

**Town of Montague
Minutes of Special Meeting
Aug. 7, 2008**

The Special meeting of Town Council for the Town of Montague is hereby declared in session by Mayor Pat McGowan this 7th day of August, 2008 beginning at 7:03 PM.

Present:

Pat McGowan, Mayor
David Mabon, Deputy Mayor
Marion Robertson, Councillor
Peter Doucette, Councillor
Bernie Crawford, Councillor
Janice Taylor, Councillor
John MacFarlane, Councillor

Staff: Andrew Daggett, CAO

Mayor McGowan called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She stated that this was a Council meeting but that it would be opened up for public comment after a presentation by the CAO, and she requested that anyone making comment or asking questions should address the Chair and state their name for the record. She then asked for the CAO to make the presentation.

CAO Daggett made the presentation outlining the amendment request, what precipitated it, and how it would affect the Town.

Preamble: Council has applied and received tentative approval for a \$1.2 million amendment to the funding agreement for the Wellness Centre. This approval is contingent on the Province receiving MRIF funding back from a project(s) that have been approved but have decided not to proceed under MRIF. Council needs to make a decision on whether or not to accept responsibility for their share of the amendment. Acceptance of responsibility for the extra \$400,000 municipal share is necessary to proceed with the Montague and Area Wellness Centre project as proposed. Acceptance of the responsibility means that the project will proceed as proposed should Provincial/Federal funds become available. Not accepting the responsibility means that Council will have to reject all tender bids and decide on a different route in which to proceed.

After the presentation, the following comments/questions were raised:

Leonard Monroe – not against the “rink” as he is embarrassed by the present facility, but he feels that this project is “way beyond” Montague and what the people, mostly seniors, can afford. He feels that the rink should be at Poole’s Corner and “you can only do what you can afford”.

Howard Kerwin – is a senior in Town and a former Councillor and is worried about “overruns”. He stated that this becomes “Montague’s baby” once the contract is signed. He is also not sure why the Library needs to be in the rink and why we need an NHL size rink.

Derek Nicholson – Councillor for Lw. Montague, stated that Lw. Montague Council is committed to help as a “regional” project, that support for a regional rink should be similar to that for a regional Fire Department, and that Lw. Montague will help with the interest costs for the extra \$400,000.

Kim Klein – resident of an unincorporated area that has been fund raising for the Wellness Centre. She stated that “this decision will affect more than just Montague”, and as a non-resident, she needs Montague as much as Montague needs the non-residents.

Lorne Cudmore – Town resident, stated that he does not want to see the Library moved to the new Wellness Centre because he won’t be able to walk to it as easily. He asked how this project would affect the fiscal capacity of the Town and thought the Chair of Finance should be the one to make the motion. He also stated that Ms. Klein’s remarks are the best argument he has heard for amalgamation.

Dianne Walsh – asked how we expect to pay for the mortgage? Councillor MacFarlane stated it would be paid through fundraising, previous tax increase, and equalization funding.

Debbie Johnson – wanted to be sure no other services were lost and inquired what the Town would use equalization for if not for this? Councillor MacFarlane stated that we could use the money for a number of things including paving or the water extension.

Eleanor Sutherland – did not think this was a good central place for the Library and questioned if it was necessary for the Library to go in the building and what were the extra costs? CAO Daggett responded that it was a necessity in the beginning but may not be at this time.

Penny Brook – asked about costs overruns, what will be lost in other priorities, what will be the sewer costs of the project and how will the Town system handle the extra sewer flow, and stated that it violates the Community Town Plan (referring to the 2004 CBCL *Downtown Montague Development Opportunity Study & Implementation Strategy*). CAO Daggett stated that this would be completed by contract and there were not expected to be any overruns, that nothing was projected to be lost due to this project, and that the sewer costs would be included in the contract. The sewer system is designed as an open system and there are no shutoff valves installed nor can there be. He reminded everyone to make sure they have a backflow valve installed and that it works properly.

Billy Cann – stated that he is for a rink (although he would like it downtown) but wherever is OK. He was misinformed that the Town would only own the rink for 3 years.

Rhonda MacLeod – stated that other communities should share in the rink.

Dianne Taylor – wondered how long the mortgage would be? CAO informed her that it was proposed to be 10 years.

Merrill Scott – spoke and explained why the Wellness Centre was being built where it was and not at Poole’s Corner or downtown on present rink site, which mostly was due to extra costs.

Tom MacLeod – thinks Montague has already forgotten the youth (cited examples) and asked that Montague “not let this go”.

Dick MacLean - stated that we can’t let the 2/3 funding slip away.

Lyman Douglas – Principal at the High School, spoke from a student’s point of view. He thought the school was moved partly for the “cluster” effect with the Wellness Centre and TCAP, that we

will pay for it “one way or another” alluding to the increase in vandalism that we could expect if the project didn’t go ahead, and that we need to find ways to get the project done.

Jim Bagnell – MLA, stated that the rink was integral to raising his kids and now his grandkids. He said that we “took on Iceland and it is still here”, we would be remiss if we miss this opportunity, and that nothing was ever gained without some “risk”.

Joe Spriet – feels it would be “grossly unfair” for Montague to pay for this by themselves, as a member of the Valleyfield Council he will lobby hard for them to pay their share, he does not feel that any other community in this area has the capacity to do this project, and he does not think the residents of Montague will have to pay for this alone.

Tara Bagnell – president of the Ringette Association, stated that she was only in Montague because of her kids and the rink, and that we can’t look a gift horse in the mouth.

Harry Annear – feels we have been going downhill and will keep doing so if we keep up the negativity. He stated we need to stay positive.

Ladain Cairnes-MacLeod – feels that the “rink is essential for our kids”, that we need a recreational facility, and that she “knows there is support for this”.

Penny Brook – questioned why it was not being built on the Iceland area?

Merrill Scott – stated that there’s not sufficient land there for a second ice surface, that we would be at least ½ year without a rink during construction, and that it would be too much money and not nearly sufficient room for any future expansion.

Councillor MacFarlane – stated that there were no service cuts or tax increases proposed with this project.

Councillor Crawford – stated he was entirely in support of the project and doing his part to get it done. “You can’t have a better tomorrow if you are always thinking about yesterday”.

Councillor Taylor – stated that she has been meeting with Sarah Jane Bell and is actively pursuing a feasibility study for a Community Energy System with the intent of decreasing the operational costs. She also stated she is 100% for the project.

Councillor MacFarlane – thanked everyone for coming out and expressing themselves and commended the Wellness Centre Committee for all their hard work. He thanked the communities of Brudenell and Lower Montague for their support, stated that we have to look ahead, and that he will be supporting the project wholeheartedly.

Deputy Mayor Mabon – stated “if we don’t show the confidence in the Town, how can we expect others to come in and invest?” He also stated he would be supporting the project.

Councillor Robertson – stated that we cannot afford to lose this and let it slip through our fingers. She also stated she will be supporting the project and looks forward to the new library and thanked the Committee for all their hard work.

Councillor Doucette – stated that he “can’t say how proud he is to be part of this” and that it needs to be looked at as a regional development. He also congratulated everyone for their

comments and the fact that, although they had some concerns, no one had expressed that they were against the project. He said “every community is participating even if not by the original design” and that the town of Montague is not in this alone. He feels that we can’t lose with the Community Welfare League expertise and a regional board of directors. He is fully in support of the project.

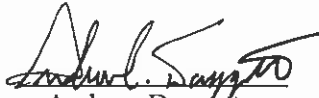
Mayor McGowan – thanked all those who came out and expressed their concerns and comments and thanked the Committees for all their work.

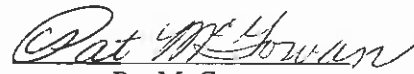
Moved by Councillor Doucette, seconded by Councillor MacFarlane to accept the responsibility for the municipal share (\$400,000) of the amendment required to proceed with the Montague and Area Wellness Centre project as proposed and to proceed forthwith should Provincial/Federal funds become available.

Motion unanimously carried

Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Doucette, seconded by Councillor MacFarlane that the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 9:18 PM.


Andrew Daggett
CAO


Pat McGowan
Mayor