



Fieldnotes



Palliser Regional Municipal Services

Fall 2010

OYEN – LYALTA RAIL DISCONTINUANCE RECOVERY PROJECT - MEETINGS BETWEEN THE MUNICIPALITIES AND CN SEPTEMBER 30th



A meeting was held on Monday September 13, 2010 at the Palliser Regional Municipal Services Board Room in Hanna to discuss the current situation with the Oyen-Lyalta railway recovery project.

At that meeting there was discussion regarding the results of the negotiation efforts of the Rail Com-

pany Board of Directors. Unfortunately, the Railway Board of Directors was unsuccessful in obtaining agreement with CN for the retention of railway operations in the region.

The Government interest stage is currently in effect whereby the Province receives 30 days to express interest in acquiring the line and if no interest is expressed, the municipalities will be given a further 30 day time frame for expressions of interest. The Provincial time frame expired on Thursday September 16, 2010. The

Province, through the Department of Transportation provided a letter to CN that they have no interest in retaining the rail for transportation purposes. The municipalities will have until Monday October 18, 2010 to express interest in retaining the rail assets otherwise CN may begin removal of all rail infrastructure from our region.

Municipal representatives met with CN on September 30th at the PRMS office to discuss options for the retention of the rail infrastructure.

Special Points of Interest from September 30th meeting:

CN provided a presentation regarding price and negotiation options

An extension to the municipal government interest stage is being sought (currently EOI is required by October 18th, municipal elections will make it difficult to get the necessary commitment)

A detailed listing of track materials and associated value in each municipality is being sought

Looking for a commitment from CN to leave negotiations open until December 18th to provide the necessary time for new councils to consider the options

Some hot air about wind energy

Palliser Regional Municipal Services received a request from the M.D. of Provost to research and provide information for planning document amendments relating to wind energy development due to the recent interest in Wind Energy development in the M.D.

PRMS staff met with the M.D. of Pincher Creek to determine the best practices in Wind Energy developments due to the long term experi-

ence with wind energy projects in south west Alberta. Wind energy technology has changed significantly over the past 15 years. The towers are much larger and produce much more electricity than in the past. The initial projects 15 years ago included towers that produce 360 kilowatt hours (kwh). More recently, 45m towers produce 660 kilowatt hours and the minimum production from a single tower is now 1.8 megawatt hours (mwh) and can be as

high as 3.0mwh with an 80m hub height and 90m rotor diameter.

A summary report along with draft Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan amendments have been provided including information regarding potential land use conflicts related to wind energy projects such as noise, safety, shadow flicker and viewshed protection. Thorough research was completed regarding the jurisdictional authority of the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) and the powers that municipalities have for wind energy approvals.



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Municipal Sustainability Plans in Action



MSP's have been completed for all six communities involved in the Beiseker Region Project under the AUMA Pilot Project. Communities involved were as follows; Village of Beiseker, Village of Acme, Village of Carbon, Town of Irricana, Village of Linden, Town of Drumheller. With the completion of

individual MSP's Paliser held a regional workshop to gather information to develop a Regional Sustainability Partnership Plan.

The Regional Sustainability Partnership Plan - Vision:
"Regional Sharing of Information"

The plan consists of a diverse group of unique and independent communities

working together to provide an extraordinary place to reside, work, play and grow in a safe and healthy environment, while enhancing economic development, leading to prosperity and sustainability for all. The majority of the municipalities struggle with declining volunteerism and social engagement.

Individual Community Actions

The need for more diverse housing options

Promoting of community events

Marketing of current available services

Clean up of unsightly/derelict buildings

Updating of current planning documents

Increase communication with public

Implementation

"The whole process was about getting people to talk about what we are, what we can be, and what opportunities are out there." Paul Salvatore, Director of Community Services, Town of Drumheller.

To date there have been community engagement sessions in each of the communities that have brought residents together to share their vision and dreams for their community.

As a result of these meetings and

open houses, actions were formed and each community will now work towards implementation of their Municipal Sustainability Plan.

A celebration and implementation workshop was held by AUMA in Edmonton.

Useful tools were introduced to help communities look at ways to engage citizens in meaningful ways in the hopes of getting them to reconnect to their community.



SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS BY MUNICIPALITY

Municipality	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
M.D. Acadia				3	4	3	1	
Acme						1		
Beiseker	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	
Carbon						1		
Castor		2		1	2	3		
Cereal								
Consort			1	1		1		
Coronation					3	1	3	
Delia					1			
Drumheller	10	1	12	3	11	6	6	5
Empress				1		3		
Hanna	1	1	3	3	4	3	3	1
Halkirk		1		1		1	1	1
Hussar	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1		1
Linden	3		2	3	2		3	1
Morrin	1				1			1
Munson				2		1		
Oyen		1			1			
Paintearth	5	3	7	6	5	9	6	3
Rockyford	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Special Areas	12	12	8	21	19	16	11	6
Standard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		1
Starland	6	7	9	12	15	7	3	4
Trochu	1	2	2	2		3		
Veteran		1			1			
Youngstown								
Gadsby**			1	1	1	3		
M.D. Provost**	6	10	8	14	12	19	11	4
TOTALS	45	41	54	74	82	83	48	28

* All totals are to October 1 for comparison purposes ** Non member municipality

Subdivision (In)-Activity

Earlier in the spring it appeared as if the subdivision activity would be on par with an average year of applications, albeit down from the boom years of 2006 through 2008.

The 2010 subdivision totals at April 30th showed promise that the applications would be up from last year, as the numbers for this year

were at 16 in comparison to 12 submissions from January to April 30, 2009.

As the year progressed into the summer months, the number of subdivisions dropped off considerably, even though there were numerous enquiries from potential applicants about the subdivision process and the required timelines.

If this apparent trend continues it will put this year's activity at a 10 year low, for in the early 2000's the average number of subdivisions submitted by this time of year was between 40 to 50 applications.



NEW GIS EMPLOYEE JOINS PRMS STAFF

Justin Hill is excited about the opportunity to take over the role of GIS Coordinator for Palliser Regional Municipal Services. Justin is a graduate from the University of Lethbridge, where he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Sciences. After completion of university, Justin spent the last 4 years working with Agriculture Canada as part of their GIS team.

When Justin is not working, he can often be found someplace underwater, as he is an avid scuba diver and scuba diving instructor. He also participates actively in free diving, which is simply scuba diving without the use of air tanks. As part of this sport, Justin has developed the unique ability to hold his breath for 5 minutes. Justin also enjoys rock climbing, hiking, fishing, and spending time with his family.

Justin along with his wife Jada and their 3 children Jaala, Jayden and Joryn are excited to live in Hanna, and look forward to participating in the community.



Welcome to PRMS Justin!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

November 4th, 2010

4pm in the Palliser Boardroom

Followed by supper & networking



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