

M.D. of Bonnyville Media Release April 27, 2016

M.D. Council passes 2016 budget

\$40.8 million allocated to road maintenance and improvements

The Municipal District of Bonnyville Council approved a balanced \$111,810,280 budget for 2016, including the school requisition, on Wednesday.

For the municipal portion of the tax bill, Council agreed to keep the Residential Mill Rate at 2.7663, the Farm Mill Rate at 5.0000 and the Non-Residential Mill Rate at 15.5000.

“Council had to make some difficult decisions this year when setting the mill rate,” Reeve Ed Rondeau said, “as the increase in the education tax requisition from the province took us by surprise.” In 2016 the M.D. is required to collect \$13.5 million in education taxes for the Alberta government.

“Council looked at a sample of 4,733 residential properties to see how maintaining the same municipal mill rate from 2015 would affect them. We found that 70 percent would have a zero to nine percent *decrease*. The remaining 30 percent would see a zero to 18 percent increase. Those residents seeing a higher tax increase is usually the result of some type of improvement, which increased their property assessment values,” Rondeau said.

Applying the 2016 provincial education tax requisition resulted in a 3.2 percent increase in the school tax from last year. “This increase in the school tax means a possible \$36 increase on a \$500,000 residential property. The 3.2 percent school tax increase represents \$1 million more in taxes that M.D. residents have to pay to the provincial government.”

Rondeau urges residents to look at their tax bill at the end of May as the education tax, along with the requisition from Lakeland Lodge and Housing, is separated out from the municipal tax allotment. “It’s important to understand that the province controls the mill rate for the school tax requisition. Municipalities have no say in how they are set. The municipality only collects and remits the school taxes.”

Rondeau says budget deliberations are always about getting the best bang for the buck. “Council does its best to balance all the demands with the reality of living within our means. The total municipal taxes that the residential ratepayer pays the M.D. is \$6 million, farmland taxes are \$600,000 and the balance comes from Non-Residential taxes.”

In 2016, a total of \$26.2 million is being put towards road improvements and construction for gravel, oiled, and paved roads. Another \$14.6 million is allocated to gravel and oiled road maintenance. In addition \$3.5 million is allocated for the next phase of the Ardmore Street Improvements, \$7 million for Gurneyville Road construction in 2017 and \$2.5 million for the possible next phase of construction on Baywood Road in 2017 or 2018. The budget also includes \$600,000 for Public Works equipment.

“Roads are the priority for the majority of our residents, and Council is continuing to attack the M.D.’s road deficit,” Rondeau said. “While roads are at the top of everyone’s agenda, the M.D. also delivers quality of life services to our residents.”

Other budget priorities include: \$2.5 million for Landfill Operations, \$2 million for Agricultural Services, \$600,000 for the Goodridge Rescue Truck and Cold Lake Tanker, \$300,000 to complete the La Corey Fire Hall/Grader Shop, and \$2.1 million to complete the Public Safety Building. The 15 Community Halls and three Community Societies will receive annual grants for a total of \$700,000. The Seniors Transportation Grant continues to be funded with a grant of \$60,000.

Rondeau says the M.D. collaborates and partners with community organizations and neighbouring municipalities to enhance services for all residents throughout the region.

Funding for the Inter-Municipal Cooperation Program (IMCP) is \$5 million to help neighbouring municipalities pay for services M.D. residents utilize. In 2016, the Town of Bonnyville can access \$3.8 million, the Village of Glendon can access just over \$500,000 and the City of Cold Lake receives \$645,800. The IMCP funding includes \$1 million for the Bonnyville and District Centennial Centre. Library services funding is allocated to Bonnyville and District Library at \$163,642, Cold Lake Library for \$75,875 and the Northern Lights Library System for \$134,182. Bonnyville and District Family and Community Support Services receives \$315,571 and Cold Lake FCSS gets \$146,319. The agricultural societies in the three urban centres – Cold Lake, Bonnyville and Glendon – receive \$20,000 each for a total of \$60,000. The Cold Lake and Bonnyville museums receive \$17,500 each.

This year’s revenues are to be funded by \$7.71 million in provincial grants, \$12.48 million from M.D. general revenues, \$82.95 million in taxes, and \$8.67 million in transfers from surplus.

Rondeau says now that the budget is passed, the combined Tax and Assessment notices will be sent out May 27. He urges residents to review their tax notice carefully. If residents have any questions regarding their tax notice, they are asked to contact the M.D. Tax Department at 780.826.3171. If residents have any questions specifically about their assessments, please contact the M.D. Assessment Department at 780.826.3171.

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