



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT APRIL 23, 2020

COUNTY MANAGER

COVID-19

Planning and response efforts to Lacombe County organizational impacts of COVID-19 continue to be considerable and time consuming. Our Emergency Operations Centre (ECC) meets twice weekly. To date, no Lacombe County staff members have tested positive for COVID-19, and with the exception of one employee suffering from cold and flu like symptoms, all staff are back at work.

Lacombe County Fire Chief and Director of Emergency Management, Drayton Bussiere, will continue to provide presentations at each Council meeting on our efforts and actions throughout the duration of this pandemic.

Property Tax Cancellation Request

We have received one formal COVID-19 related property tax cancellation request to date. The property owner was advised that Council previously had a brief discussion about COVID-19 tax related matters and will be having further discussion regarding this prior to the August 31, 2020 property tax payment deadline.

Lacombe and District Chamber of Commerce – Office Space

The Lacombe and District Chamber of Commerce has confirmed their intention to move into our Administration building in early May.

Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee

Alberta Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) requires that Lacombe County have a Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee in place to assist in ensuring that the County meets the legislated requirements of OHS legislation and to develop and promote measures to protect the health and safety of those on-site. The committee is comprised of two employee representatives and two employer representatives. I am pleased to advise that our recently appointed 2020 committee members are 1) employee representatives Mike Krenzler (welder) and Nicole Plewis, and 2) employer representatives Dion Burlock and Brandon Meyer. The committee members and I recently completed the required Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee/Health and Safety representation course through the Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association.



City of Lacombe/Lacombe County ICF – Agreement Follow-up Work

Management is preparing for a meeting with City of Lacombe Administration to develop an action plan for completing the 11 follow-up items as agreed to in our ICF. All items are to be completed before the October 2021 municipal elections.

Communications

COVID-19

- Have completed four videos (internal and external)
- Created section of the website designated to County updates and links to reliable resources
- Issued media release on utilities deferral program
- Several staff communications (general updates, mental health, cleaning requirements)
- Regular social media updates
- Contacting community groups on updates
- Coordinated road signs for COVID-19 awareness
- Radio recordings for Paula and Drayton

Website

- Created online payment portal area for the website
- Update COVID-19 area
- Added historic tax rates (2016-2019)

Media Releases

- Blackfalds/Lacombe County ICF
- Utilities Deferral Program
- World Health Day (staff video)
- Construction notifications

Social Media

- Trying to balance provincial COVID-19 messaging with important County messages.

Human Resources

- Much of Meghan's time has been dedicated to addressing COVID-19 HR related issues.
- In addition:
 - Skype interviews have been arranged for the summer seasonal labourer vacancies.
 - The returning summer labourers have been contacted to discuss plans for their return. Pre-employment tests have been booked.



- Participated in various legal and group benefit related webinars concerning COVID-19.
- Continue to participate in the County's ECC.

CORPORATE SERVICES

General

- Regional Commissions
 - The North Red Deer River Water Services Commission presented their 2019 financial statements for Board approval at the April 6, 2020 meeting.
 - The NRDRWSC Board also directed staff to prepare an updated utility rate bylaw in order to provide temporary rate relief for its members in 2020 and funded from the 2019 operating surplus.
 - The North Red Deer Regional Wastewater Commission presented their 2019 financial statements for Board approval at the April 6, 2020 meeting.
- Subdivision Development and Appeal Board
 - The SDAB hearing scheduled for March 23rd regarding MPC's decision to approve a development permit for a wedding venue on a property southeast of Mirror was adjourned as one of the parties could not attend. The applicant has since withdrawn their development permit.

Assessment and Taxation

- Annual inspections and Sales Verifications
 - With Assessments now complete, the department is now moving the data to the County's tax system
 - The Department is reviewing several tax notices from neighbouring communities looking for options to incorporate the policing costs on the County's 2020 notice.
- Tax Enforcement
 - Final registration of tax notifications was completed. The total number of registrations was 35.
 - The County and Land Titles will send out notifications to owners as well as those with a registered interest on title.
- Annual Reinspection
 - Staff have mailed out requests for information (RFI) to properties in Range 23 and are now working their way through the responses.



- As on-site inspections have been suspended, staff are also working on sending RFI's for the next range areas (21 and 22). These areas were planned to be reviewed in 2021.
- Staff are also using the new aerial photographs looking for changes in quarter sections including changes in farmland, gravel pits, etc. Small changes can be updated immediately for next year. Significant change will require an on-site inspection.

Finance

- 2019 Year end
 - Staff have finalized the audit for Lacombe County and the 12/21 Water Commission and awaiting presentation by BDO LLP to the respective Council and Board.
 - Work is continuing on the year end for the Sylvan Water and Wastewater Commissions. Those audits are scheduled to be complete in late May.
- 2020 Budget
 - Staff are starting work on the 2020 budget amendment for presentation to Council in May
- COVID Response
 - Over the past month, the department has maintained the level of service with limited staff at times.
 - Finance staff are making changes to the way Lacombe County submits bank deposits. Over the next month, staff will be working with Servus Credit Union in installing a cheque scanner. This will allow the County to deposit cheques electronically. This initiative should reduce the number of physical deposits brought to the bank. The department will also deposit cheques payable to the multiple Commissions using this method.
 - Staff are working with the Communications Coordinator to set up OptionPay on Lacombe County's website. This will offer ratepayers the ability to pay using a credit card outside of regular business hours via the County's website.

Information Technology

- Digium Phone System Upgrade
 - IT performed a major upgrade to the software used on the County's internal VOIP phone system. There is still some testing required on the new features introduced with this upgrade and IT anticipates rolling the enhancements out to staff within the next couple weeks.



- Telus Mobility Contract
 - IT has been working with Telus the last couple weeks on renewing the County's corporate mobility contract. Through discussions with the County's Telus representative, the department is anticipating some cost-savings in the monthly mobility charges on this new 3-year contract.
- Network Infrastructure Assessment
 - With the arrival of the department's new IT Infrastructure Coordinator, IT has begun an assessment of the current state of the County's networking hardware. The department anticipates replacement of some equipment in the server room that will increase the speed, reliability and availability of the County's network which will result in a more optimized experience for staff.

OPERATIONS

Public Works Shop

- Scheduled monthly services and commercial vehicle inspections were completed on heavy equipment and light/heavy duty trucks.
- Staff are just waiting to take delivery of the new gravel boxes to be installed on the new trucks.
- County staff are doing warranty repair work on the buggy walls and we will be reimbursed from Finning for the work completed. Additionally, we have two buggies in Edmonton having warranty work done.
- Winter maintenance and repairs on road construction and reclamation equipment has been ongoing since mid-December and everything is on track to rollout the first week of May.
- Summer grader blades have been ordered for when, or if, spring and summer show up.

Maintenance Crews

- The brushing crews have been working through the list of locations as per policy.
- Traffic count program continues throughout the winter with the implementation of the new traffic counters.
- With recent warm weather, mixed with periodic moisture, issues with our gravel roads are being noted and dealt with when equipment can get to them. As the frost comes out of our roads over the next few weeks we can expect the roads to be in poor condition.
- Water spring issues have been noted and addressed across the County as required.
- Have about 6,000 tonne of gravel to haul to Clive and Rangen stockpile sites to complete our winter gravel stockpiling program.



- In light of the conditions of our roads we have suspended all permitted loads within our County until conditions improve.

Construction

- Construction on C2741 (Rge. Rd. 27-4) is complete with fencing still outstanding.
- Construction of C2621 (Rge. Rd. 26-2) is complete with reclamation and fencing yet to do.
- In anticipation of this year's construction projects staff are finalizing designs and ironing out details with utility companies. Landowner consultations are ongoing and will progress throughout the spring.
- Brushing has been completed on C0211 (Rge. Rd. 2-1) in anticipation of the equipment starting on the project in May.

Parks

- Weekly/monthly playground inspections are complete with all sites in good repair. Even with the closures these still need to be completed.
- Bathroom (closed) and garbage areas continue to be checked and maintained weekly.
- Appropriate signage has been installed at all parks facilities informing public of their status.
- Sandy Point facilities have been closed to the public.
- Design and pricing is underway for the new bathroom facility at the Mirror ball diamonds. Tender prices should be received in the next couple weeks.
- All maintenance equipment, including mowers, weed whackers, etc. are currently being inspected and maintained prior to start up, which is anticipate mid-May.

Health and Safety

- There was only incident reported in this reporting period.
- Monthly safety meetings were held for all Operations staff.
- All non-essential training or safety plans have been delayed in light of COVID-19.
- All 2019 COR audit action items have been completed.
- Request for Peer audit participation sent to AMHSA for a July or August audit date. (Must be completed before COR expires in September.)
- New and returning staff orientations have started and will continue into May as different departments and crews return to work.

Additional Information

- BF 9495 (Forshee Bridge) was awarded to Formula Alberta Ltd. Contracts are currently out for signing, with an anticipated start date of July. This project came in just over \$450,000 under budget. The old bridge has been tarped to prevent bird nesting, and all landowner negotiations are complete.



- The Centreview project started on April 14, with work commencing on the culverts. Expect delays and road closure over the next couple weeks until the bridge culverts have been completed.
- Paving of Rge. Rd. 27-4 and Woody Nook Roads will begin a couple weeks prior to the anticipated paving of the Centreview Road.
- We have received confirmation from Land Titles that the property we acquired on the north side of the Kuhnen Natural area to facilitate the trail encroachments has been registered. Still remaining is the installation of the fence and this should be completed early this spring.
- A lease agreement has been developed for the implementation of the permanent dog park at Mirror. We are just waiting on feedback from the owner of the property.
- The Lacombe Athletic Park Association (LAPA) made us aware that they have prepared a tender for the expansion of the field house with a closing date for the end of April. Construction is slated to begin later this spring. The County has not committed and monies to this project and nor has LAPA requested any, at least to date.
- Staff continues to work on gravel exploration. There are currently three properties being investigated for gravel that will be completed shortly.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

AGRICULTURE/ENVIRONMENT

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry has made changes to the services offered by the Alberta Agriculture Information Centre. They have eliminated all Agricultural specialists and current staffing levels are three agents which are instructed to assist producers with questions regarding Agriculture and Forestry programs i.e. CAP Funding.

Lacombe County, was not notified about the change to service levels and was made aware of the change when we started to receive phone calls from County agricultural producers. Since that time the Manager of Agriculture and Environment has had discussions with the Alberta Agriculture and Forestry regarding what messaging is being passed on to producers. Currently, when producers call in to the Agriculture Info Centre they are being told to contact other Agriculture resource providers' i.e. Private industry, Agriculture research groups and County's.

Health Canada Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency has made the decision not to re-register 2% Liquid Strychnine Concentrate for the control of Richardson Ground Squirrels. Lacombe County is allowed to sell 2% LSC in 2020 and users have until 2021 to use the product. To date, Lacombe County has sold 25 cases of 2% LSC, which equates to 2 years worth of sales, based on previous sale averages. We are currently sold out of 2% LSC and supplies are extremely limited in North America, due to COVID-19 pandemic.



Agriculture Services have cancelled the spring 2020 Farm Safety campaign in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lacombe County is utilizing the portable sign locations for COVID-19 messaging.

Environmental Coordinator will be returning from maternity leave on April 27.

Upcoming Extension Activities

Extension events and activities have been suspended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Occurrence Reports	Road Use Agreements 0	Community Hours Required 99	Lacombe County	Communities
	Travis MJ Permits 166		Citations Issued 15	Citations Issued 2
County 1 Comm. 4	Planning & Development Occurrences 0	Community Hours Completed 93	Written Warnings 39	Written Warnings 9

Peace Officer Highlights:

March 4&5 – Officers attended annual training with Commercial Vehicle Enforcement to freshen up on changes in the ‘2020 Out of Service Criteria’. Lacombe County has three officers certified to conduct commercial vehicle inspections under the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, CVSA.

March 10 – Officers attended and staffed a booth at Lacombe County’s Spring Tune Up event in Lacombe. Officers provided residents with crime prevention information as well as ran a child seat inspection clinic for families.

March 19 – CPO Services unit meeting and safety meeting to discuss COVID-19 hazards and business resumption. Officers were split into two teams and we have staggered our shifts. CPO Services operating hours are now from 0700-2100 hrs.

School Resource Officer:

March 5 – Follow up on bullying complaint in schools

March 6 – Officers conducted a Safety presentation for the Alix-MAC School and attended the ‘Community Village’ event in Bentley.

March – Program development continues for SRO’s within the Wolf Creek Public Schools, despite schools being closed to students. Our officers continue to check in with the various



schools and are maintain relationships with staff. Research is being made into some online delivery through google classroom to help reach the students at home.

FIRE

Incidents

As of this writing, County Fire departments responded to a total of 51 incidents, with 35 of those being in the County response districts. With these calls, included County wide total for 2020 so far is 172 incidents with the largest two responses being Motor Vehicle Collisions and EMS Assists.

ALIX		BENTLEY		BLACKFALDS	CLIVE		ECKVILLE		LACOMBE		TOTAL	
Village	County	Town	County	County	Village	County	Town	County	City	County	Muni	County
1	11	0	5	1	0	0	0	6	15	12	16	35
12		5		1	0		6		27		51	
Largest Type EMS Assist		Largest Type		Largest Type MVC	Largest Type		Largest Type Alarms		Largest Type MVC		Largest Type MVC	

Fire Permits

147 Fire permits were issued in the month of March. For the year so far 79% of permits have been auto-approved by the system with the remaining 21% approved manually.

Fireworks Permits

Zero fireworks permits were issued, keeping the total number of issued fireworks permits to one.

Activities

Throughout the month of March the annual audit process was completed with the reviews of those audits being done with each municipal partner. Each year of the new audit system sees this program become more efficient, as well, the rate of compliance in the audits continues to be quite strong.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic all fire department general training sessions, NFPA training sessions and other group activities were cancelled. While this is not the ideal situation for our members, it is the best way for us to keep them healthy in order to maintain a sufficient level of members for response. In addition to this all fire halls are closed to the public and disinfection and cleaning protocols have been increase.



Emergency Management Activities

Throughout the majority of the month Emergency Management activities have been focused on various aspects of COVID-19 and its effect on Lacombe County.

Since officially activating the Lacombe County COVID-19 ECC, numerous plans have been drafted and implemented, and staff are being regularly updated on changes as they arise. Physical distancing processes have been implemented throughout the County and significant arrangements have been made to prepare for an increase in staff who may have to work from home or to accommodate alternate work arrangements.

Lacombe County emergency management is also participating in weekly calls with our LREMP partners to stay connected and aware of what they are working on and to be ready if any requests come for assistance or a more regional approach to managing this pandemic.

In addition to the Lacombe County, emergency management participates in daily press updates, weekly calls with the Provincial Operation Center, twice daily updates from AEMA and is part of an established communication network throughout Central Region that is being used for information sharing and to keep everyone up to date on staffing levels and other initiatives throughout the region.

UTILITIES

Highway 12/21

April 13th Duhamel leak inside transmission building. Shutoff valve downstream of the water meter split at the threading. The split was due to cement pad movement.

Metering vault sump line will need to be dug up and repaired. The extreme temperatures this winter have cracked the 1¼ outlet. Pumping the metering vault will be weekly until the freeze/thaw cycle is done.

Operators meeting planned for March 20th in Bashaw was cancelled due to COVID-19, it will be rescheduled when we're back to normal.

NorthShore Lift Station

A new Arjay gas monitor sensor has been replaced by TLC Instrumentation.

Camenex came out and installed an internal booster antenna inside the NSLS facility so we have cell service and Blackline monitoring.

The PRV on the header needs servicing. Summit valve was to be out on April 2nd but will reschedule this service as it isn't critical.



Sylvan Lake Lift Station & Main

Had another valve “lock-up” issue at the truck dump. The valve was worked for about an hour and responded favorably to the exercising. I have contacted Summit Valve to discuss options. Looking into the feasibility of a knife valve or a rubberized pinch valve.

OMF in Red Deer has power to the building and the generator has been delivered, CES is currently pulling wires to connect it to the transfer switch.

General

Since March 16th Lacombe County utility operators have been separated/isolated to east/west/central to help minimize contact between them. This would put a barrier between the spread of COVID-19 if one of us were to contract the virus. The emergency contact list for the operators was updated with an emergency contact for each of the operators.

Extra chlorine and Bioxide has been stored in case procurement becomes difficult.

The new operator Blackline GPS monitors which remotely monitor: 2hr check-in, slips/trips, gas detection, mass alerts and SOS feature were rolled out on the 16th of March. In an isolated type environment, these units keep our operators safe. The units are monitored remotely with notifications called/texted/emailed to EMS, and administrative staff.

PLANNING

Degraff’s RV Resort – Phase 2

The developer has initiated construction on Phase 2. The solicitor for the developer has also indicated that the developer intends to submit payment for their portion of the road pavement required to service DeGraff’s RV Resort in the near future as per the terms of the Development Agreement.

Cannabis facility updates

All, but one of the approved cannabis facilities are currently on hold and have received extensions on their development permits. Of the six facilities that have been approved so far only Greenway Pharma, in the Aspelund Industrial Park will be proceeding in the near term with operating their facility. The facility in Aspelund has an advantage of being operated within an existing building. As well Applejack Craft Cannabis, on Buffalo Lake continues to operate his existing facility but has received a year extension on his expansion plans.



Buffalo Lake South Shore Intermunicipal Development Plan

The review of the Buffalo Lake Intermunicipal Development Plan has continued under a separate process. Staff decided to postpone their March 20th working group meeting due to the COVID-19 situation until April 30th which will be held digitally. The purpose of the upcoming meeting will be to discuss potential options for clarification of the document; one of the more important items deals with the definition and application of development units within the growth nodes. These staff recommendations are to be presented to the committee for their consideration at a later date. Staff continue to make progress on the document behind the scenes; for example, after sharing data, updated base mapping was produced which reflects the current state of development around the lake.

Doef's Greenhouse Ltd. Expansion

Doef's Greenhouse Ltd. is expanding their greenhouse operation to the south west of their existing operation on the west side of Lincoln Road on the SE 11-41-28-W4M. The proposed development is an approximately 13 acre greenhouse that will be used to grow a variety of bell peppers for the Alberta/Western Canadian market. They will be powering the greenhouse via another 6MW cogeneration facility like they are using at their current facility. The total cost of the proposed development is estimated at \$25 million dollars and they will employ an additional 35 people for Phase 1 of their expansion.

Unauthorized Vehicles Complaint

The County received a complaint regarding a property in Mirror having multiple recreational vehicles and over-sized vehicles. Staff found five (5) recreational vehicles and two (2) over-sized vehicles. A letter has been sent to the property owner, outlining that a Hamlet Residential 1 'H-R1' designated property is only permitted to have one (1) recreational vehicle, and that other over-sized vehicles are not permitted. The letter is also requesting that they contact Planning Services to discuss how the issues can be resolved. Due to the current COVID situation, staff are trying to balance the concerns of neighbouring property owners while still giving the property owners in question a reasonable time frame to ensure the work can be completed safely.

COVID-19

Senior Planner (Cajun) has been sitting on the Emergency Coordination Centre team for COVID-19 response, staffing the Assistant Information Officer position. Working with the Information Officer (Nicole), these two positions are ensuring key COVID-19 messages are being delivered to the public and to County staff. Electronic means of communication via the website and social media have been key for the response as the situation changes rapidly, and a number of videos have been produced to date. These videos have been external messages from Reeve Law to the community, internal messages from the County Manager (Tim) to staff, and even staff encouraging the community to do their part to help prevent the spread. Print materials have also been produced, primarily for signage (large billboards, parks/playgrounds/washrooms signage, office closure notices, etc).