

DISTRICT OF HUDSON'S HOPE
SPECIAL MEETING
HELD IN THE MAYOR'S CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2009 AT 9:00 A.M.

Present **Council:** Mayor Anderson, Councillors Webster, Summer and Johansson (Via Telephone)
 Staff: Becky Mercereau, Deputy Clerk
 Other: Via Teleconference: R. Sawchuk, J. Harris, L. McDonough, and E. Frish

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am with Mayor Anderson presiding.

Municipal Consultation - BC Energy Plan, Independent Farmers' Advocate and "Good Neighbour" Initiative

Representatives from the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources presented Council with the following information:

BC Energy Plan

- working to improve relationships among industry, local communities and landowners by clarifying and simplifying processes, enhancing dispute resolution methods, and offering more support and information; and
- implementing the good neighbour initiative and the independent farmers' advocate.

Independent Farmers' Advocate (IFA)

- would like to have the IFA in place by fall, 2009;
- the reason to have the IFA is because of the increase of oil and gas development in northeast BC on private lands;
- these landowners want a "level" playing field when dealing or negotiating with companies and have someone they know is available to help them through the process, this would be something similar to the program in Alberta;
- currently in the consultation stage and would like to hear comments from the municipalities;
- the proposed office for the IFA would be in Dawson Creek and the space would be rented from Community Futures; however, there are other options being considered;
- the funding for this program would be from Ministries and Government, not funded by industry;
- there are currently two landowner liaisons within the Oil and Gas Commission (OGC), but they have a wide range of roles including being inspectors;
- the IFA will be interacting with a variety of agencies and will be able to advise on mitigation and negotiation, which the OGC landowner liaisons are unable to do;
- revised landowner information packages are being completed that would include standard surface lease agreements and a companion guide;
- these landowner information packages would be received by landowners prior to tenure sales and a follow up information package would be sent after the sale was completed;
- a letter is sent to the landowner after the sale, but they may not know who the actual company is that has purchased the rights if that company is using a broker;
- some landowners may not know who the actual company is until development begins;
- when a company decides to start developing they should begin communication

- and consultation with the landowner; and
- the terms of reference for the position of the advocate are being worked on and the best person will be chosen through a competitive selection process.

“Good Neighbour” Initiative

- are developing industry-led best practices to be a “good neighbour” for oil and gas companies, particularly in the Montney Play region;
- as Talisman Energy has already implemented the “good neighbour” program, the Ministry is looking for a new brand for the project;
- the reason for this project is because of increased concerns raised by communities about the impacts of increased oil and gas activity, including the increase in unconventional gas extraction; and
- some concerns received from communities thus far in the consultation process is traffic and speed, dust control, garbage, impacts on local/municipal services, and social impacts.

Council had the following questions:

- having an office in Dawson Creek would cause people in Hudson's Hope to have to drive long distances to receive information; therefore, a virtual office may be a better option for more rural areas in the northeast;
- would like to ensure that funding is not provided by from industry for the IRA;
- questioned if the landowner liaisons within the Oil and Gas Commission would be performing the same roles as the IFA;
- what would the OGC and the IFA relationship be;
- what is the definition of independent for the IFA;
- at what stage will a landowner find out what company has purchased the subsurface rights;
- would like to see the landowner notifications completed at the same time as local governments and First Nations receive notification;
- when the local government receives notification and are requested to comment, they must go and solicit comments from the community and residents and it becomes the local governments responsibility to complete the notifications;
- with the “Good Neighbour Initiative”, companies should have to announce that they are a “new” neighbour if they purchase rights in a new area;
- requested the Ministry hold more open houses with experts to speak to issues specific to oil and gas development to help landowners get a better understanding of some of the issues;
- with the “good neighbour” program the landowners would most likely want to have face to face communication with company representatives; and
- will landowners get a say on who will be their advocate.

Council was requested to complete the Discussion Guide and Questionnaire on these topics and return to the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Certified Correct:

Clerk

Mayor