

Water and Wastewater Bylaw Consolidation Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2024 – Alma Cultural Centre, 13 School Street, Alma, NB

Committee Members:

Chair – Deputy Mayor John Ereaux (Ward 1)
Member – Councillor Loretta Elderkin (Ward 2)
Ex-officio Member – Mayor Robert Rochon
Andrew Casey – Alma, NB
Katherine MacDonald – Alma, NB
Jim Campbell – Riverside-Albert, NB
Dana Butland – Riverside-Albert, NB
Robin Hickey – Seasonal resident Alma, NB
Matthew Knowlton – Hillsborough, NB
Barbara Morrissey – Hillsborough, NB (joined the committee after the inaugural meeting)

Consultants:

Pierre Plourde – Englobe Corp.
Laura Leger – Englobe Corp.

There were several members of the public in attendance.

Chair Ereaux called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Introductions:

As this was the first committee members, Chair Ereaux asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Purpose:

Chair Ereaux informed participants that this is an ad hoc committee of Fundy Albert Council tasked with providing advice and recommendations to the local government as it relates to the creation of a new, consolidated water and wastewater by-law for Fundy Albert. The goal will be to develop a by-law that is fit-for-purpose, including a new rate structure, or options. It is not in the committee's mandate to determine how much rate payers pay, or address issues with the various systems.

Conflict of Interest:

Chair Ereaux directed members to the provisions of the New Brunswick Local Governance Act that prohibits involvement by elected officials and members of committees in decision-making where they are in a real or perceived conflict of interest. As this committee won't be making decisions, this should not be a problem.

Review of the Water and Wastewater Systems:

Chair Ereaux informed committee members that the three municipal utilities are financed by the users of the systems, exclusively. There are three separate budgets for this purpose. There are currently three separate by-laws for these systems, which govern the rules concerning all aspects. All three by-laws are dated and are in need of updating. Chair Ereaux pointed to several examples in the Alma water by-law where the rate structure is problematic.

References:

Chair Ereaux pointed participants to the Alma, Riverside-Albert and Hillsborough water and wastewater by-laws and recommended their review. These are available on a Sharepoint location where the material can be accessed. There was some discussion around issues such as metering of water users, and the pros and cons of this approach. Councillor Elderkin mentioned that the purpose of tonight's meeting is not to get into specifics, but rather introduce the topic.

Chair Ereaux mentioned that several other examples of municipal by-laws are available on Sharepoint, including Victoria, PEI; Sussex, NB; and Moncton, NB.

Common Elements of a By-Law

Chair Ereaux touched very briefly on the typical elements of a by-law, including:

- Introduction
- Requirements to be connected to water and wastewater system
- Responsibilities of individuals connected to water system
- Control and use of water meters connected to the water system
- Supply of water to users of the water system
- Sanitary sewer collection system
- Objectives of the sanitary sewer collection system and treatment requirements to be connected to the sanitary sewer system
- Controls for the discharge of pollutants into the sanitary sewer system
- Water originating from a source other than the municipal water supply
- Authority of designated utility officers
- Water and wastewater rates and charges (Tariffs)
- Overdue accounts
- Penalties
- General Administrative

Chair Ereaux mentioned that he will prepare a table comparing the elements of the three current by-laws, with an opportunity to develop a consolidated approach, where possible. He

urged committee members to familiarize themselves with the elements of the current by-laws and do their own research to inform future discussions.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at the W.H. Steeves Museum, 40 Mill Street, Hillsborough on June 19, 2024 at 6:00pm. Mr. Plourde will present information on metering including the costs to purchase, install, and read the meters and the pros and cons of a meter-based billing system.

Follow-up:

- Ensure that all documents are available for review on the Sharepoint site
- Chair Ereaux to prepare by-law comparison table
- Mayor Rochon to provide Englobe a photo of a sample meter in Hillsborough
- Mr. Plourde to present at the June 19th meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

John Ereaux, Chair