

Minutes
North Zone, District 2
Meeting
Veterans Memorial Highway Association
Held Monday, April 22nd, 2013
Radisson Hotel and Suites
Vista Room
435 Gregoire Drive
Fort McMurray, Alberta

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 A.M. by Vice-Chairman Elroy Yakemchuk.

In Attendance:	Elroy Yakemchuk	County of Two Hills
	Ben Elfring	M. D. of Taber
	Robert Richard	Lac La Biche County
	Molly Douglass	County of Newell
	Arnold Hanson	Beaver County
	George Jamieson	County of Minburn
	David Blair	Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
	Jane Stroud	Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
	Melissa Blake	Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
	Michael Yakielashek	Secretary-Treasurer VMHA

Agenda: Moved By: Ben Elfring
That the agenda be adopted as presented.

Carried Unanimously:

Association

Business: Elroy Yakemchuk started the meeting by providing information to the representatives from Wood Buffalo of the issues and projects which the Association have been working on. This included the meeting with the Minister of Transportation and subsequent follow up from the Department.

Highway 881

Discussions took place regarding the poor maintenance on Secondary Highway 881. This winter had the highway closed on a number of occasions which resulted in buses loaded with workers sitting and waiting for the highway to open, transport trucks not being able to deliver their products and trucks not being able to make it up the hills due to ice. Some trucks sat for days before they were able to complete their run to Fort McMurray and beyond. The cost to industry in downtime is a major problem as well as businesses in the area which depend on reliable freight delivery.

Ms. Stroud stated that maintenance on the highway has been very poor at best. Mayor Blake stated that there appears to be no supervision or monitoring of the contractor by Alberta Transportation. Lack of materials such as sand/salt was stated as a problem. The communication between Wood Buffalo and Alberta Transportation to discuss the problems is not resulting in any improvement. The highway does not have any truck pull outs or passing lanes to help with traffic flow. An advisory group has been set up which includes industry, residents, Wood Buffalo and Alberta Transportation but to this point has had little impact.

The Association is willing to try and assist Wood Buffalo by requesting a Meeting with Regional Alberta Transportation staff, the Minister, Wood Buffalo and industry to see if changes can be initiated which would benefit all parties concerned.

Maintenance: Can we see the maintenance contract in order to know what services are to be provided, what triggers response from the Contractor to start snow cleaning and sanding. Is there a need for the placement of sand/salt storage sheds at strategic locations along the highway which would provide easy access for the contractor. Does Alberta Transportation have the authority to order the contractor to commence maintenance when deemed necessary or does the contractor have the final say when snow events occur?

Lobby: Organize a meeting with the Minister of Transportation to discuss the issues with Highway 881.

North Zone District 2 Meeting

Page – 3 -

Highway 881 to 36 Mayor Blake indicated that Wood Buffalo does not see a clear advantage to having Highway 881 renumbered to 36. Councillor Stroud also commented that additional costs would be incurred for address sign changes for the municipality.

Robert Richard felt that by renumbering the highway it would provide an all inclusive high load corridor from the Alberta/US border to Fort McMurray. Transport trucks would take advantage of using the same numbered highway continuously over the 900 kilometres.

Membership: Mayor Blake indicated that Wood Buffalo is in the process of reviewing the membership to VMHA. Due to membership costs they may not be committed for the long term.

Follow Up: The Association will contact Wood Buffalo in the next few months to further for the items discussed today.

Adjournment: Moved By: Robert Richard
That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried Unanimously:

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 A.M.

Secretary - Treasurer