

SMOKY LAKE COUNTY

Minutes of the **County Council Committee of the Whole Meeting for the purpose of Administration of Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 1:07 P.M.** held in County Council Chambers and virtually online through Electronic Communication Technology: Zoom Meeting.

The meeting was called to Order by the Reeve Mr. Lorne Halisky, in the presence of the following persons:

<u>Div. No.</u>	<u>Councillor(s)</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u> <u>Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2022</u>
1	Dan Gawalko	Present in Chambers
2	Linda Fenerty	Present in Chambers
3	Dominique Cere	Present Virtually
4	Lorne Halisky	Present in Chambers
5	Jered Serben	Present in Chambers
CAO	Gene Sobolewski	Present in Chambers
Assistant CAO	Lydia Cielin	Present Virtually
Finance Manager	Brenda Adamson	Present Virtually
Legislative Svcs/R.S.	Patti Priest	Present Virtually
Plan. & Dev. Manager	Jordan Ruegg	Present Virtually
Natural Gas Manager	Daniel Moric	Present Virtually
GIS Officer	Carole Dowhaniuk	Present Virtually
Public Works Manager	Doug Ponich	Present Virtually
Fire Chief	Scott Franchuk	Present Virtually
Deputy Fire Chief	Spencer Kotylak	Present Virtually
Plan. & Dev. Assistant	Kyle Schole	Present Virtually @ 1:26pm
Comm. Ec. Dev. Officer	Michelle Wright	Present Virtually

No Members of the Media were present.

No Members of the Public were present.

2. Agenda:

273-22: Fenerty

That the Agenda for the Smoky Lake County Council Committee of the Whole Meeting for the purpose of Administration, for January 18, 2022, be adopted, as presented.

Carried Unanimously.

3. Minutes:

No Minutes.

Dominique Cere, Councillor Division 3, virtually left the meeting, time 1:14 p.m. and entered Council Chambers, time 1:26 p.m.

Kyle Schole, Planning and Development Assistant, virtually joined the meeting, time 1:26 p.m.

4. Request for Discussion:

Transitional Solutions Inc. – Regional Fire Services Study

Scott Franchuk, Fire Chief, presented information in respect to Transitional Solutions Inc. Regional Fire Services Study, which included but was not limited to the following information:

HISTORY:

Administrators met on December 17, 2020, to discuss regional projects to submit joint application for the 2020/2021 Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Grant under the component: Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework.

County Council – January 28, 2021: Motion

That **Smoky Lake County in partnership with the Town of Smoky Lake, Village of Waskatenau, and the Village of Vilna** participate in the application of the 2020-2021 Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Grant for the **Project Titled: Regional Fire Services** under the “Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework” Component Grant for the total project cost in the amount of \$200,000.00; and approve **Smoky Lake County to be the Managing Partner** under the said application; and further agree to abide by the terms of the Conditional Grant Agreement governing the purpose and use of the grant funds.

County Council– April 29, 2021: Motion

That Smoky Lake County acknowledge receipt of the letter from the Honourable Ric McIver, Minister of Alberta Municipal Affairs, dated March 23, 2021, in regard to the **approval** of Smoky Lake County’s Intermunicipal Collaboration 2020/21 Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) grant funding in the amount of **\$200,000.00**, for the **Project Titled: Regional Fire Services Study**, in partnership with the Town of Smoky Lake, Village of Waskatenau, and the Village of Vilna.

County Council – May 27, 2021: Motion

That Smoky Lake County execute the contract with Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) of Edmonton, Alberta for the purpose of conducting the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review including, but not limited to, an assessment and evaluation of the following:

- Job Description Review Including Duties (Chief, Deputy and Volunteers, their Utilization and Chain of Command),
- Apparatus Needs,
- Water Supply,
- Fire Halls and Infrastructure,
- Training and Competency,
- Mutual Aid Agreements,
- Fire Prevention and Inspection Initiatives,
- Health and Safety, and
- Potential Staff Support,

as per TSI’s proposal dated May 25, 2021 at a cost in the amount of \$64,020.00, funded by the 2020/21 – Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Intermunicipal Collaboration Grant”.

County Council – May 27, 2021: Motion

That Smoky Lake County approve for Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) of Edmonton, Alberta to create the **Smoky Lake Regional Fire Master Plan** for the purpose of guiding the Region in making decisions to best meet the needs of the municipalities and develop a framework for effective fire service delivery in the County, the Town and the Villages, which including, but not limited to, an assessment and evaluation of the following:

- firefighter safety,
- cost control and containment,
- efficiency,
- effectiveness,

and to identify the right-sized service and approach to meet the needs of the region over the next 10 years; as per TSI’s proposal dated May 25, 2021 at a cost in the amount of \$63,180.00, funded by the 2020/21 – Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Intermunicipal Collaboration Grant”.

County Council – May 27, 2021: Motion

That Smoky Lake County approve for Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) of Edmonton, Alberta to create the Smoky Lake Regional Governance Plan for the purpose of providing alternatives for governance models with the operating and capital financial implications of each model, along with an Implementation Plan to support the execution of the Regional Fire Services Business Plan, as per TSI’s proposal dated May 25, 2021 at a cost in the amount of \$44,659.00, funded by the 2020/21 – Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Intermunicipal Collaboration Grant”.

Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee – June 30, 2021: Motion

That the Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee acknowledge receipt of the following three proposals dated May 25, 2021 and three Memorandum of Agreements executed by the managing partner : Smoky Lake County, on June 4, 2021, with Transitional Solutions Inc. (TSI) of Edmonton, Alberta, for the purpose of conducting the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review, which is funded by the 2020/21 – Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) Intermunicipal Collaboration Grant; to undertaking the following :

- Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review which includes, but is not limited to, an assessment and evaluation of the following: Job Description Review Including Duties (Chief, Deputy and Volunteers, their Utilization and Chain of Command), Apparatus Needs, Water Supply, Fire Halls and Infrastructure, Training and Competency, Mutual Aid Agreements, Fire Prevention and Inspection Initiatives, Health and Safety, and Potential Staff Support;
- Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Governance Plan for the purpose of guiding the Region in making decisions to best meet the needs of the municipalities and develop a framework for effective fire service delivery in the County, the Town and the Villages, which including, but not limited to, an assessment and evaluation of the following: firefighter safety, cost control and containment, efficiency, effectiveness, and to identify the right-sized service and approach to meet the needs of the region over the next 10 years; and

- Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Master Plan for the purpose of providing alternatives for governance models with the operating and capital financial implications of each model, along with an Implementation Plan to support the execution of the Regional Fire Services Business Plan.”
- Smoky Lake County Administration and Fire Protective Services personnel met with Transitional Solutions Inc in June to implement the 3 phase project (Governance, Fire Service Operations and Master Plan) outlining the timeframe from Governance, Fire Service Operations and Master Plan.
- The first components for Phase 1 and 2 of the project involved interviewing all the fire chiefs, CAO's and Councils, completing surveys and compiling information on current operations, all legislative documents and financials for a timeframe of 3 years.
- Phase 2 Governance interim report was completed and sent to the Smoky Lake County on September 17, 2021.

County Council – September 24, 2021: Motion

That Smoky Lake County defer the interim report entitled “Smoky Lake County Governance Business & Implementation Plan” dated September 17, 2021, prepared by Transitional Solutions Inc. as Phase II part of the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review and forward to a Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee meeting, after the 2021 general election with an invitation extended to all 4 councils.”

- In consultation with various members it was agreed to release the interim report prepared on Phase II Governance and to hold a discussion with the current councils.
- Keven Lefebvre – Project Manager was contacted by Administration for availability and the Vice Chair – Craig Lukinuk called the meeting to be scheduled for October 4, 2021

Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee – October 4, 2021: Motion

That the Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee acknowledge receipt of the Interim Report – Smoky Lake County Governance Business & Implementation Plan dated September 17, 2021, prepared by Transitional Solutions Inc. as Phase II part of the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review; and that each respective municipality to review for comments and feedback to be compiled for the final revisions and defer to a future Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Meeting Committee at the call of the Chair.”

Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee – October 12, 2021: Motion

That Smoky Lake County forward the comments and/or feedback in respect to confirming actual expenses incurred by each municipality for the final revisions to the Interim Report – Smoky Lake County Governance Business & Implementation Plan, dated September 17, 2021, prepared by Transitional Solutions Inc., as Phase II part of the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review, to a future Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Meeting Committee as recommend by the said committee by their October 4, 2021, Motion #44-21.

- Smoky Lake County Fire Chief forwarded councils comments and feedback to project manager – Keven Lefebvre on October 28, 2021

Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee – December 9, 2021: Motion

That the Smoky Lake Region Fire and Rescue Committee acknowledge receipt of the Interim Report – Smoky Lake County Governance Business & Implementation Plan dated September 17, 2021, prepared by Transitional Solutions Inc. as Phase II part of the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review; and that each respective municipality to review for comments and feedback to be compiled for the final revisions and provide the comments and feedback to the Smoky Lake County Fire Chief by January 13, 2022

CURRENT:

Smoky Lake Fire Protective Services Committee – December 14, 2021 Motion

That Smoky Lake County approve to proceed with Model 1: Intermunicipal Agreement – Contract for Service as present by Transitional Solutions Interim Report – Smoky Lake County Governance Business & Implementation Plan dated September 17, 2021, as Phase II of the Smoky Lake Regional Fire Services Review.

Village of Vilna Council Meeting – December 16, 2021 Motion

That the Village of Vilna Council recommend to the Regional Fire and Rescue Committee that the “Intermunicipal Agreement Option” as presented by Transitional Solutions Inc. be their preferred option.

Village of Waskatenau Council Meeting – December 16, 2021 Motion

That Village of Waskatenau chooses Model 2: Intermunicipal Agreement – Regional Council from the Smoky Lake County Governance Business & Implemental Plan Interim Report as prepared by Transitional Solutions dated September 17, 2021; to include consultation with the Waskatenau Fire Department; a cost-effective funding formula and maintain Level of Service.

Town of Smoky Lake Council Meeting – January 10, 2022 Motion

That Town of Smoky Lake select Model 1: “Intermunicipal Agreement – Contract for Service” from the Smoky Lake County, Governance and Business & Implementations Plan prepared by Transitional Solutions Inc., dated September 17, 2021, with the stipulation that Model 1 be compared to the current collaborative model; and direct Administration to send a letter to Gene Sobolewski, CAO for Smoky Lake County and provide a copy to Smoky Lake County Council, Village of Vilna Council and CAO, Village of Waskatenau Council and CAO, Scott Franchuk,

Fire Chief for Smoky Lake County and Juanita Cozicar, Fire Chief for the Town of Smoky Lake providing an explanation for the decision.

Scott Franchuk - Fire Chief, Spencer Kotylak - Deputy Fire Chief, and Daniel Moric – Natural Gas Manager, virtually left the meeting, time 1:35 p.m.

6. Correspondence:

International Union of Operating Engineers, Local Union No. 955

County Council discussed the letter from Rod Sedrovic, Business Representative, International Union of Operating Engineers, Local Union No. 955, dated January 10, 2022, in respect to the Grader Posting Request under Executive Session.

8. Executive Session:

Personnel Issues: Public Works Vacant Positions

274-22: Gawalko That Smoky Lake County Council go into Executive Session, to discuss a Personnel Issue: in respect to Public Works Vacant Positions, under the authority of FOIP Act: Section 27: Privileged Information and Section 24: Advice from Officials, in the presence of all Council, Chief Administrative Officer, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Finance Manager, Public Works Manager, and Legislative Services Clerk, time 1:36 p.m.

Doug Ponich, Public Works Manager, virtually left the meeting, time 1:53 p.m.

Carried.

275-22: Serben That Smoky Lake County Council go out of Executive Session, time 2:14 p.m.

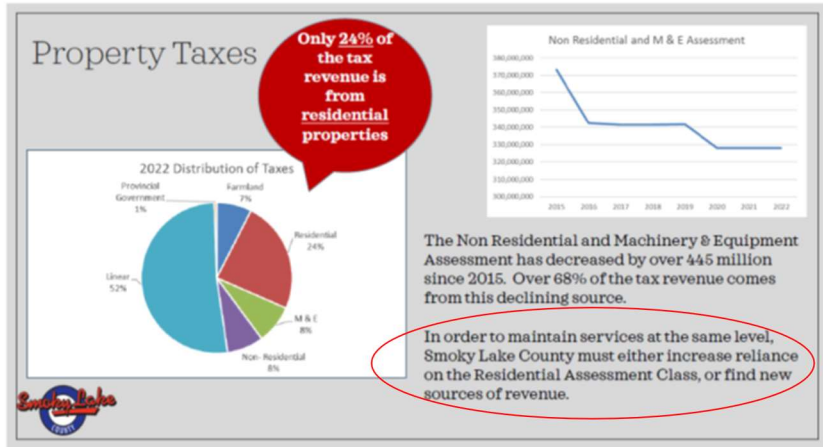
Carried.

5. Issues for Information:

Review of the Victoria District Economic Development Strategy Business Plan in respect to the Municipally Controlled Corporation (MCC)

Gene Sobolewski, Chief Administrative Officer and Michelle Wright, Smoky Lake Region's Community Economic Development Officer, provided information on the Victoria District Economic Development Strategy Business Plan in respect to the Municipally Controlled Corporation (MCC), including but not limited to the following slides:





From County Public Budget Presentation:

New Revenue Source

In the Strategic Plan for 2018 - 2020 Council identified the need to find new sources of revenue. This conversation led to the development of the **Victoria District Economic Development Plan**.

Through Economic Development, the County will:

- Arrest the declining population which will help maintain and expand core services
- Improve property values
- Reduce unemployment and underemployment
- Create career opportunities for youth
- Retain residents
- Retain, expand, and attract businesses
- Distribute wealth to equalize services, infrastructure and opportunities

The Victoria District Economic Development Corporation will improve the Counties financial outlook by:

- ✓ Providing dividend revenues
- ✓ Increased non residential assessment will be a result of new businesses . For example the assessment for Metis Crossing has increased from \$415,000 to \$5,115,270 over the past four years providing the County with over **\$150,000** in tax revenue

Profit Distribution (from Business Plan)

Corporate net profits are distributed annually:

- 40% paid as dividends to the Corporate partners: Town of Smoky Lake, Smoky Lake County and Métis Nation of Alberta.
- 25% to community fund for heritage and social projects.
- 25% reinvested for business loans.
- 10% retained as reserves.

The aim will be to make the Tourism Corporation cash neutral by 2024, be making profit, and paying a dividend to all shareholders from 2025 onwards.

Anticipated 10 -year returns of \$10MM distributed to Foundation shareholders (MCC and MNA).

- **These profits are *in addition* to any increased assessment collected by the Municipalities on the new/expanded developments.**

Current Projects:

At least 5 new developers in the Region with an investment value of \$20 -30 m, which includes a 400 capacity RV and Leisure Attraction, a Wellness Spa, glamping and cabins, and an Adventure Attraction featuring zip lines, Luge track, and tree nets.

These projects will be open for resident use as well as visitors.

By 2023, we would expect to be running a county-wide booking system for activities and accommodation bookings and the income will significantly increase.

These projects will include:

- Horse riding tours (Bellis Area)
- Farm Store expansions
- ATV and Snowmobile hire and Tours (Vina)
- E-bike and Bike Hire and Tours
- Fishing Tours
- Expand existing festivals
- A new winter or spring -based Country food Festival
- 2-3 other seasonal events
- Activities at Northern Lights Resort
- Further activities at Métis Crossing
- Activities at Waskatenau (new heritage and wildlife property by private developer)
- 10 Star Watching Pods at Métis Crossing
- Tourism Corporation opens its first hotels and B&B's
- Many more private operators running wildlife, cooking and cultural experiences

The projects commencing in 2024 will include:

- The Opening of the Smoky Ring
- The Opening of the Adventure Attraction near Smoky Lake
- Relaunch of Smoky Lake Museum (this could be 2025)
- Northern Lights RV Resort
- Northern Lights Family Adventure Centre to open
- More activities and accommodation at Métis Crossing
- Many more small operators running accommodation and tours
- 2-3 new seasonal county events

The business aims to grow the Smoky Lake tourism economy from \$7 -8 million to \$60+ million in ten years, creating 600 new jobs and increasing Regional population from 4200 to 4700 +. The Regional visitation targets for year 10 are 1200+ units of accommodation including hotel, bed and breakfast, self -catering, camping, premium RV and Lodges, and 125,000 travellers spending \$200 -\$300 per day and staying 3+ nights. In addition, the forecasts show the Region attracts 170,000 day trippers spending \$40-\$60 per day.

Supporting Activities: Training centre, internships, housing

Strategy Foundational Needs: Strong Development Culture

Open for Business and Ready for Investment

- Data Driven Decisions
- Outrage Moderation
- Managing Large Scale Development applications
- Walking our Talk

Municipally Controlled Corporation Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two municipal partners, Smoky Lake County and the Town of Smoky Lake, are to be joint partners in a municipally controlled corporation (MCC), contributing \$600K each through loans and share purchasing.

The MCC provides a corporate platform for the Town and County to be able to put money into the local tourist economy and provide a legal and financial buffer for the municipalities, from any operational or financial liabilities.

The MCC ensures economic diversification in the Region through lending to and investing in, the Smoky Lake Tourism Corporation. The MCC is not intended to be a profitable entity but a Regional economic diversification vehicle.

MCC Ownership

50% Town of Smoky Lake
50% Smoky Lake County

Governance

Board with two members each from Town and County.
Rolling Chair of MCC elected by Board Members.

Funding

\$10,000 share purchase by Town
\$10,000 share purchase by County
\$590,000 loaned from Town of Smoky Lake
\$590,000 loaned from Smoky Lake County

Operational Income

Dividends, interest and fees from investments in Smoky Lake Tourism Company.

MCC Activities

- Report MCC activities to Municipalities
- File SLTC Director Reports to SLTC Board
- Nominates Board members for the Smoky Lake Tourism Company (SLTC)*
- Channel municipally sourced grants, loans and investments to SLTC
- Pay loan payments from SLTC to Municipalities
- Minimize operating costs to Board meetings (1 per year), special meetings if required, legal and financial filing costs as required by Alberta Corporate regulations.

*Board members nominated to SLTC do not need to be MCC Board members; the MCC may nominate Directors to SLTC with the skills and experience to drive the activities of the SLTC

The MCC does not:

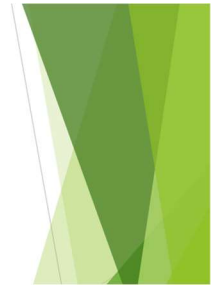
- Employ staff
- Rent offices
- Pay MCC Directors
- Invest or loan to other projects or companies
- Get involved in SLTC daily operations or report to Municipalities on SLTC activities except for loan repayments/status.

Working Group:

- Finalize MCC corporate documents
- Community Information Events/Communications - Strategy Update

Administration is working on RV Park Strategy and Land Use Bylaw updates to support the Strategy execution.

In parallel, there are several visitor economic development projects coming to the Councils in the next several months for consideration.



Michelle Wright, Smoky Lake Region's Community Economic Development Officer, virtually left the meeting, time 3:24 p.m.

7. Delegation:

No Delegation.

8. Executive Session:

Legal Issue:

North East Muni-Corr Ltd.

276-22: Gawalko

That Smoky Lake County Council go into Executive Session, to discuss a Legal Issue: in respect to North East Muni-Corr Ltd.'s Code of Conduct Policy, Memorandum of Association and Articles of Incorporation, under the Authority of the FOIP Act, Section 16: Third Party Business Interests, in the presence of all Council, Chief Administrative Officer, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Finance Manager, and Legislative Services Clerk, time 3:36 p.m.

Carried.

277-22: Gawalko

That Smoky Lake County Council go out of Executive Session, time 4:27 p.m.

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

278-22: Cere

That the Smoky Lake County Council Committee of the Whole for the purpose of Administration Meeting of Tuesday, January 18, 2022, be adjourned, time 4:27 p.m.

Carried.

REEVE

S E A L

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER