

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF MURRAY HARBOUR
MINUTES of SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

November 18, 2023

In Attendance: Mayor, Terry White; Deputy Mayor, Gary MacKay; Cllr. Pam Oickle;
Cllr. Marlene Chapman; Cllr. Kelly Matheson

Regrets: Cllr. Paul White, Cllr John Robertson

Staff: Anne Harnesk (CAO)

1. Call to Order:

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts declared.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Deputy Mayor MacKay and seconded by Cllr Oickle,
that the agenda for November 18, 2023 Special Council Meeting be accepted as submitted.

Vote was 4-0 in favour; motion carried.

4. New Business

a. Council support of motion to have a study done regarding amalgamating Murra Harbour/Murray River fire districts

Having several meetings with Robert Hughes, Trustee for Murray River to get the wording of a motion to approve the study of merging Murray Harbour and Murray River Fire Districts and the unincorporated areas in the fire districts discussion followed.

Moved by Deputy Mayor MacKay and seconded by Cllr Oickle,
Whereas the Rural Municipalities of Murray Harbour and Murray River are concerned about their ongoing viability as municipalities; interested in exploring the funding, economic development and tourism opportunities that that a larger municipality could bring to the area; and interested in studying the costs and benefits of incorporating the two communities and their two fire districts into one new sustainable municipality of approximately 3000 residents in the Southern Kings area.

Be it resolved that:

The Rural Municipality of Murray Harbour and the Rural Municipality of Murray River engage a consultant to study the costs and benefits of establishing a new sustainable municipality in the Southern Kings Area, which study will include:

- An assessment of the impact of the proposed restructuring on the existing incorporated and unincorporated areas, including proposed services and tax rates (both Provincial and Municipal) by area served, in accordance with the Principles, Standards and Criteria Regulations of the Municipal Government Act.
- A community engagement plan to ensure that all area residents and stakeholders have an opportunity to have input into the study.

- An assessment of the lost tourism and economic opportunities caused by the current lack of a coordinating body for the area.
And Be it Further resolved that an application be made to the Province to fund the study.

Vote was 4-0 in favour; motion carried.

- b. Close meeting as per section 119 (1) (g) of the *Municipal Government Act*
As per section 119 (1) (g) of the *Municipal Government Act*, "the conduct of an investigation under, or enforcement of, an Act or bylaw, the meeting will be closed to discuss the Independent Third-Party Investigators report findings and any sanctions that may be appropriate.

Council will reconvene in an open meeting at the end of the closed sessions which is expected to take up to 20 minutes.

Moved by Cllr Chapman and seconded by Cllr Matheson,
that the special Council meeting of November 18, 2023 be closed to discuss the results of the Third-Party investigators report.

Vote was 2-0 in favour; motion carried.

Discuss the Independent Third-Party Investigators Report

Councillors Matheson and Chapman discussed the appropriate sanctions to be placed upon Councillor Robertson for the breaches of the Rural Municipality of Murray Harbour Code of Conduct bylaw 112.

Reconvene the special Council meeting

Moved by Cllr Matheson and seconded by Cllr Chapman,
that the special Council meeting of November 18, 2023 be reopened.

Vote was 2-0 in favour; motion carried.

The following sanctions will be placed upon Councillor Robertson:

1. Suspension from Council for six-months to begin November 18, 2023 and end May 18, 2024.
2. Removal as Chair of the Maintenance of Infrastructure Committee, effective November 18, 2023.
3. A fine in the amount of \$500 to be paid by December 1, 2023, payable to the Rural Municipality of Murray Harbour.
4. A written apology to be delivered to the CAO by December 1, 2023 and must include the following:
 - a. I apologize to the Mayor, Councillors, Residents of Murray Harbour, and area, and the indigenous people for the offence my signs of September 29th and 30th, 2023 caused.
 - b. I acknowledge I was in breach of the Code of Conduct for a councillor of the Rural Municipality of Murray Harbour specifically:

Clause 8.1 – Member of Council are keepers of the public trust and must uphold the highest standards of ethical behaviour.

Clause 8.6 – Members of Council must demonstrated and promote the principals of the Code of Conduct through their decision, actions and behaviour. Their behaviour must build and inspire the public's trust and confidence in municipal government.

Clause 9.1(d) - *Members of Council are expected to perform their duties in office and arrange their private affairs in a manner that promotes public confidence and will bear close public scrutiny.*

Clause 9.1(g) - *Members of Council must avoid behaviour that could constitute an act of disorder or misbehaviour. Specifically, Council officials, staff and advisory body Members must avoid conduct that is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to discrimination, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, or the adverse treatment of others.*

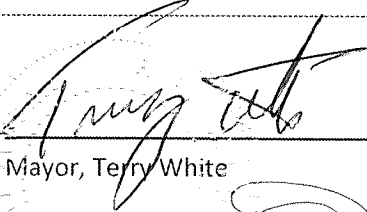

A letter with this information will be sent via registered mail to Councillor Robertson.

Moved by Cllr Chapman and seconded by Cllr Matheson,
that the above sanctions will be placed upon Councillor Robertson
Vote was 2-0 in favour; motion carried.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Cllr Oickle and seconded by Deputy Mayor MacKay to adjourn at 11:05 am.

The next regular meeting of the Council will be on January 10, 2024 at 7:00 pm in the Boardroom.


Mayor, Terry White
Arne Harnesk, CAO