

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF MORRIS

The Council of the Rural Municipality of Morris held its regular meeting on Wednesday, November 14, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. in the R. M. of Morris Council Chambers.

Reeve Herm Martens presided.

Council Members present were: Ralph Groening, Barry Fraese, Denis Robert, Sieg Neumann, Leo Kornelsen.

At the start of the meeting, all member of Council present took their necessary Declaration of Office and Declaration of Qualification for their position as a member of the Council of the R. M. of Morris.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Pastor Gavin van der Linde gave a brief dedication prayer.

Agenda

Moved by Ralph Groening, Seconded by Barry Fraese:

#210/01. Resolved that the agenda for November 14, 2001 regular meeting be now approved as it is now amended or as may be amended.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Committee  
Appoint.

Moved by Sieg Neumann, Seconded by Denis Robert:

#211/01. Resolved that the Committee appointments for the period until the 2002 Organization Meeting in November, 2002 be now made as follows:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chairman</u>	<u>Member</u>
Deputy-Reeve		Ralph Groening
Road Committee	Sieg Neumann	Stan Siemens Barry Fraese
Water & Soil Management	Ralph Groening	Leo Kornelsen Denis Robert
Finance Committee	Sieg Neumann	Ralph Groening
Equipment Committee	Stan Siemens	Denis Robert
Protection Committee	Leo Kornelsen	Stan Siemens Barry Fraese
Employee Relations	Barry Fraese	Ralph Groening Leo Kornelsen
Building Maintenance	Denis Robert	Sieg Neumann
Welfare Committee		Herm Martens Ralph Groening
Private Dyke Committee	Stan Siemens	Denis Robert Leo Kornelsen
Water Works Committee	Ralph Groening	Stan Siemens Barry Fraese

Carried For 6  
Against 0

Organizat.  
Appoint.

Moved by Leo Kornelsen, Seconded by Barry Fraese:

#212/01. Resolved that the following members be appointed to the various organizations for the period until the 2002 Organization Meeting, as follows:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>
E.M.O. Control Committee	Herm Martens Ralph Groening
Southern Health Unit Board	Barry Fraese
Rosenort Community Centre District	Leo Kornelsen
Low Farm Community Centre District	Ralph Groening
Kane Community Centre District	Ralph Groening

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Joint Morris Community Centre District	Stan Siemens Denis Robert Byron Edel
Joint Sperling Community Centre District	Barry Fraese Bill Tjaden
Ste. Agathe Community Centre District	Denis Robert Scott Parker
Aubigny Community Centre District	Denis Robert
Pembina Valley Development Corp.	Herm Martens
Alternate-	Ralph Groening
Pembina Valley Water Co-op	Herm Martens
Alternate-	Ralph Groening
Lower Red River Valley Water Commission	Herm Martens
Alternate-	Ralph Groening
Morris Manor Governing Board	Sieg Neumann
Morris Soil & Water Conservation Dist.	Barry Fraese
International Coalition	Herm Martens
Alternate -	Ralph Groening
Triple "R" Development Corp.	Herm Martens
Alternate -	Ralph Groening
Morris Montcalm Weed Control Dist.	Leo Kornelsen Denis Robert
RM/Town Joint Landfill Committee	Barry Fraese Denis Robert Leo Kornelsen
Valley Regional Library Board	Ralph Groening
Valley Agricultural Society	Ralph Groening
Livestock Review Committee	Sieg Neumann Stan Siemens Ralph Groening
Red River Valley Health Dist. Foundation	Barry Fraese
Morris Area Recreation Commission	Ralph Groening
Morris Ambulance	Barry Fraese
Red River Coalition	Herm Martens
Community Dyke Committees - Lowe Farm	Ralph Groening
- Aubigny	Denis Robert
- Riverside	Leo Kornelsen
- Rosenort	Barry Fraese
L.U.D. of Rosenort	Ralph Groening
North West Water Management Assoc.	Ralph Groening
Alternate -	Herm Martens
Joint Ventures Initiatives	Sieg Neumann Herm Martens Ralph Groening

And That the Reeve is to be ex-officio representative on all Community Dyke Committees.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Signing  
Authority

Moved by Sieg Neumann, Seconded by Denis Robert:  
#213/01. Resolved that the Reeve and Municipal Administrator shall be the signing authority for the Rural Municipality of Morris and that the Deputy-Reeve shall also have signing authority in the absence of the Reeve and also that Shannon Hesford have signing authority in the absence of the Municipal Administrator.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Board of  
Revision

Moved by Sieg Neumann, Seconded by Denis Robert:  
#214/01. Resolved that the Council of the R. M. of Morris be hereby now appointed as the Board of Revision for the R. M. of Morris with Reeve Herm Martens as Chairman and Grant Macaulay appointed as recording secretary.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Prior to the start of the Board of Revision, all persons present who would be making presentations before the Board were sworn in or affirmed. Those persons included Hugh Lumgair and Harvey Friesen of the Municipal Assessment Branch. Also present were Arthur Dueck, Mary Sawatzky, Cornie Fehr, Byron Edel, Laurie Edel, Bob Bunkowsky, Heather Bunkowsky, Elaine Edel, Florida Carpenter and Merl Friesen.

Delegation  
F. Carpenter

Mrs. Florida Carpenter spoke to the Board that the taxes on her property were too high. Most of the buildings have either been taken down or soon will be taken down. There is no longer a business on this property and requests that the commercial classification be removed.  
The Assessor indicated that currently the property is classed as commercial and they recommended that it be changed to residential. They also recommended that the building assessment be reduced from \$1,200. to \$500..

Delegation  
M. Sawatzky

Ms. Mary Sawatzky stated that she had removed a trailer from her property and put a house on it. The house is only 100 sq. ft. more than the trailer, however the added taxes were considerable to the property. She feels that this added amount is too high for a house that was originally built in about 1960. The Assessor indicated that the property was inspected in the summer and is about 1,020 sq. ft. in size. The trailer that was on the property was a 1978 model and mobile homes are assessed at a much lower calculation than houses.

Delegation  
E. Edel

Mrs. Elaine Edel spoke on their appeal. She indicated that their land has been repeatedly flooded recently. They have farmed this property for many years but have been flooded 4 of the last 6 years. This year there was spring Red River flooding and also heavy rains in the summer again flooded their lands. The water takes longer to leave their land because of their location. With the floods, the road access to their house has been closed many times in recent years. The assessment should be lower because of the flooding and poor drainage.

The Assessor stated that the land is assessed at about \$800. per acre and recent sales in the area were at \$870. - \$900. per acre. From area sales, it would appear that the assessment of \$800. per acre is not too high.

Mrs. Edel noted that these other land sales were in areas that did not have the same drainage issues and likely were higher land that has better drainage. They must wait for a longer period of time before they can get onto the land.

Mrs. Elaine Edel

The waters cannot get back through PTH 75 quickly and the water is very slow leaving their land getting back to the river.

Councillor Neumann stated that it is natural drains that travel through their property.

The Assessor indicated that for these natural drains, the property is assessed at \$40. per acre and there is about 5 acres allowed for certain properties.

When land is divided by a drainage ditch, that is also taken into consideration when assessing the entire parcel.

Councillor Robert questioned why the natural drains were assessed at all as they are basically worthless land for any farmer.

Delegation  
C. Fehr

Mr. Cornie Fehr, representing the Lowe Farm Housing Corp., told the Board that they are not able to obtain enough rental money to pay expenses. In 2000, they had 5 empty suites and they can barely meet expenses with 2 empty suites. they continue to have vacancies in their building. The Province has allowed them to rent units to others than seniors. However, with that they still have vacancies and they do not have a waiting list and most of their current tenants are over 80 years old. The Provincial MHRC dictates the rental amounts and with the increase in assessment, it only adds to their situation of not being able to meet expenses.

The Assessor stated that the average increase in the municipality was 15.9% and this increase is at 3.5%. They have used a valuation on the income approach and the Housing Corp. has supplied this income information. They have given a vacancy allowance of 23% for this building.

It was also mentioned that this building is very old fashioned and old styled. Should municipal dollar requirements remain similar as 2001, then it is likely that their taxes would decrease.

Mr. Fehr indicated that with the rent that they are allowed and the subsidy from MHRC their average rental is much below the amount of \$425. per month used by the assessment branch.

Delegation  
A. Dueck

Mr. Arthur Dueck, of the Rosenort Housing Corp., advised the Board that their properties have had huge increases in assessment. When they built the buildings, they did very careful budgeting. Some renters cannot pay more. The Assessor stated for the Health Centre and the Apartments (new area), the prior assessment was for apartments only and did not include the health centre. In their calculations, the equity payment is calculated into the rental amounts. The Health Centre is assessed at \$530,900. and the Apartments are at \$634,800. The Health Centre assessment omitted in error on the prior assessment, but is now included and is classified as institutional.

Mr. Dueck indicated that their building is also having an occupancy problem in that they have a number of vacancies in their building as well. He also noted that the Health Centre should be considered as a community service. The Assessor stated that they use a percentage rate of 7% based on cost figures to calculate an amount for rent calculations.

Mr. Dueck mentioned that the Heritage Centre there was no money up front and the tenants pay the full rate. There are 12 permanent suites and only 5 are occupied. They do allow a life-lease arrangement, if required. The rentals are \$634.00 per month plus equity and each suite is approximately 600 sq. ft. in size.

Mr. Harvey Friesen indicated that the Assessment Branch is recommending an assessment change to \$686,600. for the Rosewood Apts.

Mr. Dueck noted that the apartments are depreciating and should be factored in and the assessment should be lowered.

Delegation  
B. Bunkowski

Mr. Bob Bunkowski stated that for his house and garage, there were changes to his house that happened because of the 1997 flood. They were forced to relocate their house and build a new basement. These were forced alterations and now have an assessment increase because of these forced alterations. The building is not totally completed and the assessors have no knowledge of conditions during a flood that people have to endure.

The Assessor indicated that he did not believe that the house was under appeal.

Mr. Bunkowski stated that he has considerable land that has the Morris River going through it. More water is being put into the river and every year they must do cleanup of their property. With this adverse impacts on their land, having increased assessments are not justified. There is also the issue of water from the west and the difficulties of drainage of their land because of this excess water. He also questioned the property values of sales based on foreign investors purchases. These purchases should not be considered in their land valuations.

The Assessor listed their various parcels and that the assessment ranged from \$600. per acre to approximately \$750. per acre. Recent land sales in the area have been for generally over \$800. per acre. He indicated that not all sales are foreign owner sales and not all foreign sales are used in calculations.

Mr. Bunkowski questioned on farm houses, how does one get market value when it is part of a farm sale. He was told that the assessors take the land value away from the total sale and the net difference is for the buildings.

Delegation  
B. Edel

Mr. Byron Edel told the Board that a 23% increase in land value is unreasonable. Their area is flooded frequently and these flood waters get trapped between the roads and the railways. Because of their low elevation, and drains from the water, the water gets to their area quicker and cannot get into the Red River. Every time that they have flooding, there is much cleanup to do and the road to their residence is closed many times for long periods of time and they have been flooded 4 of the past 6 years.

The assessor indicated that this land is \$800. to \$825.00 per acre.

Mrs. Laurie Edel stated that the land sales used by the assessors were for land that is higher land and better locations. Their land is located in a wedge area stuck between the Railway and the Highway. She also indicated that the area allowed for natural drains through their lands is not enough, because every time that it rains these drains grow significantly and the area flooded and drowned out is much greater.

Delegation  
L. Hamblin

Mr. Lorne Hamblin told the Board that he has moved the buildings from the property in question and the recent assessment for the property still shows them as being on the property. The quonset was moved to another site and he has only an old barn on this site.

The Assessor acknowledged that this quonset had been removed and should be removed from the assessment for this property.

The Board of Revision then recessed for lunch at 12:40 p.m. and reconvened at approximately 1:40 p.m.

When discussing Appeal #2, from Mr. Ed Bergstresser, Councillor Sieg Neumann informed Council that he could be in a conflict situation with this property and he removed himself from any discussion or decision making regarding this appeal.

Board  
Adopts  
Amendments

Moved by Sieg Neumann, Seconded by Denis Robert:  
#215/01. Resolved that the Board of Revision of the R. M. of Morris hereby now adopts the appeal decision now made and as indicated on Appendix "A" to these minutes.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Board  
Become  
Council

Moved by Ralph Groening, Seconded by Leo Kornelsen:  
#216/01. Resolved that the Board of Revision of the R. M. of Morris be now adjourned and resumes as the Council of the R. M. of Morris.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Council  
Accepts  
Board  
Amendments

Moved by Leo Kornelsen, Seconded by Barry Fraese:  
#217/01. Whereas the Board of Revision for the R. M. of Morris has made decisions relating to the assessment appeals made to the Board;  
Therefore Be It Resolved that the Council of the R. M. of Morris hereby accepts these decisions and that all of this changes be made to the 2002 Assessment Roll and that they be noted as Appendix "A" to these minutes.

Carried. For 6  
Against 0

Moved by Councillor Denis Robert:  
That this regular meeting be now adjourned at 4:30 p.m. with Council agreeing to meet again on Thursday, November 15, 2001 to continue the remainder of the agenda of the November 14, 2001 regular meeting.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Reeve

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Municipal Administrator