

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
of the Village of Barons
June 11, 2024**

Present: Daniel Doell, Mayor
Ron Gorzitza, Deputy Mayor
Clinton Bishop, Councillor
Jen Durell, Administrator
Brian Passmore, Village Foreman

Absent: *None*

Recording Secretary: Jen Durell, Recording Secretary

Call to Order: Call to order at 7:00 p.m.

Guests: **George Dykstra – Taxes**

Speaks of tax increase. Doesn't think it was called for to raise the minimum tax. Says properties haven't gone up that much.

Deputy Mayor speaks of assessors doing the valuation of all the properties.

Mayor Doell spoke of looking into the possibility of lowering the minimum tax.

Concerned that no consultation was had with the public.

Angel Zucchiatti – Taxes

Speaks of services not matching taxes and wants to know revenue sources. Says that the village needs another plan. Concerns were raised regarding the impact to seniors and residents alike.

Councillor Bishop explains the difference between assessment and taxation. Explains how Council came up with the millrate and the minimum tax. Speaks on the increase from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00. He spoke of the assessment and taxation processes. Speaks of property assessments and what they mean. Speaks of how assessor comes to the assessed values of the property – house values, renovations, real estate market, changes in the community. Also spoke to the audience on how Council is limited under the MGA as to how they can raise revenues. The Village saw a 27% increase in property values. Says Council did their best to minimize the impact for residents.

Approval of Agenda: **Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gorzitza to approve the agenda as presented. Carried unanimously.**

Minutes: To accept the minutes of the May 14, 2024 Regular Council Meeting minutes as presented.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gorzitza to accept the minutes of the May 14, 2024 Regular Council meeting as presented. Carried unanimously

To accept the minutes of the May 28, 2024 Budget Meeting minutes as presented.

Motion made by Mayor Doell to accept the minutes of the May 28, 2024 Budget meeting as presented. Carried unanimously

Business Arising: a) **Darryl Scase, Independent Auditor – Presentation of Audited Financial Statements**
Mr. Scase speaks of how they work for 10 different municipalities and the discussion is always about costs. Says that the small municipalities took a hit when the elevators pulled out and the Village lost the assessed values of same. Speaks of how a budget works – Zero based budget. Start with adding costs. Says the Village has to cover base costs. Says the province doesn't help the small villages very much and the grants are never enough. Speaks of working grants and revenues and the balance of the budget is left with taxation. Says that he checks that the process of the budget is equitable to the revenues coming in. Barons has stuck within the boundaries of the budget. Also checks the internal controls and are things properly monitored. Says that an unqualified report means they found deficiencies, and we had a qualified report again this year which meant no irregularities. Says that cash is slim for a lot of small communities. Says that a smaller community is dollar for dollar as opposed to larger communities which have a larger pool of money. Speaks of \$87,000 reserve and not being able to touch it. Says that Council has to measure the cash, as other Councils have had to do. Speaks of cost increases for everyone – residents and village. Speaks of tax increases for his own office in Calgary – Was at \$3,000.00 now is \$19,000.00.

Speaks of financial statements and how they have met the standard necessary by the province that have been set out. Didn't find anything untoward or out of the ordinary. Says that the residents are seeing the same thing all over.

Village Foreman Report: Speaks of Water plant being back on the SCADA system. Intersections are all marked for signage project. Dust abatement is supposed to commence June 12. Have been doing pre-prep and marking manholes in preparation for this. Hoping to get signage all done before family fun day. Has now sealed all the conduit in preparation for the roof to be replaced.

Administrators Report: The change over to the summer utility billing has been completed. The 2023 Statistical Information Return and 2024 Taxation Bylaw has been sent to Municipal Affairs. Some grant applications were submitted for projects approved. Attended a meeting with MPE and the contractor for the sewer lagoon project. The project is scheduled to commence as of July 9th. Tax notices have now gone out as of May 30, with the payment deadline of Aug 1. Many complaints have been received regarding taxes. Two of the Village's GIC's are maturing in July, which Administration will instruct them to re-invest at the current interest rate. Administration received an inquiry from a developer wishing to meet with Council on June 13th to discuss a possible development opportunity. Admin away next week for Local Government Administration Association (LGAA). Councillor Bishop attended the Seniors on Friday to present cupcakes for Senior's week.

Correspondence:

- May Bank Reconciliation
- Community Peace Officer Monthly Report – May
- Community Peace Officer Monthly Report – April
- Complaint Forms – Shaver, Dykstra, Rempel, Diplock
- County of Lethbridge Community Learning Council – 50 year Celebration Invitation
- Town of Coalhurst Miner's Days Invitation

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gorzitza to accept the correspondence as presented. Carried unanimously

Financial Reports: Council was presented with the accounts payable and monthly statement for the month of May, 2024.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gorzitza to approve the accounts payable for the month of May, 2024. Carried unanimously

Motion made by Councillor Bishop to approve the monthly statement for May, 2024. Carried unanimously

Committee Reports:

- a) **ORRSC**
Next meeting upcoming at the end of June.

- b) **Green Acres**
Discussion of the financials of Green Acres.
- c) **CFLR (Community Futures Lethbridge Region)**
The AGM is upcoming at the end of June. A few loan approvals and arrears were discussed.
- d) **FCSS (Family Community and Social Services)**
Getting ready for summer as it's the busiest time for FCSS.
- e) **Mayors and Reeves**
Next meeting at the end of June.
- f) **Chinook Arch Library System**
No report at this time.
- g) **AG Society**
Planning for Family Fun Day. Community garden underway - \$25.00 per box subsidized by the AG society. 4' X 4' box in the greenhouse.
- h) **Emergency Advisory Committee**
Discussed the Regional Partnership agreement, as well as the community annexes to the overall Emergency plan. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of hiring someone for the Regional system by the end of the year, but no determination has been made as of yet. Next meeting to be determined.
- i) **Carmangay Library**
Next meeting is upcoming.

New Business:

- a) **Bylaw #761 – Land Use Bylaw Amendment**
Council was presented with Bylaw #761 for their consideration. Discussion was held. Kattie from ORRSC explained to Council about the error in the bylaw.

Motion made by Councillor Bishop to read Bylaw #761 a first time this 11th day of June, 2024. Carried unanimously

- b) **Regional Emergency Management Partnership Agreement**
Council was presented with the proposed agreement for the Regional Emergency Management Partnership. Discussion was held.

**Motion made by Mayor Doell to approve and sign the Regional Emergency Management Partnership Agreement as presented.
Carried unanimously**

- c) **Memorandum of Agreement for Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) Capital and Operating**
Council was presented with the proposed agreements for the Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) grant program. Discussion was held.

**Motion made by Councillor Bishop to approve and sign the Local Government Fiscal Framework Capital Agreement as presented.
Carried unanimously**

**Motion made by Mayor Doell to approve and sign the Local Government Fiscal Framework Operating Agreement as presented.
Carried unanimously**

- d) **July/August Council Meetings**
As in previous years, Council was asked to consider the necessity of having regular Council meetings in the summer. This would also include having no newsletter for these months.

**Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gorzitza to not have any Council meetings or newsletters in July or August unless some emergent issues arise, then a special meeting of Council will be called.
Carried unanimously**

- e) **Administrators Vacation Request**
Administrator Durell requests Aug 12th – 15th, 2024 for vacation time.

**Motion made by Mayor Doell to approve the vacation request from Administrator Durell.
Carried unanimously**

Closed Session: None

Adjournment: Adjournment of the meeting was at 8:28 p.m.

Mayor – Daniel Doell

Administrator – Jen Durell