



TOWN OF FORT MACLEOD

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release – Wednesday, June 25, 2014

STATEMENT:

Putting Community Interests First, Fort Macleod Town Council Votes to Suspend Mayor from Positions on Boards and Organizations for Six Months

The Town of Fort Macleod Council has voted to suspend the current Mayor, Rene Gendre, from his appointed positions on all boards and organizations, both internally (town-related) and externally (appointments made to regional, provincial or other associations) for a six-month period beginning July 1, 2014. The motion to take this action passed on Monday, June 23. Mayor Gendre remains a voting member of Council, and will still hold the ceremonial title of Mayor during his suspension period.

As a Council, we admire Rene's passion and dedication to the town and its affairs, but our overriding concern is for the community as a whole and for Council's ability to effectively govern. Our increasing concern with the Mayor's actions on several fronts -- and especially outside the bounds of Council approval -- have led to this very difficult decision, which was arrived at after legal consultation and a review of applicable Town policies and legislation under the Municipal Government Act (Revised, May, 2014).

Council's desire is to operate in an environment that is respectful and fair to all and one which is designed to hold everyone to a high standard. As well, there must be clarity about the relationship Council has with the Administration team and other members of the community.

The Mayor was repeatedly warned about acting outside the bounds of Council procedures, first informally, then formally dating back to April with a request from Council to adhere to a covenant of behavior applicable to all council members, which was not supported by our Mayor. A second request came in May with additional requests to follow council procedures and bylaws, which was also ignored.

A code of conduct bylaw (1793) was passed on June 23 that introduced and/or reinforced a list of operating rules for all members of Council, and which allowed Council to take action to suspend the Mayor's committee duties for six months.

Council's desire is to work towards a common vision that reflects the desires of the community in order to move our town forward. For that reason council, in cooperation with town administration, is working on an Organizational Review and an effective and active Strategic Plan.

For council contact information or to review stated bylaws please contact our town office or visit our town website.

Town Office: [403-553-4425](tel:403-553-4425)

Website: <http://www.fortmacleod.com>

Please see over for Background information

Background Information

- Mayor Gendre remains a voting member of Council, and will still hold the ceremonial title of Mayor during his suspension period.
- Council's action will not affect the day-to-day workings of the community which is managed by a Chief Administrative Officer and more than 30 employees.
- During this time, Council will work to clear up some misconceptions regarding roles and responsibilities of individual council members:
 - Council members cannot directly order town employees or volunteers of town organizations to perform tasks.
 - Council members cannot solicit business, negotiate and/or enter into formal financial agreements with businesses or other organizations on behalf of the town without Council consultation and approval
 - Council members cannot unilaterally remove or restrict town funding or other resources from groups or organizations currently supported by the community.
- A Deputy Mayor appointed by Council will fulfill the official obligations and have all the administrative responsibilities of the Mayor. The Deputy Mayor will also chair Council meetings or appoint a Council member to do so.
- Council will decide at a later date who takes on the internal and external board, association or organization memberships formerly held by the Mayor.
- The Deputy Mayor's position currently rotates every two months among Councilors. Council may decide to extend the current Deputy Mayor's term to allow for continuity, or appoint an incoming Deputy Mayor who overlaps to ensure continuity.
- A review will take place near the end of the six-month suspension, after which time Council may choose to reinstate some, all, or none of the Mayor's duties and either cease, or further extend the suspension.