



# **CITY OF BROOKS**

**Council Committee**

**February 28, 2023**

## **NOTES**

### **MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

Present:

- Mayor John Petrie
- Councillor Joel Goodnough
- Councillor Mohammed Idriss
- Councillor Ray Juska
- Councillor Jon Nesbitt
- Councillor Bill Prentice
- Councillor Marissa Wardrop

### **CITY STAFF**

Present:

- Alan Martens, CAO
- Amanda Peterson, Deputy CAO
- Amy Rommens, Manager, Administration/Recording Secretary
- Shelley Thomas, Manager, Finance
- Alicia Bartlette, Manager, Planning and Engineering
- Don Saari, Manager, Works and Utilities
- Lisa Tiffin, Manager, Community Development
- Mitchell Iwaasa, Economic Development Officer

Other:

- Jason Levy, City Taxi
- Val Hiebert, Brooks Taxi
- John Klein, Klein Cabs
- Crystal Peters, REDI Enterprises
- Sandra Burns, REDI Enterprises
- Clinton Mulungo, TAG Committee Member
- Sean Tiffin, Chair, TAG
- Sandra Stanway, Brooks Bulletin

**Mayor Petrie called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.**

#### **1. DELEGATION – PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION BYLAW**

- J. Petrie advised that with regards to the proposed Transportation Services Bylaw, the local Taxi Companies were asked to attend to speak to the proposed Bylaw.

# CITY OF BROOKS

## Council Committee

February 28, 2023

### NOTES

- ✚ J. Levy, City Taxi, noted that he has reviewed the proposed amendments, and for the most part, does not feel the Bylaw would be in the best interest of the City. He noted that there are three taxi companies in Brooks already, and as such, the business is split three ways. He added that he already has issues with nighttime; there is no clientele from 10:00 p.m. until 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. (from Sunday to Fridays), and as a result it is hard to keep drivers. He also spoke about how he has to insure all vehicles even if they're not being used.
- ✚ V. Hiebert, Brooks Taxi, noted that there is basically no business from Sunday night to Thursday night; even weekends are slower. She spoke about how times have changed over the years where people don't go out at night like they used to; it now only happens on a long weekend or special occasions. She added that rideshare companies set their own rates, so when they come into a community, they will undercut the Taxi Companies until such time as they have taken away all of their business.
- ✚ J. Klein, Klein Cabs, spoke about not having a lot of business, and the insurance requirements that taxi companies have to meet to operate. Uber and rideshare businesses are not bound by the same requirement, which allows them to purchase cheaper insurance.
- ✚ There was general discussion on the challenges Taxi Companies face in today's economy, and what Council's intent was in proposing a new Bylaw that allows for Transportation Network Vehicles.

*The delegation from the taxi companies left at 5:07 p.m.*

- ✚ Council discussed the proposed Bylaw in relation to the concerns brought forth by the Taxi Companies while contemplating the need to leave the Bylaw open to allow for Transportation Network Vehicles to operate within the City. Council Committee decided that the requirement to operate a Taxi or a Transportation Network Company 24/7 in the City be removed from the proposed Bylaw.

**Council Committee directed Administration to bring Bylaw 23/01 forward to Council with the proposed amendment.**

## 2. DELEGATION – CHANGING HANDIBUS NAME

- ✚ S. Tiffin, Chair, TAG, took the opportunity to introduce themselves as a self-advocacy group in Brooks. He advised that they have decided to challenge the City of Brooks to change the name of the Handibus. He noted that research has been completed of all surrounding cities, and that they have adopted a more inclusive transportation name. They feel that changing the name of the Handibus to Access Transit would be more inclusive to the community as a whole.

# CITY OF BROOKS

## Council Committee

February 28, 2023

### NOTES

- ✚ In response to a question from Council Committee about how the name was chosen, C. Peters explained they contacted other places and then presented all names to TAG who then choose Access Transit.
- ✚ A. Peterson spoke to how the name change would take place, starting with the new bus where decals were purposely not put on until after this request came to Council Committee.
- ✚ A. Martens advised that the City will do the name change and work with TAG on the promotions.

J. Petrie thanked S. Tiffin for attending to present their request.

*The delegation from TAG left at 5:17 p.m.*

#### 3. **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – CITIZEN-AT-LARGE MEMBERS**

- ✚ A. Rommens advised that of the 12 members on the Environmental Advisory Committee, also known as EcoBrooks, seven (7) may be Citizen-at-Large members who must reside within the City of Brooks. With the EcoBrooks Committee having ongoing challenges in filling the Citizen-at-Large vacancies, the Committee is recommending that Council consider amending the Bylaw to allow not more than two of the seven Citizen-at-Large members to be members who reside from within the County of Newell boundaries.
- ✚ Council Committee discussed the present composition of the Committee, and whether the Bylaw should be amended or not.

**Council Committee directed Administration to draft an amending Bylaw to allow not more than two of the seven Citizen-at-Large members to be members who reside from within the County of Newell boundaries.**

#### 4. **BUSINESS LICENCE BYLAW**

- ✚ A. Rommens advised that Administration recently updated the Business Licence Bylaw to reflect current practice of the Planning and Engineering Department. She presented the changes to the Bylaw.
- ✚ Council Committee discussed the proposed changes to the Bylaw, including the requirement for mobile vendors to obtain a Development Permit.

**Council Committee directed Administration to bring forward the Business Licence Bylaw 23/03 to Council for formal approval.**

# CITY OF BROOKS

Council Committee

February 28, 2023

## NOTES

### 5. INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AG JOURNALISTS – CONGRESS AND FARM TOUR SPONSORSHIP

- ✚ L. Tiffin advised that this item was discussed at the last Council meeting, and that since this discussion, County Council has approved a sponsorship of up to \$40,000. She added that the EID approved to sponsor up to \$20,000. Based on this, if the City wants to participate in the regional sponsorship, the City's share would be up to a third (\$13,333.33).
- ✚ L. Tiffin provided additional information on what is included in the Platinum Sponsorship Package.
- ✚ Council Committee discussed the regional sponsorship opportunity. It was noted that the Joint Shared Services Committee is not funding any of the sponsorship costs; only any hosting expenses incurred.

**Council Committee directed Administration to bring forward the regional sponsorship opportunity to Council to fund one-third of the costs at \$13,333.33.**

### 6. PROPOSED CHANGES TO UTILITY RATES BYLAW

- ✚ S. Thomas advised that a priority for the Finance and Public Works Department in 2023 is to streamline the Utility Billing process and develop sound collections procedures for Utility charges that will complement customer service, improve efficiency within the Departments and expedite collections.
- ✚ S. Thomas spoke about the role of the Utility Clerk, the collection process, and how charges are transferred to the Property Tax roll if the occupant of the property is the owner, and what happens if the occupant of the property is not the owner (i.e. notification requirements, payment arrangements, shut-offs).
- ✚ S. Thomas presented possible options to Council Committee for consideration based on responses received from other municipalities on how they deal with their Utility accounts.
- ✚ Council Committee discussed the proposed changes, specifically how renters may be affected if landowners are responsible for collecting utilities from their tenants.

**Council Committee directed Administration to bring forward the Bylaw changes for Council's approval requiring any new Utility Account to be in the name of the landowner as presented in Option 1.**

### 7. ADJOURNMENT

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR IDRIS that the meeting adjourn at 6:38 p.m.**

**MOTION CARRIED**