all of Council (include pictures from floodplain mapping). Determine position after workshop on Aug 26, release on September 3;
- Council to speak with one voice;
- Important to show empathy and acknowledge people's challenges, but to apologize perpetuates the "sacrifice".

Discussion continued on the post-buyout use of land:

- Area returned to floodplain could include "floodable" playing fields and park space, not just wetlands.
- DMAF application included funding for design and construction of restoration works;
- Could restoration funding be temporarily allocated to increase buyouts, as restoration work would not occur for several years.
 - Residents are looking at options for longer timelines.
- Timeline for procurement process;
- Staff capacity
- RDKB land in South Johnson Flats
 - Bank stabilization only, the cost of land acquisition was too high
- Residents disbelief that the City can pull DMAF off;

- Land value estimates: about 20% below pre-flood when DMAF application appraisals were done, but likely to rebound.
 - DMAF application included contingency to allow for higher re-appraisals; many residents have worked hard to improve the value of their homes post-flood;
- DMAF project will span more than 1 term of Council;

The Corporate Officer gave an update on the hiring process for the Capital Projects Engineer.

Discussion concluded with further talk on messaging:

- Recovery Manager and Deputy Corporate Officer will come up with some talking points for the DBA/Chamber representatives before they report back to those organizations;
- If the floodplain workshop goes well, portions could be recorded for public distribution;
- Urban Systems will be able to answer questions arising from the floodplain workshop on Aug 26, however each floodplain model requires about 3 hours to run, so there will be some delay in providing results.
- A public presentation should be planned, at a larger venue.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STAFF FOR DECISIONS**

7. **REQUESTS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE**

8. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

9. **LATE ITEMS**

10. **RELEASE FROM IN-CAMERA**

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

The In-Camera Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

Resolution #: I091/2019/08/20 MOVED / SECONDED

THAT the In-Camera meeting be adjourned.

Carried

Mayor Brian Taylor

Dep. Corporate Officer – Kevin McKinnon