**Village of South River**

**Minutes – Joint Council Meeting**

**Tuesday, May 12, 2015**

The meeting was held jointly on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 in the South River Council Chambers.

A quorum was present for the Village of South River. In attendance were Mayor Coleman, Councillors Smith, Sewell, Brandt and Mahon.

A quorum was present for the Township of Machar. Council in attendance were Mayor Carleton, Councillors McLaren, Flowers, Scarlett and Wood.

Present from the South River Machar Agricultural Society: President Suzanne Learn, Jim Stephenson, Shawna Mehaffey and Tina Flower.

Present from the Almaguin News: Kathryn Boyle. Myrna Hickingbottom, South River Resident, arrived at 7:00 p.m.

Staff present were Brenda Paul, Clerk-Administrator (Machar), Sherri Hawthorne, Treasurer (South River), Jamie Payne, South River Machar Arena Manager and Susan Arnold, Clerk Administrator (South River).

**1. Call to Order –** The meeting was called to order by Mayor Coleman at **6:30**pm. Mayor Coleman and Mayor Carleton shared the Chairs responsibilities.

**2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest –** None declared

149-2015 Mahon/Smith

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council of the Village of South River does hereby move Closed Session Item #4 ii) Financial Breakdown of Costs to Remove and Reinstall Ice to the Open Session agenda.**

Carried

**3. Deputations**  - Nil

**4. Financial Breakdown of Costs to Remove and Reinstall Ice**

As an introduction to the topic Councillor Sharon Smith opened the dialogue with a summary of decisions made by the arena committee and both councils during the last term. Sharon recalled how, at the beginning of the last term of council costs to operate the arena and community centre were increasing and arena rentals were declining. The difference between the costs (such as hydro, insurances, wages, water, maintenance, etc) and the revenue had to be added directly to the tax bills for the residents in the Township of Machar and the Village of South River. Three years ago there were serious discussions about closing the facility for several days each week to decrease costs. Another option suggested was keeping the ice in following the end of summer hockey camp. The removal and reinstallation of the ice has significant costs attached and many organizations had approached the arena manager asking to have the ice put in earlier. The goal of the arena committee was to increase revenue. During the second half of the last term of council ice rentals were increasing and in July of 2014 the Almaguin Spartans approached both councils with a proposal whereby the team would make the South River Machar Arena its home base. Negotiations took place quickly as the hockey season was fast approaching. With the Junior ‘A’ team’s arrival came other September ice rentals from local groups and beyond. Attendance at the games increased to 200-250 each Friday night home game which also brought in additional snack bar revenue and spin-off revenue at other local businesses.

However, Councillor Smith also noted the handling of communications between the councils and the South River Machar Agricultural Society last August could have been done much better. It was never the intention of either council to leave the Agricultural Society out of the loop and apologies have been extended several times to Suzanne and the agricultural society’s members. The South River Machar Agricultural Society has worked very hard and has long been a valued part of the community’s fabric.

Following last year’s fair the Agricultural Society expressed serious concerns about the moisture on the boards covering the ice. There were several events which worked against the staff in preparing for the fair: the extreme heat and humidity the week prior to the fair resulted in high condensation on the floor boards and the large heater ordered to dry the arena ice surface was delayed in its arrival. Last year was a learning curve and both staff and the committee were convinced it could do better in 2015.

Both Councils and municipal staff are committed to working with the Agricultural Society to make this fall fair a huge success. With this goal in mind one very exciting option has been introduced. The arena committee will rent for the fall fair weekend a large big top tent (60’ X 40’ or 60’ X 60’). This will provide

the atmosphere of a festival, protect venders if the weather is rainy, provide protection from the sun, the sides can be rolled up to allow venders in the tent to feel as though they are part of the fair and, on its own, could be a real attraction. The Agricultural Society would have the use of the upstairs room which is now accessible by a lift as well as the lobby of the arena and the surrounding grounds.

Councillor Smith concluded by saying all organizations in our communities are valuable and contribute to the quality of living in this area. Past mistakes have been acknowledged and lessons have been learned. Both councils are hopeful the past can be put away and positive steps can be taken to move forward with everyone working together to make this fall fair a really great one. The issue is about money not the contributions of the Agricultural Society or any of the other arena users.

Staff provided the joint council with audited numbers showing the cost of removing the ice in 2014 and then reinstalling the ice following the fair. They are as follows:

Bobcat to remove Ice $ 450.00

Ice Paint/Line Kit $ 500.00

Power for the Ice Plant $1500.00

Water for Ice Making $ 500.00

Labour (140 hours) $3800.00

$6750.00

Under the terms of the Municipal Agreement represents $4500 for South River Tax payers and $2250 for Machar Township tax payers.

In addition the ice would not be available to generate ice rental revenue for two weeks. In September 2014 the arena generated $8120.00 in ice rentals for the first three weeks. This is an additional cost of removing the ice. Groups which use the ice in September are not limited to the Almaguin Spartans but it also includes the Almaguin Minor Hockey, the Gazelle’s Ladies Hockey, the figuring skating club, North Bay Trappers Atom A, Bantam B and local rentals.

Contractually, the municipalities would be responsible for the cost of busing the Junior ‘A’ team and as well as the ice time in other rinks. Arenas in our area have no ice available. Sundridge is expecting to have ice September 26th, Burks Falls do not expect to install winter ice until October 1st. Powassan is set to have ice installed by September 12th. Trout Creek has scheduled ice installation for mid-October. North Bay has limited ice surfaces available with a high local demand. Therefore busing the team outside the immediate area would be necessary. The lost revenue and the transporting costs would be over and above the ice removal and reinstalling costs. This is an unnecessary expense for the local taxpayers when a much more cost effective option has been suggested.

Discussion by all members of the joint council took place. It was determined a smaller ad hoc committee would be formed to meet with the Agricultural Society. Two council represents from each municipality would attend as well as both mayors. When asked if the Agricultural Society would be willing to meet and send two of its members President Learn said she would have to take the request to her board which was meeting on May 21, 2015.

**5. Landfill Discussions**

Mayor Carleton asked if South River had a proposal prepared. Councillor Mahon advised that the South River wanted to open the topic for discussion to see if Machar Township had any interest in pursuing another agreement with the Village of South River.

Councillor McLaren advised that it cost Machar Township residents’ $165/household therefore it couldn’t make any agreements for less than that amount with South River. Councillor Scarlett commented that allowing South River residents to dump household garbage would shorten the life expectancy of the landfill site. Councillor Mahon suggested it wouldn’t be for household garbage. It would more likely be for larger items, brush, construction waste, etc. on a monthly or bi-monthly schedule. Machar Council agreed it would discuss the idea at future meetings.

7:09 Jim Stephenson and Suzanne Learn left the meeting.

**6. Future Animal Shelter Requirements**

A discussion took place regarding suggestions and ideas for future succession planning. Currently Machar Township and the Village of South River and several other municipalities have a contract with a private citizen to operate the municipal animal shelter. Clerk Administrator Susan Arnold was asked to contact the current animal shelter person to see what future plans she is considering. It was suggested this topic also be raised at a Central Almaguin Economic Development Association (CAEDA) to broaden the discussion.

**7. Joint Council Meetings**

Both Councils agreed it is necessary to meet from time to time to discuss budgets, capital projects and situations which cannot be resolved by committee. Councillor Wood suggested that there should be some criteria around the calling of a joint council meeting since both councils and its members have very full schedules. It was decided by both councils that a joint council meeting could be at the call of either council and with a maximum of 30 days for a date to be set.

**8. Earlier Budget Process**

Clerk Administrator Brenda Paul asked if the Village could provide the audited numbers for the shared services earlier than they have been traditionally received. Machar Township’s audit occurs in February and South River’s audit take place mid-March by two separate auditing companies. The Village has, in the past tried to move its audit closer to the first of March but can’t move it into February because many of the figures necessary for the closing entries for the shared services are not yet available to the Village. Treasurer Sherri Hawthorne cited Hydro One as a good example. Due to the billing cycle the Hydro One invoice for the last month of the year doesn’t usually arrive until mid-February. Both councils understood each municipality had its own challenges around year-end and South River has agreed to ask its auditor if the draft final figures for the shared services could be provided earlier in 2016.

**9. Municipal Shared Payments**

The Village of South River is requesting that the quarterly municipal payments be made monthly. As Treasurer Sherri Hawthorne explained the bills are monthly, the wages are bi-weekly and the Village is finding it difficult to budget cash flow when so much is being paid out monthly for the shared services and reimbursement for those expenses coming only four times a year. The Village does not have the luxury of asking Hydro or the Union Gas to wait to be paid without interest being charged to the account. The other option Treasurer Hawthorne suggested is having separate bank accounts for each shared service and when there is a deficit in the account the overdraft interest is shared. Clerk Administrator Paul commented that in 2014 Machar Township had changed the timing of the quarterly payments in order to help relieve the burden of carrying these shared expenses. Machar Township has promised to discuss monthly payments to see how it would affect its budget.

**10. Day Camp Fees**

Mayor Linda Carleton asked if the arena committee would review the day camp participation numbers at the end of the summer to see if the number of campers were down due to the change in pricing. Previously the Day Camp fee structure was based on one amount for Machar/South River residents, another higher rate for non-residents, another rate for the social services sponsored campers and another rate for a session. The weekly rate dropped to $115.00/week/camper for everyone for 2015.. Councillor Doug Sewell commented that non-residents had become very creative in finding ways to have the resident rate apply and the municipal staff could no longer research and police where children were staying during the summer. The monthly session fee provided a small discount for purchasing the full session but it was noted that often campers did not attend a fourth week of camp even though they had registered but administration would have to turn away some campers because it appeared, on paper, the camp was at capacity. By having campers not attend the fourth week it meant the camp program was losing money. Therefore it was decided one rate per week would be a better solution. Councillor Scarlett agreed that even by paying the four weeks at $115 it is inexpensive child care. It works out to less than $20 per day per child and Councillor Scarlett said he pays much more than that at a licensed day care centre. The councils agreed a review would be conducted at the end of the summer.

7:51 p.m. The remaining members of the Agricultural Society and Kathryn Boyle left the meeting.

**11. In Camera - One Item: Legal Opinion and advice received from the Village of South River’s municipal solicitor regarding the Village of South River/Machar Agricultural Society 1947 Agreement.**

150-2015 Sewell/Mahon

**BE IT RESOLVED that this meeting of the Village of South River Council be closed under Subsection 239.2 (f) and that this Council proceed in Camera at 7:52 p.m. for the purpose of receiving of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.**

151-2015 Mahon/Sewell

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council adjourn the Closed meeting and reconvene in Open Session at 8:30 with Mayor Jim Coleman as Chair.**

Clerk Administrator Susan Arnold was directed to contact the South River Machar Agricultural Society president and forward the dates of May 27th and June 4th to the Society as possible dates for the ad hoc committee to meet.

Arena Manager Jamie Payne asked both councils to consider allowing him to move forward on the lighting upgrade which could provide additional cost reductions in the hydro billings. Ice was out until the middle of June and a short turn -around time was needed to invite tenders from suppliers for the light fixtures with the fixtures being installed in-house.

152-2015 Brandt/Sewell

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council of the Village of South River does hereby support motion #26-15 as contained in Arena minutes of May 6th, 2015 with costs from within recommended arena budget.**

Carried

153-2015 Sewell/Brandt

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Village of South River does hereby read a first, second and third time and finally pass By-law #19-2015 being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of Council at its meeting held on the 12th day of May, 2015 with the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk Administrator and the corporate seal affixed.**

Carried

154-2015 Sewell/Brandt

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council of the Township of Machar does hereby adjourn to meet again as the Village of South River on Monday, May 25, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the South River Council Chambers located at 63 Marie Street, South River, or at the call of the Mayor. Time of Adjournment: 9:00 p.m.**

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Jim Coleman, Mayor

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Susan L. Arnold, Clerk Administrator