

WEST QUESNEL LAND STABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 3, 2010 @ 7:00 pm
Council Chambers, City Hall

- Advisory Committee:** Councillor Mike Cave
Heinz Loelke
Archie Hlady
Cynthia Bernier
Duane Sauve
- City Representatives:** Mayor Mary Sjostrom
City Manager Byron Johnson
Finance and Administration Director Kari Bolton
Public Works Director Jack Marsh
Communications Supervisor Matt Wood
Communications Clerk Carol Anderson
- Consultants:** Nick Polysou - AMEC Earth & Environmental
Rick Collins – URBAN Systems
- Special Guests:** Ron and Sandy Heaton

1. Introductions

Councillor M. Cave called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed the Heaton's. As this was the first meeting attended by Manager B. Johnson and Director K. Bolton, introductions were made around the table.

2. Adoption of Minutes

MOVED H. Loelke, Seconded C. Bernier and resolved: THAT the minutes from the meeting held on April 29, 2009 be adopted.

CARRIED

3. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from previous minutes.

4. New Business

- (a) **2009 Monitoring Results** – N. Polysou provided an update on the 2009 Geotechnical/Hydrogeological Program, 2009 Annual Monitoring Results and the 2010 Program through a power point presentation.

He summarized the 2009 Program wherein the pre-construction of the Full Scale Dewatering Program, the Ongoing (Annual) Monitoring and the Project Management (Consultation/Communications) were completed. Due to budget, the construction of the Full Scale Dewatering Program was not undertaken.

2009 Annual Monitoring included the monitoring of surface movement (through GPS surveyed hubs), subsurface movement (through slope inclinometers), groundwater levels (through piezometers, wells, horizontal drains), and weather data. Results showed that ground movements were higher again in 2009, water levels are high and fluctuating (as in previous years) and precipitation was normal or slightly below normal.

N. Polysou reviewed some previous years' monitoring and noted that since the installation of the monitoring equipment, they have been able to retrieve accurate and extensive data.

Due to the ground movement, most of the slope inclinometer instruments now need to be replaced and this is scheduled to be part of the full scale dewatering program.

- (b) Update on Grant Funding** – J. Marsh distributed a series of correspondence regarding the applications for grant funding. A phased project was developed as part of our original Building Canada Program funding application which divided the works over time within a budget of \$11.94 million. The total amount of funding received this year was \$4.731 million (\$3.161 m from the provincial/federal governments and \$1.57 m being the City of Quesnel's portion).

The main components of the project are:

1. The installation of groundwater wells and horizontal drains to reduce groundwater levels;
2. Associated connections of groundwater wells and horizontal drains to the closest sewer system; and
3. The installation of water meters to determine leakage from the existing water distribution system.

As the amount of funding provided was less than requested, the City identified the works that would provide the highest chance of arresting the movement while also managing potential risks. Accordingly, the following works have been proposed:

1. Constructing all subsurface dewatering wells and drains identified at this time;
2. Redirecting a major storm sewer to reduce discharge into the Stork/Crane pond;
3. Minimizing risk of flooding in the lower extents of the area; and
4. Installing flow meters on water mains (if sufficient funds remain).

Discussion on the installation of the water meters and what, if any benefit they would produce took place.

The meters would not only monitor the amount of water used by residents but would assist in determining the locations and amount of water going into the ground through system leakage. At present, we have no way of monitoring the amount of water actually being used by residents or how much leakage there is. It has also been determined that although this would be a benefit in data collection and determination of where to make repairs, the first two components would provide actual reductions in the amount of groundwater. This installation of water meters would be the next step in the project should funding become available.

J. Marsh confirmed that the provincial and federal governments are well aware that this is Phase I of a much larger project, requiring a larger commitment. The City will continue to lobby.

- (c) **2010 Work Program** – N. Polysou continued with the proposed work program for this year which includes ongoing monitoring, preconstruction design activities, the installation of subsurface dewatering (wells, horizontal drainage), and surface drainage works. An Environmental Assessment is required prior to commencement of works and has been completed by Urban Systems and submitted for government review.
- (i) **Subsurface Dewatering** – Will include horizontal drains across the lower/eastern portion of the landslide area (“area”), pumping wells across the upper/middle portion of the area, monitoring, and servicing. Any existing wells that are not producing will be disconnected/disabled.
 - (ii) **Surface Drainage** – R. Collins indicated on a map, exactly where the proposed drainage routes/reroutes would be installed. As mentioned in previous presentations, this piece of the program is designed to limit the amount of surface water getting into the ground – to take the water off site and not allow public water to flow into ponds. He also pointed out a couple of areas where we may experience increased overland flows and provided several options to mitigate this potential flooding or overland flow. The Committee had questions on the draining of ponds in the area and R. Collins noted that there were several issues to consider – environmental implications, ponds located on private property and the costs associated with the removal of the water.
 - (iii) **Environmental Assessment** – We must account for any impact or damage to the environment both while doing the work and after the work has been completed so long and short term implications of the dewatering program. A report was forwarded for approval sometime last week and we should expect a response in about two months. There was discussion about the length of time and the Committee wondered whether there was any work to be done while waiting for approval. N. Polysou said there should not be any delay in getting started on the subsurface drainage works once the assessment is approved.

(d) **Financing of City's Share of Grant** – Director K. Bolton distributed an “options” sheet for consideration by the Committee. The City's portion of Phase I is \$1.57 million. There is currently \$207,667 in reserves for this project and a potential increase from 2009 surplus. Basically, there are three options as follows:

- (i) Collect amount through municipal taxes (would indicate a 2% tax increase to all City residents);
- (ii) Collect partially through municipal taxes (would indicate a 1.6% tax increase to all City residents) and 20% through a Parcel Tax on properties in the affected area (approximately 900 parcels would see an additional 20% tax increase); and
- (iii) Collect amount through Parcel Tax on properties in the affected area.

The Committee was asked to provide feedback on these options and, if possible, feedback on the general feelings from residents in the area.

Attached to the options presented was a letter (to Mayor and Council) from the South Hills and Area Neighbourhood Association, suggesting that a partial parcel tax be implemented. Manager B. Johnson confirmed that the City has not solicited any input from any other neighbourhoods and before any tax decisions are made, a public meeting will be held.

This matter may be brought before Council in the next week for information purposes only. Manager B. Johnson indicated that a decision from Council would likely be made at the end of the summer months.

5 Other Business

Communications – Supervisor M. Wood indicated that a newsletter would be sent out on the 2010 Work Program and the financing of the City's share of the grant (above in 4(d)). We would then follow up with a public meeting. This would all happen prior to Council making a decision on these financial options.

Next Steps – Wait for approval of the Environmental Assessment, complete the Work Program and begin the actual Dewatering Program.

There was no other business.

6 Correspondence

Correspondence was received. There were no questions.

7 Adjournment

MOVED by C. Bernier THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

CARRIED

cc: *City Council*