

# TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

## Economic Development Advisory Committee

### AGENDA - November 6, 2017 - 11:30 a.m.

#### MEETING -Committee Room - Civic Centre

Page

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Non-agenda Committee items which because of urgency cannot be deferred to a subsequent meeting, identified to be considered later in the meeting.**
3. **Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof**
4. **Approval of Previous Advisory Committee Minutes**
  - 4.1 October 2nd, 2017 Meeting Minutes. 2 - 3
5. **New Business**
  - 5.1 Tbaytel Fibre Announcement (members will adjourn at 11:50 a.m. to Council Chambers for the Tbaytel announcement and then return to the meeting immediately thereafter). 4 - 5
  - 5.2 Report on the Biomass 2017 Conference and RRFDC Wood Related Activities. 6 - 9
6. **Standing Items**
  - 6.1 J. Cumming - Urban Trees. (refer to materials previously provided by J. Cumming at the October 17th meeting.)
  - 6.2 Implication of Ontario Raising Minimum Wage to \$15.00 per hour (Bill 148) - this matter continues to be monitored. 10 - 12
  - 6.3 Industrial Park Sales Guide and Prices. (materials to be presented at the December 4th EDAC meeting).
  - 6.4 Residential Revitalization Grant Program (materials to be presented at the December 4th EDAC meeting).
  - 6.5 Rainy Lake Market Square.
  - 6.6 Lack of Residential Rentals Analysis.
7. **Non-agenda Items**
8. **Adjourn / Next Meeting Date - December 4th, 2017**

TOWN OF FORT FRANCES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

October 2nd, 2017

The meeting of Economic Development Advisory Committee of the Town of Fort Frances was held in the Committee Room, Civic Centre on October 2nd, 2017 from 11:42 a.m. to 12:47 p.m.

PRESENT: J. McTaggart, Vice Chair; D. Fortes, R. Avis, C. Mallory, J. Gillon, K. Perry, K. McCaig, G. McBride, M. Caron

ALSO PRESENT: T. Drysdale, Consultant, G. Gillon (RRFDC), D. Brown, CAO, T. Dennis, CBO/Municipal Planner and K. Lawson, Secretary

REGRETS: L. Mose (MNMD)

**1. Call to Order - 11:42 a.m.**

**2. Non-agenda Committee items which because of urgency cannot be deferred to a subsequent meeting, identified to be considered later in the meeting.**

2.1 J. Cumming re: Urban Trees.

2.2 C. Mallory re: Lack of Residential Rentals in Fort Frances.

2.3 Mayor Avis re: Resolute Update.

**3. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof - none**

**4. Approval of Previous Advisory Committee Minutes**

4.1 September 11th, 2017 Meeting Minutes.

McBride-Perry: THAT the minutes from the September 11th, 2017 meeting be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

**5. New Business**

5.1 Discussion Item No. 1 - Industrial Park Sales Guide and Prices.

- Tannis provided a verbal update on taxation assessment for properties within Ontario and Manitoba. A discussion was had on available lot assessment and this matter will be furthered at a future meeting.

5.2 Discussion No. 2

Residential Revitalization Grant Program. Committee provided recommendations to increase the potential funding amount while decreasing the amount of necessary expenditures necessary to meet funding guidelines. A new draft will be brought forward to a future meeting.

**6. Standing Items**

6.1 Implication of Ontario Raising Minimum Wage to \$15.00 per hour.

- this matter continues to be monitored.

6.2 Rainy Lake Market Square Update.

- Tannis advised the official opening has been delayed and she will advise further.

**7. Non-agenda Items**

- 7.1 J. Cumming re: Urban Trees.  
- Jim distributed information to members in attendance to be used for discussion purposes at the next regular committee meeting.
- 7.2 C. Mallory re: Lack of Residential Rentals Update.  
- Charleen spoke to the committee about the lack of available rental units in Fort Frances. Tannis will work with Tyson Dennis, CBO/Municipal Planner to develop an analysis of marketing opportunities and possible multi-family rental properties.
- 7.3 Mayor Avis re: Resolute Update.  
- Mayor provided committee members with a brief update on the status of Resolute properties in Fort Frances. This matter continues to be monitored and Council continues to express their concerns to Provincial Ministers both by correspondence and through the use of delegation requests. Mayor has yet to receive a response from Resolute to his June 1st, 2017 request for information regarding the status of properties.

**8. Adjourn 12:47 p.m. / Next Meeting Date - November 6th, 2017**

**FIBRE**  
**It's here!**

tbaytel

# Join us to celebrate

the launch of Fibre in Fort Frances

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**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2017**  
**12:00PM**  
**FORT FRANCES CIVIC CENTRE**  
**320 PORTAGE AVENUE**

**tbaytel**

October 31, 2017

## **Report on the Biomass 2017 Conference and RRFDC Wood Related Activities**

### **OPPORTUNITIES:**

#### **Cellulosic Ethanol:**

I discussed the region's wood residues and potential for additional unused wood resources with Patrick Pitkanen of st1, an advanced fuels company. The company has a pilot cellulosic ethanol plant in Finland that uses sawdust as a feedstock, up and running in Finland and are looking for an area to sell or set up the technology. They are looking for enough feedstock to make at least 1.4 million liters of ethanol per year.

I believe that we do have the feedstock here if we can utilize the wood residues and standing fibre on the Crossroute that is not currently being harvested. A plant would cost an estimated \$50 million dollars but he said that st1 and others could participate financially in a project.

#### **Bio-Fuel**

There was a presentation on bio-fuels, primarily bio-diesel which has a growing market. I got the impression that making a consistent certifiable product was difficult unless the feedstock was consistent.

#### **CHP (Combined Heating and Power)**

There were many CHP companies at the session, at least 6. They were promoting stand alone units which would heat and power communities with wood, either chips or pellets. Chips are the primary feedstock in Finland and there are 1200 such units operating in the country. These units may have some application in Ontario, but there is some difficulty due to power purchase agreements needed to produce and use the power. The province has made it somewhat easier to use the units from an emissions standpoint through the new ESAR category.

#### **Pellets**

There was very little discussion on pellets and the Finns do not use them. They said their wood costs are too high to use the wood for such a low end product.

The Advance Pellet rfp was mentioned.

## **Whitesand CHP and Pellet Project.**

That being said, the Whitesand First nation has the rights to the Nipigon forest, formerly Buchanan's, and a power purchase agreement with Hydro One at around \$.44 per Kilowatt. They intend to generate 5 Megs of power for distribution to the FN and the Town of Armstrong, use some power to generate pellets for sale and become a wood sorting facility for Resolute FP and other. It appears to be a community based employment and green energy project as it will reduce the community reliance on diesel power generation, reduce their carbon footprint and create jobs in the region.

## **Lignin**

There was a presentation on lignin and a pilot project between Resolute FP, FP Innovations and Lakehead University at the Resolute FP mill in Thunder Bay. Lignin has many uses especially in replacing oil based plastic. It may be why Resolute is holding onto the Crossroute Forest.

## **POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THE DISTRICT - ANAEROBIC DIGESTER:**

Wood ash, wood fines, abattoir offal and other biologics are a problem to many businesses, municipalities and First Nations in the Rainy River District. At a recent meeting with Elaine Graham of OMAFRA a diverse group including, the Emo Research Station, the RRFDC, Norbord, the Township of Chapple and Emo Feeds discussed the potential for applying to the 4<sup>th</sup> intake of the Investment in Forest Industry Transformation (IFIT) program (see attached) which has \$55 million available for innovative community problems to reduce waste and carbon impacts.

## **Project:**

After some discussion, it was determined that the most suitable project for the region was a biodigester situated mid-district, most likely at or near the Norbord facility; the program required a for profit forestry company to take the lead.

Other reasons are:

- Norbord has, and is seeking a long term solution to disposing of its wood ash and wood fines from the manufacturing process.
- The wood ash is currently being stored at the Township of Chapple municipal dump and it taking up space which reduces the life of the dump.
- The Rainy River Regional Abattoir Inc. which is located in Emo, is seeking ways to dispose of the offal, blood and SRMs which occur after slaughter.

- Other biological materials such as leaves, restaurant waste, etc can also be disposed of in the digester from the surrounding area.

The material, which leaves the digester following the indigestion process, is sterile compost for which there is a market in the horticultural sector.

Unfortunately the program was announced in mid-September and closes next week on October 12<sup>th</sup>. This is far too short a time frame to put together a successful Expression of Interest due to such issues as who would participate, at what scale the project would be etc.

The group thought that we should investigate the project further and see if there are other interested parties. If there is enough interest and enough financial commitment, we should apply to the NOHFC for funds to assist use in undertaking a feasibility study and business plan if the project looks feasible. This is a proven technology but the community and business partnerships will be the innovative driver for the project.

This process would make the region ready for the next funding program either Federal or Provincial.

### **AN OVERVIEW OF THE RRFDC AND WOOD PRODUCTS:**

Over the past few years the RRFDC has undertaken and reviewed various wood products related projects.

#### **Wood/Grass Pellets**

Outlook Market Research and Consulting and Kelwin Management Consulting recently completed Phase One (a preliminary feasibility study) for an Agricultural/Wood Fibre Pellet Facility. This Phase One work focused on several key factors that held the potential to have the greatest impact on the feasibility of the project and about which there was significant uncertainty. They included preliminary investigations of markets, feedstock availability, evaluation of the plant size and the Manitou Forest Products location for a grass and/or wood pellet/cube biomass plant.

#### **Wood Residues**

Over the last decade, pulp mills and a few large sawmills have closed in Northwestern Ontario. These same mills once took many types of residuals from other smaller saw mills and wood processing facilities within the industry. Now that there are fewer places to send residuals and the distances to the remaining facilities, make a poor business case for moving the material. In some cases, it may lead to the demise of some of these smaller facilities as well, if this market shrinks further.



Many in the industry have been warning for several years that a different solution needs to be found for mill residuals. Recently, the Rainy River Future Development Corporation (RRFDC) met with FP Innovations Industry Advisor, Percy Champagne and some local industry owners who have requested an investigation to determine the current situation in order to develop possible solutions. In the spring of 2017, the RRFDC undertook a survey of Northwestern Ontario wood manufacturing facility to determine the amount of wood residues in the region west of Atikokan.

### Glulam/Wood Residues

In June 2017, the RRFDC supported a Wooden Bridge Seminar in Kenora to bring together interested parties to discuss this opportunity. Quebec has been using glulam beams for bridge construction for many years and it is easy and cost effective. Given the number of bridges in the district that need upgrading there may be opportunity here.

LEAF EWP is developing a new facility to manufacture unique glue laminated lumber products that offer innovative approaches to CLT and glulam. The project includes the design, engineering, acquisition and installation of custom equipment required to operate a unique glue laminated timber production facility and the testing and certification to allow use of products in residential and non-residential construction in Canada and the United States. The product, which LEAF has named MultiLam, will use MSR spruce for the compression and tension layers and under-utilized hardwoods (i.e. poplar) for the neutral layers of the panels and beams. This project was originally to be located in the Thunder Bay area. In the spring of 2017, the RRFDC meet with the proponent of this project in Thunder Bay to discuss the possibility of using wood from the District to make the beams.

### Housing/Wall Panels

The RRFDC has investigated both local house construction and the development of a housing wall plant. Both projects faced considerable start up obstacles such as meeting Ontario manufacturing regulations, capital costs and variable markets.



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From the same organization

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**Association of Municipalities of Ontario**  
City of St. Thomas Community Recycling  
Centre Wins AMO Gas Tax Award



## "Fair Wage" Bill Would Complicate Public Safety, Emergency Response

November 1, 2017

Association of Municipalities of Ontario President Lynn Dollin was at Queen's Park on October 31st advocating for changes that would ensure effective and affordable public safety/emergency response.

"We depend on on-call and stand-by workers to step in during major storms, disasters and other emergencies," said Lynn Dollin, AMO President. "Collective agreements are negotiated to reflect these unique roles, and ensure fair compensation and treatment for these important workers."

Dollin is seeking amendments to fix the unintended consequences of Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*. For example, the bill would require matching pay for full-time and stand-by workers, and additional payments for on-call work, even volunteer firefighters. Volunteer firefighters are on a "call list" rather than being on-call. They choose to respond to a call and are only paid for the hours that they work.

"The Province agrees that municipal governments weren't the intended target of this bill. In fact municipal governments are employers of choice within their communities," Dollin said.

Municipal governments have been tallying the costs of the Bill 148's requirements. For some small and large urban municipalities the costs are upwards of \$1 to \$2 million per year.

"Across Ontario municipal costs are already rising at about \$1 billion per year, often driven by provincial laws and this is a text book example," Dollin added. "If they don't amend the bill, municipalities will be forced to either greatly increase property taxes, reduce local services - or both."

### For more information :

#### Organization:

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

#### Address:

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## Shuniah seeks Bill 148 exemption over volunteer firefighter costs

New rules would see municipality pay volunteer firefighters 'approximately \$47,000 a year,' CAO says

CBC News · An hour ago

Shuniah council is calling on the province to re-examine its proposed Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act over concerns that the bill would cause volunteer firefighting costs to skyrocket.

Currently, volunteer firefighters with the Municipality of Shuniah are paid varying amounts, based on the level of responsibility an individual firefighter has, and how many hours they contribute as a firefighter each year to calls, training and other related activities, said Paul Greenwood, Shuniah's chief administrative officer.

Greenwood said Shuniah currently pays its volunteer firefighters from \$1,500 to \$7,000 a year; payments are made quarterly.

### On call three hours a day

However, the Act, also known as Bill 148, includes a provision that would see volunteer firefighters placed on call for three hours a day, 365 days a year, regardless of whether or not a fire is taking place.

While they're on call, each volunteer firefighter would be paid about \$43 an hour, Greenwood said, which is based on an average wage for firefighters in Ontario.

- **Municipal tax may need hike to pay for Fair Workplaces Act**
- **Minimum wage bill will 'bankrupt' municipalities, mayors warn premier**

"If this were to pass, approximately \$47,000 would be paid to a volunteer firefighter to be on call," Greenwood said. "Municipalities would have to re-evaluate how volunteer firefighting is modelled and the service provided."

It would also have an impact on property taxes in Shuniah; the resolution tabled at Tuesday's Shuniah council meeting states taxes would rise by 24 per cent.

## Resolution passed by council

The resolution called for the province to give Shuniah an exemption from the new on-call rules contained in Bill 148, as well as for the province to conduct a "full economic impact analysis" of the bill.

The resolution was passed; Greenwood said it was to be forwarded on to the province on Wednesday.

Bill 148, meanwhile, passed second reading in the Ontario legislature on Oct. 18. Greenwood said Shuniah isn't the only municipality concerned over the bill.

"The province is getting feedback both for and against this bill," he said.

Shuniah has about 25 volunteer firefighters on its roster, Greenwood said.

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