

**Municipal Meeting – Initial Conversation about Municipal Restructuring**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**June 27, 2016, 7 pm**  
**Central Development Corporation/Rural Action Centre Boardroom**

**Present:**

Art Ortenburger (Bonshaw), Robert Clow (Afton), Sharon Slauenwhite (New Haven-Riverdale), Stephen Gould (New Haven-Riverdale), Alan Miller (Kingston), Douglas Gillespie (Clyde River), Don Jardine (Winsloe South), Shari MacDonald (Miltonvale Park), Hal Parker (Miltonvale Park), Joanne Smith (Warren Grove), Ambre Tawil (Warren Grove), Christine MacKinnon (Municipal Affairs and Provincial Planning), Nicole Warren (Central Development Corporation)

**1. Roundtable/Introductions**

All of the rural incorporated municipalities within the North River Fire District were invited to attend this initial meeting to have a conversation about common areas and possible shared services or municipal restructuring interests going forward.

Common themes during roundtable introductions included:

Communities want to stay rural, many desire to keep things as they are but feel they will be required to change, meeting came up quickly so it is too early for most communities to speak for Council, however all were attending the meeting to take back information.

**2. Restructuring Process**

Christine MacKinnon with Municipal Affairs spoke about the Restructuring Process (viability criteria – which include items such as population of 4000, tax base of 200 Million and a Service Centre, differences between annexation, amalgamation and incorporation for a new municipality). She offered some examples of ways communities can come together - e.g. service agreements, specific partnerships, regionally and provided links to the department's resource materials.

Links are as follows:

This is a link to the department resources regarding restructuring:

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/mapp/viability>

There is general information available for municipal leaders and staff here:

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/mapp/municipalaffairs>

The group also discussed the new tool kit being developed by the Federation of PEI Municipalities, unsure of the timeline for this to be ready, but this should help municipalities to move forward with planning.

There is funding available for Municipal Growth Management Studies – this could be an option for the group if they meet the viability criteria and chose to come together.

One point discussed among the communities present was the need for a ‘Service Centre’ to be designated. Many questioned what was meant by a service centre. Rural areas want to remain rural; it was unclear whether the local community Centre would qualify as a service centre. Some expressed concerns of losing these hubs of the communities if a larger service centre were needed. It was noted that the Province is open to discussion with respect to the Service Centre given our proximity to Charlottetown.

### **3. Open Discussion**

Communities present had an open discussion on the opportunities and challenges that partnerships and/or amalgamation could provide. Including:

- Each should complete a needs assessment as a starting point to identify what they are willing or able to share with neighboring communities and in turn define what benefits this could create.
- Group discussed official plans, not all communities present have official plans, what is the benefit for those who do, is there value in doing this or not. A challenge for those who don’t have plans is that the municipality is left out of the process as the Province approves what is to be done in the community (planning, development, etc.)
- How and when does this group reach out to Cornwall? Rural areas felt until they came together to discuss the rural issues, they couldn’t approach the urban areas. Group discussed holding one more meeting to brief other communities that couldn’t make it this time and then approach Cornwall.
- Could there be a series of specific issues that the rural communities could reach an agreement on to partner with Cornwall? Some type of regional partnership similar to the approach taken with Communities 13.
- One suggested that communities should independently use the tool kit being prepared by the federation (when available) to self-identify what it is that they want in their own communities, what the community is responsible for now and what would they want to be responsible for.
- Each community could consider a statement of values to bring back for discussion at a next meeting.
- Clear need/want to protect farmland, forestry, tourism in these areas.

#### **4. Next Steps:**

Communities present agreed that a reasonable next step would be to compile notes from this meeting and share with all, including those invited but unable to attend this evening. A next meeting would be held once everyone had a chance to brief their councils on this meeting. At the next meeting the group could look collectively at common areas for partnership among the communities that are interested in pursuing this further. Further to this – CDC will reach out to the communities who were invited but unable to attend (rural communities within North River Fire District) to invite to the next meeting once a date is set.

Next meeting should be relatively soon (possibly in July), should not wait until the fall. A date will be proposed when the notes are circulated.

Group also agreed that after one more meeting amongst the rural communities to see where this is going, Cornwall should be approached.