

M.D. of Bonnyville Media Release December 11, 2013

M.D. of Bonnyville passes 2014 interim budget

\$39.7 million allocated to road improvements and maintenance

The Municipal District of Bonnyville Council approved an \$83,235,766 interim balanced budget at its Wednesday meeting.

M.D. Council will pass the final 2014 budget in the spring, once the provincial government releases its Education Requisition. For interim budget purposes, tax estimates are based on the 2013 assessment. The 2014 estimated expenditures are funded by \$51.87 million in Taxes, with a proposed one mill increase for Non-Residential; \$5.57 million in Provincial Grants; \$12.11 million from General Revenues such as fees and partnership dollars and \$13.69 million in transfers from surplus (reserve funds from carried over projects and funds remaining from previous years' budgets).

Reeve Ed Rondeau said road improvements and maintenance are still the highest priority for Council, but funds are also being allocated to improve the quality of life for residents. Council has made a commitment towards regional cooperation and has dedicated funds for neighbouring urban municipalities and organizations that provide services to M.D. residents. "During the budgeting process it is always a balancing act to meet the expectations of our M.D. residents. We know that roads are always the first on the list, as most of our residents travel them every day. But, during our town halls this year, residents asked for increased recreational opportunities and Council always has organizations approaching it throughout the year requesting funding for various initiatives."

Council has allocated \$20.8 million for Road Improvements/Construction, \$13.6 million for Gravel/Oil Road Maintenance and \$2.8 million for Public Works Equipment in the interim budget. The Second Phase of the Ardmore Street Improvements tallies up to \$2.5 million. The M.D. is stockpiling a large amount of gravel this year to lock in lower prices. Rondeau said this affects this year's cash flow since "we have gravel instead of dollars, but it saves us money in the long term."

For the first time, Council has budgeted \$100,000 to do a Municipal Census in 2014. "The M.D. has grown considerably since the last federal census in 2011," Rondeau said. "This population increase will provide additional funding from provincial and federal grants."

The 2014 budget includes a variety of projects that will improve services to our communities and build upon our recreational infrastructure, Rondeau said.

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Council will continue to fund the Senior's Transportation Grant for \$60,000. Annual Operating Grants to the 15 Community Halls will continue for a cost of \$700,000. A new La Corey Fire Hall and Public Works building has been budgeted for \$2.2 million. The Glendon Rapid Response Unit will be replaced for \$177,000. At Kinosoo Ridge, a Tube Park will be constructed for a proposed cost of \$400,000. The Fort Kent Skating Rink has been budgeted for one million dollars.

Regional projects such as Landfill Operations come in at \$2.2 million; Bonnyville Centennial Centre at one million dollars and the Regional Community Development Agreement Grant for the Town of Bonnyville and the Village of Glendon at \$862,987 and \$126,888 respectively to serve the needs of M.D. ratepayers. Council has also budgeted \$20,000 each for the Glendon, Bonnyville and Cold Lake Agricultural Societies. The Glendon Agricultural Society will receive an additional \$158,000 for its arena renovations. The Cold Lake and Bonnyville Museums will each receive \$17,500.

Rondeau said the M.D. continues to be a good "regional citizen" by providing funding support for the Beaver River Regional Waste Management Commission, Regional Fire Authority, Bonnyville and District Family and Community Support Services and Cold Lake and District FCSS, as well as the libraries in Cold Lake and Bonnyville. "Council is committed to supporting the Regional Community Development Agreement as well as cost-sharing agreements for fire, ambulance, libraries, FCSS, airport and Part 9 Companies because these entities provide services to the residents of the whole region."

Council will take a second look at the budget in early 2014, once the year-end is complete and assessment figures are tallied.

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