

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT BONNYVILLE NO. 87

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS December 12, 2018

Keeping you informed of the services, business and development that affect YOU!

☐#1 Council Passes 2019 Interim Operating Budget – The Municipal District of Bonnyville Council approved \$49,143,000 for the 2019 Interim Operating Budget. The operating budget, which does not include capital budget items (with the exception of \$143,000 for capital equipment replacement purchases for the Public Safety Department), is meant to keep the M.D. open for business during the first quarter of 2019, when final budget deliberations will take place (January 8, 10, 15 and 16, 2019). This includes keeping the lights on, staff continuing to look after our residents by delivering essential services (customer service, snow removal, waste pick up, water and sewer services) and contingency funds for any emergent projects that come up before the final budget can be approved in the spring.

In an effort to continue to be transparent and engage with residents, Council will host Town Halls in the new year to get resident feedback. So what can ratepayers in the M.D. expect to see in the final budget? Reeve Greg Sawchuk explained Council's priority will continue to make industry and business welcome in the M.D., as well as continuing to expand recreation opportunities for M.D. residents. In 2019, small business (50 or less employees) will continue to benefit from the M.D.'s Small Business Property Sub-Class Mill Rate. Council is also eyeing a decrease to the M.D.'s Non-Residential Mill Rate, making our region more attractive for larger businesses to set up shop in the M.D. Sawchuk said this move will also help bring the M.D. closer to the provincially mandated 5:1 tax ratio (meaning the highest non-residential tax rate can be no more than five times the lowest residential rate). "This budget will recognize the current economic conditions," Sawchuk said. "Our Council will take a conservative approach, while maintaining essential services." The Parks, Recreation and Culture department is currently accepting proposals for a feasibility study for a multi-use, outdoor recreation park. This is just one of the potential projects Council is looking at to serve the recreation needs of M.D. residents, while also creating facilities which may draw regional and provincial sporting events. Keep an eye on our website, www.md.bonnyville.ab.ca or our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MDBonnyville for the announcement regarding dates for the Town Halls.

☐#2 Lessard Bridge Repair Tender Awarded – Council awarded the tender to repair the Lessard Bridge to Formula Alberta Ltd., for the price of \$464,360, with a total project budget of \$564,996 including contingencies and engineering. Councillor Dana Swigart initially had reservations about accepting the lowest bid, due to the price difference between Formula Alberta and the highest bidder. Director of Transportation and Utilities, Darcy Zelisko explained it is because Formula Alberta owns a lot of its own equipment, where some of the higher bidders had equipment rentals calculated into the bidding price. The Lessard Bridge has been closed to traffic since early spring. Melting snow and ice floes damaged the structure of the bridge, making it unsafe to travel on. The repairs are expected to be completed by the end of the winter, as long as the weather cooperates.

□#3 Parks, Rec. and Culture Updates – Kinosoo Ridge’s opening weekend was successful. All runs were open by Dec. 8, thanks to a generous snowfall on Dec. 2. The cross-country ski trails at Muriel Lake M.D. Park are now open, and are in fantastic condition. Trail updates will be posted on the M.D. website and social media platforms weekly. Director Chris McCord mentioned she is looking into a couple of grants/rebate programs that will help with replacing lighting at Kinosoo and the Parks Shop with LED lights, as well as a grant to help cover some wage costs for a summer position. With the combination of less-than stellar weather and the economy, campground revenues for the 2018 season were down slightly from the year before. Council agreed to let Cold Lake Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) use the chalet at Kinosoo Ridge, free of charge for the 2019 Northeast Zone FCSS meeting at the end of April. The Ridge will also cater the meeting at a set rate.

□#4 Planning and Development Update – During the month of November, the P & D department received 15 residential development permits, and three industrial permits, valued at \$1,355,500 for a year-to-date total of \$26,502,953. Also in November, the department took in 85 plumbing, gas, sewer and electrical permits. The M.D. has received 29 subdivision applications to date, with another expected by the end of the year. Council renewed five road allowance leases, for a period of three years each – Bylaw 1699 located at SW 19-61-6-W4M, Bylaw 1700 located at W/NW 15-62-5-W4M, Bylaw 1701 located at W/NW 21-63-6-W4M, Bylaw 1702 located at E/NE 34-63-7-W4M and Bylaw 1703 located at W/NW 13-61-5-W4M. Public Hearings were held for Bylaw 1697 regarding the Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) between the M.D. and the County of St. Paul, and for Bylaw 1698 regarding the IDP between the M.D. and Lac La Biche County. Bylaw 1669 was given Third Reading. This bylaw will allow the M.D. to update the fee schedule for licenses, permits, and make sure development is being done on a cost-recovery basis. Council agreed to waive subdivision fees for a property realignment in Cherry Grove. Currently the Cherry Grove Cemetery is encroaching on a neighbouring property. This predicament existed before the property was purchased in 2010. The landowners will have to come to an agreement and deal with surveying costs to rectify the situation.

□#5 Tax and Assessment Update – When taxes haven’t been able to be collected on a piece of property for three years, the municipality can hold a public auction to sell the land and recover tax monies owed. The M.D.’s tax department has whittled a list of 10 properties down to three, with the understanding one of those owners will establish a payment plan. If any properties remain on the list, a public auction will be held March 26, 2019. The M.D.’s goal is to make sure there are no properties up for public auction, and the Tax Department will continue working with landowners to make that happen.

□#6 Moose Lake Drainage Update – The drainage outlet at Birch Grove has been decommissioned. T & U Director Darcy Zelisko is currently waiting for an inspection by Alberta Environment and Parks, and to lift the environmental order. Consultants have been surveying and reviewing drainage plans around Moose Lake, and have brought multiple options forward to help develop a Master Drainage Plan, including installing drainage parkways (ditches), reconstructing storm water ponds, pumping out some areas

and installing a gravity-fed storm sewer system. New culverts have already been installed in Birch Grove in preparation for a new drainage parkway, in anticipation of approval. Zelisko said he is in the application process for a new drainage parkway to Pelican Narrows. Council agreed to present the Master Plan to the public in the new year.

☐#7 Funding Support – Council will provide the Cold Lake Snowmobile Club with \$17,000 to purchase a tracked utility vehicle to blade and groom trails, including the recently granted trail section through the Cold Lake M.D. Campground, and the Beaver River Trestle. The \$17,000 represents about half of the cost for the utility vehicle, with the balance coming from club-organized fundraising events. Council also approved a \$10,000 donation to both the Bonnyville Health Foundation Gala and the Cold Lake Hearts for Hospital Gala, and also approved buying two tables at each gala for a total cost of \$3,600.

☐#8 Briefly – Council tabled a decision regarding a request for \$20,000 for Physician Recruitment from Cold Lake’s Hearts for Healthcare. They’d like some more information on the project. The Jan. 23, 2019 Council meeting has been postponed to Jan. 30, as Council will be attending the provincial ASB conference in Calgary. Council forwarded a request for \$10,000 for the bi-annual Bonnyville Oil and Gas Show to 2019 budget deliberations.

For more information, contact Diane Jenkinson, Marketing and Communications Manager at 780-826-3171. Our website is a useful way to get the information you need.

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