



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT OCTOBER 28, 2021

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### **COUNTY MANAGER**

#### **Director of Community Services**

Dion Burlock, our current Manager of Agricultural and Environmental Services, has been selected as the County's Director of Community Services. Dion will officially assume his new duties on January 1, 2022, following the December 31, 2021, retirement of current Director, Keith Boras.

#### **Designated Industrial Properties (DIP) - Assessment Services Contract**

Alberta Municipal Affairs has extended our DIP assessment services contract to March 31, 2023. Our current contract was due to expire on December 31, 2021. The contract value of \$162,610 per annum remains unchanged.

#### **Innovation Initiative**

The following staff have agreed to serve on the County's inaugural Innovation committee:

Peter Duke, Planning Services

Brandon Maier, Operations

Mike Foote, Corporate Services

Mark Sproule, Community Services

Nicole Plewis, County Manager Dept.

Tim Timmons, County Manager

The committee met on October 13<sup>th</sup> and agreed to proceed with a staff idea pitching competition (similar to the Dragon's Den) in 2022. Committee members are currently developing the framework for this initiative and will be sharing it with staff early in the new year.

#### **Working from Home**

With the provincial government COVID-19 work-from-home public health order still in place several of our staff are participating in our remote work program. Approximately 35% of our office employees are working from home on either a full-time or rotational basis.

#### **Home Support Program**

We received a request to consider providing home support services, through our arrangement with Lacombe FCSS, to a resident of Red Deer County who lives near the Red Deer County/Lacombe County boundary. We did not support this request.



## **Communications**

### Media Releases/Online Promotion

- Ongoing promotion of the election (lots and lots)
  - Advance Vote/Election Day promotion
  - Specifics on “what you’re voting on” breakdown by Division
- Truth and Reconciliation Day recognition

### Other Communications

- Truth and Reconciliation Day
  - Daily emails to staff leading up to Orange Shirt Day on Truth and Reconciliation Day, Residential Schools, Sixties Scoop, Orange Shirt Day, and an overview with resources.
- Assisted Paula with Chamber of Commerce Business Gala scripts (virtual/video script)

### Communications Action Plan

- Website revamp Update
  - Most of the content has moved over to the new one
  - Almost ready to move over documents

## **Human Resources**

- Participated in the recruitment for the Director of Community Services position
- Continuing to work on the implementation of the new HR software system which will assist in streamlining several routine HR functions
- Continuing to work on the 2022 Salary and Wage budget:
  - Employer and employee contributions to Local Authorities Pension Plan will decrease in 2022
  - The employer rate, up to the YMPE, will decrease from 9.39% to 8.45%. The employer rate, over the YMPE, will decrease from 13.84% to 12.80%. This decrease results in savings for Lacombe County of approximately \$83,000

## **PLANNING**

### **Wilson’s Beach Estates – Revised Communal Wastewater System**

Construction work is progressing with the mainline within Phase 1 of the development now complete, along with all the tie-ins to the lots. The supply line into the tanks at Lincoln Ranch should be completed by the end of the month. The system should be complete by early November.

### **Lincoln Ranch/DeGraff – Communal Wastewater System**

The developer is in the process of receiving approval from the County to commence construction on the access road and wastewater treatment system components. This



construction is for the wastewater treatment system for both Wilson Beach Estates and DeGraff's RV Resort. No work for Lincoln Ranch is proposed at this time.

### **Land and Property Rights Tribunal (LPRT)**

The LPRT made a decision on the Victor and Susan Bergen subdivision for a 33-acre fragmented subdivision. The LPRT agreed the parcel was not fragmented but decided that a residential parcel with an Environmental Reserve Easement (ERE) would better protect the waterbody and wetlands than a smaller residential parcel with the riparian area remaining within the remnant agricultural quarter. The LPRT approved the proposed 33-acre parcel on its merits as a first parcel out subdivision, with significant variances of the maximum parcel size and minimum age of the existing residence.

### **Heavy Industrial Rezoning**

Staff have been in discussions with two heavy industrial businesses looking to expand their operations within the County. Both of these expansions will necessitate a rezoning of agricultural land. These projects require a lot of work up-front from both staff and the applicants to ensure all the proper technical studies have been completed. Both projects build upon our existing heavy industrial nodes and no major issues have been identified at this stage of the projects.

### **Heartland Manor**

The seniors care residence in the Milton Area, operated by the Lacombe Action Group, originally built in 1994, has been purchased and the new owners received a development permit to convert the building to a residential use. As part of that approval the applicant was required to convert the garage back to an accessory building by removing the kitchen appliances and associated wiring. This structure was previously permitted as a security/operator suite for the senior's residence. Staff have completed an inspection of the property and the garage has now been adequately converted to an accessory building. Interior work continues to occur to make the buildings suitable for residential use.

### **Dairy Innovation West (DIW)**

Contact was made with the team at Alberta Milk regarding the status of the milk processing facility that was approved by the County in the 2020. Alberta Milk has confirmed that the project by Dairy Innovation West intends to move ahead in the spring of 2022.

### **New Agri-business Feature**

The Economic Development Officer will be introducing a new monthly submission called 'Ag Entrepreneur Spotlight'. Eligible businesses will be required to fill out an application for consideration. A feature article will be written and included in the County News, as well as shared in part with quotes, links and photos on the County's social media. The intent of the article is to highlight the County's agricultural community and encourage more agricultural opportunities.



### **Watipi Campground/Kuhnen Park**

In the spring of this year staff informed Council that the Kuhnens indicated they were considering turning the operation of the Watipi Campground in Kuhnen Park back to the County in 2022. As an update to this, the Kuhnens have confirmed that they will continue to operate the campground as allowed under the current lease agreement. They have entered into an agreement with a new manager who will operate the campground and will offer a nature educational theme to it. This will include various nature walks and other educational components.

### **Trailer Sign Compliance**

A compliance letter has been issued to a landowner for the unauthorized trailer sign located along the QEII Highway near the Blindman River. The County does not allow trailer signs; therefore, the signage is unauthorized. The compliance letter requires the trailer sign to be removed by November 1, 2021.

## **CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **General**

- 2021 Municipal Election
  - The County held a successful 2021 municipal election.
  - Voting took place in both advance and general votes.
  - With referendum and senate elections in place, the County provided 17 voting stations throughout the County on election day in addition to 7 locations for the advance vote.
  - Voter turnout varied. In Divisions 4, 5 & 6 where there were municipal councillor elections the turnout was approximately 37%. The combined turnout for senate and referendum voting was 31%. These numbers are up from 2017 when municipal elections saw 30% turnout.
  - There is a number of post election activities to complete including receiving post election financial disclosures from candidates and sorting and storing election supplies until required in the future.
  
- Composite Assessment Review Board Appeals
  - The County received three non-residential appeals related to the 2021 tax year.
  - Hearings are now scheduled for December 1<sup>st</sup>. The hearings will be heard by the County's ARB members and will be chaired by a provincially appointed member.
  
- Outstanding Property Taxes
  - With passing of the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for payment of taxes, the County still had \$2.9 million in total outstanding taxes. This compares to \$3.435 million that was outstanding a year ago and \$2.301 million in 2019.



## **Assessment**

- 2022 Assessment Reinspection
  - Sales data compilation is now complete and reinspection work also nearing completion.
  - Staff are now working on picking up new development from 2021.
  - Oilfield and industrial development annual inspections will commence in November.
- Designated Industrial Property Appeals
  - The County's assessor has been seconded to the Province to assist in the current designated industrial property appeal.
  - The Province, and the County's assessor have been working through information provided by the Complainant's tax agent.
  - Based on information received to date, the parties are preparing for a full hearing with the Land and Property Rights Tribunal.
- Tax Sale
  - Staff are working on developing the reserve bid prices for properties going to tax auction.
  - Originally 15 parcels were advertised in September. As of October 20<sup>th</sup>, 10 remain on the list with several owners working to address their outstanding taxes prior to tax auction. The tax auction is scheduled for November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- 2021 Non-Residential Assessment Appeals
  - Staff are also preparing the Composite Assessment Review Board Appeals scheduled for December 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Staff are reviewing information submitted by the Complainants earlier this week.

## **Finance**

- Front Counter Staff:
  - Staff continue to input and validate civic addresses in the financial software as time permits.
  - The deadline for property taxes was September 30<sup>th</sup>, and the staff, as always, served our customers with outstanding service.
- Payroll
  - Seasonal layoffs commence in some departments, keeping payroll staff busy with processing final pays and records of employment.
- Finance
  - Budget preparation is well underway. Staff are pulling together all department budgets into one document to present to Council on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - Staff are working on preparing quarterly financial information reports for the November 10<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.



## **Information Technology**

- NextGen 9-1-1 Seminar #2
  - IT attended the second seminar on the NextGen 9-1-1 rollout that focused on the GIS/mapping requirements for the new system as positional accuracy will be greatly enhanced.
  - Telus emphasized the need for municipalities to standardize the GIS data to work in the new system, something that has already been done with municipalities who have joined the Alberta Municipal Data Sharing Partnership. The County is a member of the partnership.
  - As a result, the municipalities in the partnership will not have to do any significant data manipulation for the data to be integrated into the NextGen 9-1-1 system.
  
- Firewall & Switch Replacement
  - IT has decided to replace the County's existing SonicWall firewall with a new firewall from Fortinet that will greatly enhance the County's perimeter defence from potential cyberattacks.
  - Through analysis of top performing firewalls in the industry in 2021, Fortinet received the highest rankings and scores on cyber protection. It is anticipated that staff will be switching over to the new firewall in early 2022.
  
- Cyber Security
  - As part of the County's ongoing cyber security program, IT will be working with a 3rd party consultant to perform an independent evaluation of the County's entire cyber security program before the end of 2021.
  - This assessment will provide an overview of the County's current security posture, an objective review of existing plans and a guide on how to improve on any deficiencies that may exist.
  - It will also help the County develop tactical and strategic directions to further mature and strengthen the security program.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Public Works Shop**

- Scheduled monthly services and commercial vehicle inspections are complete on heavy equipment and light/heavy duty trucks.
- The new 5500 service truck has finally arrived and is having the service body installed. The crane and compressor are installed in Penticton.
- The grader wings have been repaired and serviced and will be installed when the weather dictates.
- Work is complete on sanders and plows in preparation for the upcoming season.
- Staff are preparing and reviewing tenders for the 2022 capital equipment.
- Shop staff continue regular repairs for fire and LRWSC.



## **Maintenance Crews**

- With the completion of the gravel program, crews have started work on CCE7 (C&E Trail) and are still on track to be completed this construction year.
- The docks at Sunbreaker Cove are scheduled to be removed in the next couple weeks.
- 5,000 tonne of winter sand has been mixed and stacked in preparation for the upcoming season.
- Crews worked on Rge. Rd. 23-3A (South Alix Road). Work included narrowing it up, capping it with clay and re-graveling.
- The second application of calcium for dust control is complete.
- With the dry conditions, calls regarding washboard have increased.

## **Construction**

- Construction is complete on C2352 and C3841 (off Highway 11 near Red Deer River) with fencing to be completed.
- Construction is complete on C3926 (east of Highway 20) with fencing to be completed.
- Construction is complete on C0401 and C3951 (west of Highway 766) with fencing and reclamation yet to be completed.
- Construction on C2331 (Meston Road) is complete with fencing and reclamation to be completed.
- Construction on C4023 (Posti Road) is 50% complete.

## **Parks**

- Weekly/monthly playground inspections are complete with all sites in good repair. Annual audits are complete as well.
- Bathrooms and garbage receptacles continue to be checked and maintained weekly.
- Sandy Point is closed for the season. The washrooms will be opened back up to the public when ice fishing season opens.
- The locks at the Mirror campground bathroom have been changed so that users can no longer lock them behind them.
- The highway information signs for Mary and Cliff Soper Natural area have arrived. County staff have installed the signs located on our roads and we are waiting on Alberta Transportation to install the signs located on Highway 2A.
- Staff are preparing an update to the paid parking systems for a future Committee of the whole meeting.

## **Health and Safety**

- Monthly safety meetings were held for all Operations staff. Future safety meetings are now virtual in light of tighter restrictions.
- 2021 OH&S legislation changes have been deferred from September 1. The latest from the Government is the changes are expected to be released later in the year.
- Action items identified in the 2021 COR Audit has been ongoing and continues into the fall with 7 of the 12 completed to date.



- The third quarter inspection of County building sites is complete, and a report is being prepared for Administration's review.
- Many training sessions have been scheduled and completed as well as catching up on items that were postponed due to COVID. These include WHMIS, first aid and defensive driving.

### **Additional Information**

- Bridge files 1477 (Renn Mill Road), 9405 (Meston Road) and 13454 (South Bentley) are complete.
- Bridge files 214 (Jaffrey) and 1436 (Rainy Creek) should be complete by the end of October.
- All 2021 paving projects are complete.
- We are still waiting on Can-Traffic to be working in the area to perform adjustments on the traffic lights at the entrance to the Aspelund Industrial Park.
- CP has indicated the crossing work on Range Road 27-4 is being performed by a third-party. CP further indicated this work is still a priority for 2021.
- We are still working with CP for them to complete their portion of the work to remove stop signs on Twp. Rd. 39-0. Speed reduction signs have been posted. This is an ongoing issue as the railway is being very nitpicky on brushing. There has been a lack of response this month however we will continue to follow up.
- Staff have been reviewing many plans as they relate to development which include Lincoln Ranch, Wilsons Beach Estates, Sandy Point 3B and campground expansion, and Eagle Builders FAC storm pond.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **AGRICULTURE**

The Roadside Spraying Program and the Roadside Mowing Program have completed annual operations.

Clubroot of Canola Inspections are completed for the 2021 growing season. Forty-five fields were inspected with six fields confirmed for the presence of Clubroot of Canola. Two fields had previously been identified for the presence of Clubroot and four fields were identified as new infestations.

One Clubroot of Canola sample was submitted to the U of A for variant testing as requested by the landowner.

Lacombe County participates annually in a provincial Canola pest survey on behalf of Alberta Agriculture. Alberta Agriculture uses this information to create provincial distribution maps and identify areas for future research. Six fields were surveyed and samples were submitted for the presence of Clubroot, Blackleg, Sclerotinia, Verticillium, and Asters Yellow.





Lacombe County, Red Deer County, and the MacDougall Wealth Management Group are partnering to host a webinar on “Securing your Farm and Future” in January 2022. The workshop will entail different facets and processes involved with farm succession planning.

**ENVIRONMENT**

A field assessment was completed on the Crooker Wetland, as required by the County’s Water Act Approval with Alberta Environment and Parks. The County was required to monitor the Crooker Wetland for five years with 2021 being the final year. The wetland continues to progress towards a fully functioning wetland ecosystem.

Wetland assessments for the 2022 Road Construction season are currently being completed, as part of the Water Act Approval process for the disturbance of wetlands.

The Environmental Stewardship Award recipient was selected by a committee made up of the Environmental Coordinator, Councilor Dana Kreil, and the Ellis Bird Farm Site Manager and Biologist, Sandy Van Dijk.

**CPO SERVICES**

**September**

Occurrence Reports	Road Use Agreements 4	Community Hours Required 98	Lacombe County	Communities
	Travis MJ Permits 203		Citations Issued 46	Citations Issued 5
County 17	Planning & Development Occurrences 1	Community Hours Completed 59.5	Written Warnings 31	Written Warnings 13
Comm.13				
SRO 5				

**PEACE OFFICER HIGHLIGHTS**

September brought with it a new school year, and our SRO is back engaging with students, teachers, and staff. On September 7<sup>th</sup>, CPO Services met with Wolf Creek Public Schools to discuss back to school for the 2021/22 school year. Our SRO has been training school crossing guards through the patroller program and has attended and engaged students in events like the Terry Fox Pancake Breakfast.

With summer winding down, so has the use of the Sandypoint and Sunbreaker Cove recreation areas. Peace Officers have been conducting regular weekend patrols since May and have encountered a variety of issues during this time including impaired driving, dog attacks, and the illegal operation of golf carts on County roadways.



The majority of complaints this month were concerning speed. Rosedale Valley underwent a posted speed limit change and several patrols were conducted, including the placement of one of our radar speed signs. Other areas of concern noted were Range Road 26-2, between Milton Road and JJ Collett, and Freedom Road near Joffre.

**FIRE**

**Incidents**

ALIX		BENTLEY		BLACKFALDS	CLIVE		ECKVILLE		LACOMBE		TOTAL	
Village	County	Town	County	County	Village	County	Town	County	City	County	Muni	County
10	4	2	5	1	0	1	3	3	19	5	34	19
14		7		1	1		6		24		53	
Largest Type EMS Assist		Largest Type Vehicle Collision		Largest Type Vehicle Collision	Largest Type Vehicle Fire		Largest Type EMS Assist		Largest Type Alarms Ringing		Largest Type Alarms Ringing	
Fire Permits		Current Month		54			Fireworks Permit		Current Month		2	
		Year to Date		1076					Year to Date		28	
Monthly Invoice Total		7		New Policy Invoices	4		Total Invoice Amount		\$26,930.00			

**Activities**

September was a slower than normal month with only 19 calls in the County, compared to 40 in August and 61 in July. There is no one reason for this as call volumes were low in all districts. There was one significant structure fire in the Town of Bentley which had responders from Bentley and Lacombe on-site to get the blaze under control. While the initial structure was lost, both neighboring properties were threatened and saved by crews on the scene. The Reeve be directed to call a special Council meeting for the purpose of participating in a joint meeting with the City of Lacombe and LAPA on December 1, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the Lacombe Memorial Centre to discuss Phase Two of LAPA’s Track and Field Expansion Project. This is a testament to the thorough training programs across the County.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

The details of the draft LREMP Emergency Social Services plan were presented to the LREMP Advisory group in September, this concludes a significant portion of work that Lacombe County staff had been assisting with and allows for the document to move into its final stages of completion.



Three more Lacombe County staff were selected to train for the Central Region All Hazard Incident Management team. When staff is done their training a total of six staff will have received this high-level training, which is a significant benefit for the County and our neighbors.

## **DIRECTOR**

Progress on the Highway 12/21 water lines extension project is steady. The line to Edberg is complete including pressure testing as of August 8th. The mechanical in the Edberg pump house is scheduled to be completed in late December. Crews have now mobilized to the Clive site where fusing, and drilling is underway. The Clive line has experienced two delays, the first delay is due to significant rock found at the pipe installation depth. This was overcome by open-cutting this segment at a higher cost. The second delay has been dealing with CP Rail on two crossings with original estimates had us waiting for flag people until late March of 2022. We have been given the assurance that we can have this moved up to November.

SLRWWC is also progressing well. It is anticipated that this project will be complete and commissioned by mid-November.

Connections on the Sylvan Lake Communal Project are also ramping up ahead of the October 31, 2021, deadline. I will have numbers for Council at the meeting.