

A special meeting of the Council of the Rural Municipality of Blucher, #343 was held in the Municipal Office, Village of Bradwell, on Wednesday, July 25, 2001 commencing at 8:00 a.m.

Those in attendance were: Reeve Dan Greschuk, Councillors Gary Garman, Bruce Meilicke, Lionel Mitchell and Francis Boehm.

The purpose of this special meeting was to review and discuss the following:

- ◆ emergency drought assistance

Discussion:

Reeve Greschuk

- ◆ questioned the following:
 - ◆ the rationale for a payment before harvest when the actual loss is not known
 - ◆ the fairness of providing a flat acreage payment to everyone regardless of loss, input costs, farming practices, etc.
 - ◆ the approach of demanding assistance rather than negotiating assistance
 - ◆ if we declare the RM a disaster area, what is the RM prepared to do

Councillor Garman

- ◆ simply declaring the RM a disaster area is ineffective unless there are specific results to be gained by the declaration

Councillor Senger

- ◆ majority of ratepayers contacted are reluctant to declare the RM a disaster since there is not a 100% loss
 - ◆ may jeopardize further assistance if inspection reveals certain areas of the RM is not a disaster
 - ◆ assistance is required for some crops, but not others

Councillor Meilicke

- ◆ what constitutes a disaster?
 - ◆ later seeded crops may have average yield
- ◆ what advantage is gained by declaring the RM a disaster area
- ◆ perhaps wait until after harvest to determine actual loss

Councillor Mitchell

- ◆ majority of ratepayers are reluctant to declare the RM a disaster until actual yield loss is known
- ◆ what can the RM do on its own, before or without Provincial or Federal assistance
- ◆ disaster could be defined as a complete loss of ability to generate revenue
 - ◆ flooding, earthquake, etc.
 - ◆ crop insurance may mitigate the loss

Councillor Boehm

- ◆ would declaring a disaster put pressure on Provincial and Federal Government to provide assistance

Consensus:

- ◆ if a disaster as defined as a cataclysmic, unforeseen and uninsurable event, then the RM is not in a disaster situation
- ◆ however, previous droughts were not as devastating since agriculture had reserves to offset loss. Due to the past 5 year agricultural crisis, farmers no longer have the ability to withstand this type of event
- ◆ possible RM assistance for consideration
 - ◆ endorse a rational, reasonable, negotiated approach when lobbying for Provincial and Federal Government assistance
 - ◆ contribute a % of municipal levy towards a cost shared assistance program with the Provincial and Federal Governments
 - ◆ cancel a % of municipal tax
 - ◆ reduce or waive penalty or arrears
 - ◆ wait until after harvest so that actual loss is known

Drought
Asst.

243-2001 - Greschuk

That we believe it is premature to declare the entire R.M. of Blucher # 343 a disaster area;

however, for individuals that are financially devastated due to this year's drought:

- ◆ that we endorse a rational, reasonable, negotiated approach for requesting emergency Provincial and Federal assistance,
- ◆ that this RM is prepared to contribute a maximum of 50 % of our 2001 agriculture levy towards a cost shared program with the Provincial and Federal Government to benefit ratepayers of the RM of Blucher, # 343,
- ◆ that we request all other RM's in the province to consider endorsing a similar proposal for their ratepayers.

Carried

Adjourn

244-2001 - Senger

That this meeting of Council adjourn.

Carried.

Reeve

Administrator