Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study Committee
Committee Meeting
May 28, 2024

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Debbie Rose	Eugene Dettling
	Judy Garner	Kelvin Hall
	Randy Ludwar	Eleanor Walker
	Marcel Olsthoorn	Rick Wilson
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Kea Adachi	Ian Bowen
EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT:	Electoral Area "D" Director Matt Taylor Alternate Director James D'Andrea	
OTHERS PRESENT:	Allan Neilson, Neilson Strategies Inc. Sherry Hurst, Leftside Partners Inc. Natasha Horsman, Horsman Strategies Simon Rasmussen, Senior Planning Analyst Patrick Thompson, Director, Governance Structure	
STAFF PRESENT;	Jim Zaffino, Chief Administrative Officer Danny Francisco, Senior Manager of Information Services Marc Aucoin, Coordinator, Legislative Services	

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Rick Wilson, Chair

A. INTRODUCTIONS

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Minutes for the Okanagan Falls Incorporation Study Committee Meeting of April 16, 2024 be adopted. – **CARRIED**

C. STUDY PURPOSE and PROCESS
The consultants reviewed with the Committee the purpose and process for the Incorporation Study.

D. LETTER FROM ROLLING HILLS WATER DISTRICT

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the letter dated May 27, 2024 from Rolling Hills Water District (attached) regarding their willingness to remain in the incorporation boundary be received and filed. **– CARRIED**

E. LOCAL ROADS SERVICE SHEET

The Local Roads Service Sheet was presented and reviewed by the committee with updated information received from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The consultants noted that there was a shortfall of approximately $2.275 million between the projected amount in Urban Systems' roads assessment and the Ministry's provided assessment. Consultants presented options to send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure seeking clarification and increasing the previously presented annual roads reserve contribution. Discussion included but was not limited to:

a. Question asked whether the Ministry's assessment includes works identified for completion in 2024.

i. The works identified to be completed in 2024 will go forward regardless of whether or not incorporation happens.

b. Question asked regarding the tax impact of increasing annual roads reserve contribution from $75,000 to $150,000.

i. On an average $500,000 assessed value property it would be an additional $41.67 annually.

c. Question asked regarding whether the highway through Okanagan Falls will remain the responsibility of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure if incorporation moves forward.

i. Yes, the highway will be the Ministry's responsibility regardless of incorporation.

d. Question asked whether the Roads Service Sheet should be endorsed now or after clarification is received from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

i. It would be best to wait for clarification and then have Chair Wilson call a brief meeting ahead of the public engagement phase to review the response and endorse the Roads Service Sheet.

MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Committee send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure seeking clarification of the discrepancies between their roads assessment and the one completed by Urban Systems. **– CARRIED**

F. TAX COMPARISON – RDOS and MUNICIPAL SCENARIOS

Consultants reviewed updated 2024 comparison figures for the two local government scenarios with the Committee.

G. PROVINCIAL OFFER OF ASSISTANCE

Simon Rasmussen, Senior Planning Analyst with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, presented the Provincial Offer of Assistance to Committee. It was noted that the formal letter from the Minister with the Offer is expected to be received shortly and will be distributed and posted online once it is received. Discussion included but was not limited to:

a. Question asked whether information in the Offer has been included in the proposed budget.

i. Yes, the information has been incorporated in the budget.

b. Question asked whether the dollar amounts in the Offer are over five or seven years and if any of the amounts are annual.

i. Different components of the offer are spread over different periods. Most of the dollar amounts are one-time, other than the Small Communities Grants (annual) and the five years of continued road maintenance.

c. Question asked whether the roads assessment includes storm drainage maintenance or upgrades.

i. This is a question that should be included in the letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

d. Question asked regarding whether residents will get credit for traffic fine revenue when policing costs increase.

i. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs will follow up and inform the Committee.

MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Committee endorse the Provincial Offer of Assistance as presented by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. **– CARRIED**

H. SEVEN-YEAR BUDGET

Consultants presented the Seven-Year Budget for a potential Okanagan Falls municipality and a series of sample property tax notices. Discussion included but was not limited to:

a. Question asked whether there are any users outside of the proposed incorporation area being served by sewer or water.

i. Water service provided to Provincial Park is the only user outside of service area.

b. Question asked regarding why the Sewer capital reserves were so low.

i. Recent and current upgrade work is exhausting current reserves. A future council may choose to raise rates in order to rebuild reserves. Future development cost charges would also feed into reserves.

c. Question regarding future development's impact on sewer and water infrastructure.

i. Development cost charges can be used for future upgrades, and any upgrades required specifically for a new development would be paid for by the developer.

MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Committee endorse the Seven-Year Budget for a potential Okanagan Falls municipality as presented by the consultants. **– CARRIED**

I. IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

Consultants presented the Implementation Overview document to Committee.

MOVED AND SECONDED
THAT the Committee endorse the Implementation Overview as presented by the consultants. **– CARRIED**

J. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Consultants presented the Engagement Phase of the study and upcoming engagement activities to the Committee. Discussion included but was not limited to:

a. A question was asked regarding the best way to find Committee volunteers to attend various engagement activities, including Music in the Park and Canada Day.

i. Consultants will circulate an email to the Committee with the proposed schedule, and noted that at least two members would be required to attend for a booth to be booked.

ii. Consultants also noted that all Committee members who volunteer to staff an information booth would meet with a consultant before hand in order to be prepared to speak to the public about the provided poster boards and information handouts.

K. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

Members of the Public that were in attendance in person and online were given the opportunity to identify themselves and indicate if they lived in the study area before asking questions. Questions and discussion included but were not limited to:

a. *Question asked about why Canada Day was chosen as one of the dates for an information booth.*
    i. *There are two events scheduled for July 1 in Okanagan Falls – a shorter one oriented for children and families and a longer one (Music in the Park) which is much longer. The Music in the Park event was selected as it provides more opportunity for community engagement.*
b. *Question asked regarding an approximately 7 km road distance discrepancy between the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's roads assessment and the one completed by Urban Systems.*
    i. *The Committee's letter to the Ministry will include a request for clarification about the discrepancy in the lengths of roads assessed.*
c. *Question asked whether or not there is a minimum number of voters required in a referendum to make the result valid.*
    i. *While there is no minimum number required, a low voter turnout would prompt questions from the Ministry regarding community engagement and the number of votes would be taken into account when making their decision whether or not to approve incorporation.*
d. *Question asked whether the final say on incorporation belongs to residents or government.*
    i. *The Ministry will make the final decision and is in place to act as a safeguard in the event of extreme situations (low voter turnout, etc.) but they will be guided by the local population.*
    ii. *B.C. is one of the only provinces in Canada that has committed to listening to local populations on incorporation.*

L. NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be scheduled for after the Engagement phase has concluded.

M. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and SECONDED
That the meeting adjourn at 7:50 pm. **-CARRIED**