



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT FEBRUARY 25, 2021

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### **COUNTY MANAGER**

#### **Town of Blackfalds**

The Town of Blackfalds has inquired about Lacombe County cost-sharing some infrastructure works (water, wastewater, stormwater and roadways systems extensions and upgrading) that are required, in part, to service the new high school in Blackfalds. I responded by questioning the appropriateness of a municipality paying for these types of improvements in another municipality irrespective of whether the end use is a school, major plant, retail business, rec facility, etc. unless there is some type of reciprocal revenue sharing arrangement attached to it. Notwithstanding, I advised that the County would be willing to have further conversation around helping out with the cost of acquiring the school site if Blackfalds actually had to purchase the land which is what we did with the City of Lacombe a number of years ago when the Terrace Ridge Elementary School site was purchased from the former Canadian University College. The cost-share was based on County/City student enrollment numbers. As well, should Alberta Infrastructure not fund all of the on-site improvements the County could look at helping out with that as well. Funding for the land purchase and on-site improvements would be from the County's Funds in Lieu of Reserve Land Reserve.

#### **Burbank Campground**

Two meetings were held in February with Burbank residential subdivision property owner Clint Shopland, Greg Lunn of the Lacombe Fish and Game Association, and me. With some preliminary process and outcome related issues having now been addressed we are starting to make some substantive progress towards finding a resolution to the matters at hand. Our next meeting is scheduled for March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **Municipal Bylaw Infractions**

We have received a number of complaints from residents of Mirror and the communities in which we provide contract Community Peace Officer/Bylaw Enforcement services in about our issuance of Municipal Tags for bylaw infractions, particularly failure to remove snow from sidewalks and parking on streets for longer than the allowable time period. Warnings are always provided before our CPO's issue a tag.

#### **Lacombe County/Summer Village of Sunbreaker Cove (SBC) Wastewater Project**

Tenders from three pre-qualified contractors for the joint (Lacombe County and SBC) wastewater main line and SBC internal servicing project were received on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Stantec is currently reviewing the tenders and has advised that the joint wastewater main line component should be in the order of \$900,000 (plus or minus 10%). As both project components were included in the same bid package and with a number of overlapping components being involved such as mobilization, reclamation, utility locates, etc. the exact amount for joint main line has not yet been confirmed. The cost of the joint main line will be shared between the County and SBC based on projected flow volumes in each municipality with the County's share



being 56% and SBC's 44%. Negotiations for cost-sharing the additional components required as a result of oversizing the main line to accommodate County flows are ongoing. The estimated costs of these items of \$75,000 - \$100,000 are not included in the tendered amount.

### **FCSS Review**

As per Council's direction Administration is conducting an FCSS program review. We anticipate presenting our report to Council at the June 1<sup>st</sup> Committee of the Whole meeting.

### **Communications**

#### Media Releases/Online Promotion

- Election 2021 (articles and social media). This will be ramped up over the coming weeks.
- Fire Permit Season.
- Wild About Bees (logo, promotion, online event set up).

#### Communications Action Plan

- Website revamp – Reviewed plans with senior management. Website template shortlisted and have handed over preferred options to IT staff to see what can be included in the first phase. Have determined department contacts for content updates.
- Created Instagram/Facebook/Twitter templates to help with consistent messaging.

#### Other

- Finished first draft of Agriculture guide completed and with departments for review.
- Windmill feature wall completed.

### **Human Resources**

- Continued work on the County Vehicle Taxable Benefit issue. Met with a couple of staff to discuss the upcoming changes and the financial impact it will have on them.
- Started work on the WCB Annual Return for both Lacombe County and Lacombe Regional Waste Services Commission.
- Started planning our seasonal recruitment needs for 2021.
- Shared the 2021 Respectful Workplace Challenge with staff. This year the emphasis is on *Spreading Kindness* throughout the organization for the month of February; employees have been leaving surprise gifts on staff's desks, distributing kindness cards, buying coffees, etc.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **General**

- 2021 Municipal Election
  - Staff continue with election training. Training has been rolled out as the manual and rules are released.



- Administration is also working to retain a returning officer for the 2021 elections.
- Financial Reserve Review
  - Work is progressing on this project.
  - The Consultant has completed the data collection process of the project and is working on the recommendations and final report.
  - The project is still on target to be completed by the end of February.
- MOST Funding for Community Groups
  - Cheques to community groups have been sent out totalling \$134,000.
  - Many groups have contacted the County to express their appreciation.
- County – Community Programs, Events & Activities Policy RC(9) Grant
  - Council will be considering the annual RC(9) grant requests for 2021 at this meeting.
  - Many groups have carried over their funding from 2020 and therefore the total amount to be awarded will be smaller for 2021.
- Staff Intranet
  - The County's new Intranet was released to staff on February 16<sup>th</sup>. This new internal site will allow staff to access a variety of information including electronic files, safety and HR information and newsletters.
  - Staff are working to expand access of this site to all staff.

## **Assessment**

- 2021 Tax Enforcement
  - Staff have sent out tax notification letters to property owners who have had tax in arrears for more than two years. The list was larger than last year, however, many who receive the notification often pay prior to having a tax notification registered on title.
  - The deadline for property owners to avoid having a tax notification registered on title is March 26, 2021.
- 2021 Assessment Roll
  - Annual inspections are now complete for residential and non-residential properties including data entry and verification.
  - The annual market analysis work is also complete. There were very few changes made this year with only minor changes to vacant land values. Residential market values are lower on the whole while non-residential properties remain stable.
  - All Designated Industrial Property updates were sent to the Province by the February 5<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Province sent out the 2021 linear assessment roll to municipalities after the Family Day long weekend.
  - Significant changes to oil and gas well linear has been offset by pipeline linear assessment which did not see the same reductions. Staff are reviewing the changes to the County's assessments to determine impacts on the 2021 budget.



## **Finance**

- Payroll
  - LAPP year-end reporting is complete.
  - T4 preparation is underway.
  - The first firefighter payroll was completed in early February. Staff encountered a couple of minor issues; however, these issues will be resolved before the next payroll.
  
- AP/AR
  - The bulk of 2020 AP and AR invoices are processed for Lacombe County and all Commissions.
  - Cross-training of staff has begun due to recent staff changes.
  
- Reserve Review
  - The staff are working with the consultant to provide information on the County's current funding capital projects and to calculate reserve contributions.
  
- 2020 Audit
  - Our auditors were onsite in January and completed their interim audit work. They are scheduled to return at the end of March for final audit work.
  - Staff are preparing year-end documentation for the auditors and working on configuring and using CaseWare for year-end working papers.

## **Information Technology**

- A/V Project in Council Chambers
  - IT has received hardware and programming quotes to perform a full upgrade of the Joffre Room that will match the functionality of the main Council Chambers.
  - Staff are now in the process of reviewing the quotes and will be putting together a project plan for review by Senior Management.
  - The project plan will be completed within the next 7 days.
  - The microphones and biamp audio hardware for the main Council Chambers have been ordered and we are hoping for delivery prior to the February 25<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.
  
- Fire Permit System Migration
  - With the 2021 Fire Permit season ready to begin on March 1, staff have performed the required programming updates for the Fire Permit System to be successfully migrated from the County's SharePoint server in the County office to the SharePoint Online Platform.



## **OPERATIONS**

### **Public Works Shop**

- Scheduled monthly services and commercial vehicle inspections were completed on heavy equipment and light/heavy duty trucks.
- All Council approved 2021 replacement capital equipment has been ordered.
- Shop staff continue to cycle through fire trucks and fire equipment from all departments for repairs and service.
- Road construction equipment will be cycled through the shop during the upcoming months preparing them for spring roll out.

### **Maintenance Crews**

- Staff are completing the yearly railway crossing inspections and will be updating information and developing list of required maintenance work.
- Due to extreme cold temperatures most equipment sat idle for the week of February 8.
- Gravel testing occurred at two locations during the reporting period with no positive results.
- Staff continue to focus on damaged and faded signs throughout the County.
- As usual, we have an extensive brushing program this year and staff are working through it.
- Gravel stockpiling continues when trucks are not snow plowing.
- Staff are dealing with the typical winter challenges with icing problems due to springs.
- County crews undertook brushing work for the Village of Clive and invoiced as per policy.

### **Construction**

- Construction is complete on C2552 and C3944 (MEGlobal), with reclamation and fencing to be completed in the spring of 2021.
- Construction is complete on C2211 (Buffalo Lake), with reclamation and fencing to be completed in the spring of 2021.
- Staff are finalizing designs of the 2021 road projects and will be contacting landowners to discuss agreements.

### **Parks**

- Weekly/monthly playground inspections are complete with all sites in good repair.
- Minor general upkeep will continue throughout the off-season.

### **Health and Safety**

- Monthly safety meetings were held for all Operations staff. To reduce the risks related to COVID, safety talk worksheets were distributed.
- Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee (JWSHSC) elections were held, and the newly elected employee member is Chance Brayford. The newly appointed employer member is Larry Riep. They are replacing Mike Krenzler and Dion Burlock, respectively.



- February inspections were completed at all County work sites with minimal deficiencies identified.
- The Health and Safety Coordinator is reviewing all Hazard Assessments and Safe Work Procedures documents and updating as needed for COVID-19.

### **Additional Information**

- Three culvert bridge files (214, 1436, 13454), to be constructed in 2021, have completed tendering and the projects awarded to Martushev Logging Ltd. The tender amounts came in under budget. We are still hopeful that we may receive STIP funding for these projects.
- BF 9405 (Meston's Road) is currently out to tender and closes on March 4.
- The 2021 Paving Contract has been awarded to Border Paving, with an anticipated start date of mid-May.
- The construction of the intersectional lighting at Highway 12 and Range Road 27-4 has been completed. Waiting on Fortis to install the transformer and energize.
- A request for pricing for the 2021 line painting work is out and we should be hearing back in the next couple of weeks. Once received and if approved, we will be talking with our neighboring small municipalities to see if they would like to participate in our contract.
- We have been in discussions with Bell Communications as they are requesting to put utilities within our right-of-way. They currently do not have a Utility Agreement with the County. One has been provided but they are asking that it be modified to suit their purposes. We have indicated that we will not entertain this and if they wish to proceed with the project the agreement must be in place prior to constructing starting. Talks are ongoing.
- Requests for pricing are being prepared for our 2021 culvert and fencing materials.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **AGRICULTURE**

#### **Agricultural Plastics Recycling Program**

Collection since the beginning of October 2020 to date:

Red Deer County = 22.5 rolls

Ponoka County = 8.0 rolls

Lacombe County = 70.5 rolls

**Total                      101 rolls**

To date, all grain bags collected and transported have been processed by PolyAg Recycling Ltd. in Bashaw.

Clean Farm Inc. has communicated that sustainable markets have developed for bulk plastic (silage film and bale wrap plastic). They are currently operating a pilot project in Lethbridge County, testing designs for compression balers which would make the transportation of bulk plastic a viable option.



**ENVIRONMENT**

**Solar Project Update**

The Operation's shop roof has been signed off by a structural engineer to support the 86.4 kw AC solar system; and further, a funding agreement through the Municipal Climate Action Centre has been applied for and approved for \$50,213.09. The construction contract has been signed with Skyfire Energy Inc. Contracted project completion date is June 30, 2021.

**PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

Occurrence Reports	Road Use Agreements 6	Community Hours Required	Lacombe County Citations Issued	Communities Citations Issued
County 9	Travis MJ Permits 113	99	36	14
Comm. 19	Planning & Development Occurrences	Community Hours Completed	Written Warnings	Written Warnings
SRO 5	0	121	23	11

**Peace Officer Highlights:**

In January, our School Resource Officer (SRO) conducted 4 presentations and 3 investigations. Presentations ranged from internet safety to Grade 5 students and drug safety to some of our Junior High grades. Our SRO continues to engage students and teachers through this challenging time, and they have been providing some great video resources to teachers to help them engage their students on a variety of important issues.

A few items of interest that officers were involved with during January include:

- A vehicle that failed to stop on Spruceville Road, traveling 99km over the posted speed limit.
- A broke down vehicle on Milton Road was being operated by a person with warrants issued for their arrest.
- An individual was found in medical distress along the side of a rural County road that required immediate medical assistance.
- Four public health complaints were received, ranging from business operating without approval, people gathering in excess of limits, and residents hosting company contrary to restrictions.



**FIRE**

**Incidents**

As of this writing, County Fire Departments responded to a total of 42 incidents, with 28 of those being in the County response districts. With these calls included the County wide total for 2021 so far is 42 incidents with the largest two responses being Alarms Ringing and Motor Vehicle Collisions.

ALIX		BENTLEY		BLACKFALDS	CLIVE		ECKVILLE		LACOMBE		TOTAL	
Village	County	Town	County	County	Village	County	Town	County	City	County	Muni	County
5	9	0	5	1	1	2	3	1	5	11	14	28
14		5		1	3		4		16		42	
Largest Type EMS Assist		Largest Type		Largest Type Outside Fire	Largest Type		Largest Type EMS Assist		Largest Type Alarms Ringing		Largest Type Alarms Ringing	

**Activities**

With the new Lacombe County F(1) Policy coming into full effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> much of the month was spent preparing for the roll-out of payroll and invoicing to coincide with those changes. As a result of the new policy, eight response invoices were sent out to residents and non-residents.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

COVID-19 activities continued from 2020 into January with restrictions for Lacombe County buildings also still in place.

**UTILITIES**

**Mirror**

The grease and baby wipes brochure was updated and sent out with this month’s utility billing to ratepayers due to the main blockage on 51 street this Christmas. The blockage was two basketball-sized blockages in an 8" sanitary sewer main.

One of the heaters in the Community Hall failed last week which caused the water meter to be damaged. The water meter has been replaced.

**Shop**

The backwash reservoir line that comes to the shop has frozen. We are currently using a submersible pump and hose to pump it to the trees to the west. This cistern is filled with the sand filter and the softeners backwash cycles.





## **General**

Twelve annual reports for Lacombe County, Highway 12/21 Regional Water Services Commission and Sylvan Lake Regional Wastewater Commission have been sent to Alberta Environment and Parks.

Work with the SLRWWC and Highway 12/21 Commissions is progressing well. Two water lines and one sewage line and lift station are being designed and will be ready for tender in late March, for construction in the spring and summer of 2021. Alignments are close to being confirmed which will allow the detailed design to progress further.

The Highway 12/21 Commission water lines had a requirement to engage in Indigenous consultations. Staff and the Commission Chair participated in a two-hour introductory meeting with representatives of the Samson Cree Nation. Follow up meetings will occur sometime after March 1, 2021.

## **PLANNING**

### **The Slopes**

Beginning this spring, SAKA Builders of Red Deer, in conjunction with some local investors, will be building four houses at The Slopes. Their vision is to start with four homes sized approximately 2,500 square feet and follow with an additional four homes once those sell. This will also coincide with the completion of the long-awaited Water Treatment Plant. Plans are currently being designed and it is anticipated contracts will be finalized in the coming days and weeks. While it has been a long time coming, the developer genuinely believes this is the traction needed to really launch their vision at The Slopes.

### **Wilson's Beach Estates**

Staff have been working with the new owners of Wilson's Beach Estates, Veldhuisen Construction Ltd. on the development of the subdivision. To date only two homes have been built in Wilson's Beach Estates but the new owners are working closely with staff to implement some exciting new ideas that they feel will increase the attraction of the subdivision. Traction is starting to take hold for this development as staff have received calls from interested purchasers asking questions about the development as well as just recently approving a permit for a new 1,300 square foot house with an 800 square foot attached garage.

### **Rochon Sands Disposal of Reserve**

The County was circulated on a proposal to dispose of a portion of a Municipal Reserve parcel in order to remedy encroachments. The public hearing for the disposal bylaw was to take place on February 11, 2021. Staff have reviewed this referral and have found that there are no encroachments that would merit the proposal to enlarge a private lot into the reserve lands. It may be the case that existing structures do not meet setback requirements; however, it would be preferable for the summer village to simply issue a variance to address this. The municipal reserve is adjacent to the Provincial Right of Way and the boat launch. Municipal Reserve in this



location serves an important function and disposing of it to remedy an encroachment will not guarantee that future encroachments will not occur. Staff have submitted a letter outlining these concerns on the matter, which has been a consistent approach to these issues around the lake.

### **MDP/LUB Updates**

Staff are working on the annual matrix review of the MDP and LUB and will present the recommendations for Council's consideration in March.

### **Summer Village of Half Moon Bay PUL**

The application to create separate title to an approximately 0.803 ha (2 acre) parcel of land on the east part of Pt. NE 11-39-2-W5M, south of the Summer Village of Half Moon Bay, to accommodate the construction of a Public Utility Lot for a future wastewater transfer station has been conditionally approved.

### **Subdivision by Midnight Sun Farms Inc.**

The landowner had appealed Condition 2 of the approval for a first parcel out subdivision to the Municipal Government Board. Condition 2 requires a 30-metre-wide service road to be dedicated by caveat across the Highway 20 frontage of the quarter section, to Alberta Transportation standards.

Alberta Transportation has notified us that they have re-reviewed the requirement and determined that there may be other options for access management that can be required at a future time, such as when there are changes to the land use, additional subdivided parcels, or closer towards when multi-laning will take place. As such, Alberta Transportation has waived Condition 2, so that the appeal can be withdrawn, and the landowner can proceed with the subdivision.

### **Communication Towers**

The Planning Services department has seen a significant increase in calls for communication towers in the County. The telecommunications companies are informed that they do not require a permit from the County and are simply requiring that we grant a letter of concurrence for submission to Industry Canada. This has helped speed up the approval process and should help to increase the wireless connectivity in the County.