



**COUNCIL MEETING
HIGHLIGHTS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 1, 2021**

Tofield Agricultural Society – Tofield Arena Upgrade

Dave Berrecloth and Darryl Lindberg, Tofield Agricultural Society, attended Council and provided an update on the Tofield Arena Upgrade project.

On May 19, 2021 and September 1, 2021, the Tofield Agricultural Society presented information to County Council regarding the need to replace the Tofield Arena floor and upgrade the Zamboni room.

The latest estimate of cost is \$1.56 million (\$1.2 million to replace the floor and \$360,000 to upgrade the Zamboni room). The Agricultural Society is requesting financial assistance from the Town of Tofield and the County. The Town has already committed up to \$500,000 towards the cost. The Agricultural Society will contribute \$200,000 through various fundraising efforts.

The Agricultural Society has submitted applications for several grants which, if successful, will reduce the amount required from the municipalities. A “best case scenario”, if all grant applications are successful, will require a \$100,000 grant from the County. A “worst case scenario”, if no grant applications are successful and the Zamboni room project is delayed, will require a \$500,000 grant from the County.

The County’s Capital Funding for Recreation Policy supports partnerships for recreation facilities. Requests are to be accompanied by a business plan and a minimum of 50% of the capital funding required for the project should be confirmed before Council considers its participation.

The Beaver Regional Partnership Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan encourages partnerships between municipalities and non-profit organizations for the delivery of regional recreation and culture services. One of the Plan’s outcomes is that existing regional investment in recreation be protected and sustained where warranted by usage and regional benefit. The Tofield Arena is considered a regional asset.

The last significant investment that the County made to the Tofield Arena was for a building addition and replacement of the ice plant. The Agricultural Society, County, and the Town partnered on this project with assistance from some grants.

Council passed a motion to approve a maximum grant of \$500,000 to the Tofield Agricultural Society to replace the Tofield Arena floor and upgrade the Zamboni room, to match the Town of Tofield’s contribution, with funding from the Claystone Waste dividend.

Viking/Beaver East Family and Community Support Services

Dawn Chrystian, Director, Viking/Beaver East Family and Community Support Services attended the Council meeting via Web Conferencing and presented the 2020 Beaver County Municipal Report.

Agricultural Services Board Member Appointment

At the November 3, 2021 Regular meeting of Council, administration was directed to advertise for the available PAL Member position on the ASB.

The ASB Member and Meetings Policy) states that 'No more than nine (9) members shall sit on the Agricultural Service Board. At least four (4) farmer members (Producers-at-Large) will be selected from throughout Beaver County in addition to all members of Council'.

An application process has been used in the past to seek qualified candidates for available positions on the board. The position was advertised and in total 6 applications were received for the board position.

Council passed a motion appointing Brad Boettger as Producer at Large (PAL) Member to the Agricultural Service Board from the applications received for a 3-year term.

Public Participation Plan

At the August 18, 2021, regular meeting of Council, administration was directed to prepare a Public Participation Plan in regards to water management and road maintenance programs.

In accordance with Council's Public Participation Policy, a plan has been drafted for Council to review and provide comment on. The Plan covers public participation opportunities and tools that will be used to gather input from County residents and municipal stakeholders.

Survey questions will be presented to Council in mid-December for comment prior to the survey opening in January for the public's input. Deadline for submissions will be January 19, 2022 to allow time for administration to review the information and prepare a report to Council.

Information regarding the Public Participation Plan will be published in the Beaver County Chronicle, on the County website, and through the County's social media profiles. An information flyer will also be sent to postal boxes within the County.

Council passed a motion to approve the Public Participation Plan requesting that County residents and municipal stakeholders provide input on policies and programs related to water management and road maintenance programs.

Budget Meeting Follow-up

Administration provided answers to several questions arising from the budget meeting held November 15, 2021.

1st Draft of the 2022 Budget

The 1st draft of the 2022 budget was presented for Council's consideration. In addition to the budget changes noted in the presentation, the County has been provided with the draft assessment year modifiers (AYMs) by Municipal Affairs.

These modifiers reflect inflationary changes from July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021 and if approved by the Minister, will increase the County's assessment base by approximately \$10.2 million, generating an additional \$159,030 in taxes.

Council passed a motion confirming the 1st draft 2022 budget.

Kinsella Agricultural Society – Funding Agreement

Kinsella Recreation and Agricultural Society is important in establishing and maintaining a sense of belonging in the community for the residents of Kinsella and the surrounding area. The Society provides recreation opportunities and community events that bring together the residents of the County as well as attracting visitors from outside. The Recreation and Agricultural Society is responsible for the operation of the Kinsella Community Hall and Rodeo Grounds along with any events that are run out of these venues.

For a 10-year period between January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2021, Beaver County has had an agreement with the Society to contribute financially to its operations. The agreement began with an \$11,600 payment in 2012 with a stipulation that each subsequent year's payment increase by either 3% or the percent change in Alberta's Consumer Price Index (CPI) from October to October, whichever is less.

With the yearly increases as outlined in the agreement, the final payment to the Society in 2021 will be \$13,082 (3% increase over 2020 amount as October-October CPI increased 4.3%). Because the 2022 CPI is unknown at this time, administration recommends that the 2022 grant be calculated as a 3% increase over 2021, which will be \$13,475. This would be the starting point of the agreement and would be expected to continually increase as the 10-year agreement progresses.

Council passed a motion to approve a renewal of the funding agreement with Kinsella Recreation and Agricultural Society for a period of 10 years, effective January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2031, with an amendment to Section 3a) to read: Commencing in 2022, a grant of Thirteen Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventy-Five Dollars (\$13,475.00).

Bylaw 21-1115 – Council Code of Conduct Bylaw

The Municipal Government Act requires that Council pass a Code of Conduct Bylaw. A Bylaw was passed by Council in 2018 and includes a provision that it be reviewed at least once every four years.

Recommendation #6 of the Corporate Governance Review suggests that Council revisit the terms of the Code of Conduct Bylaw and strengthen the confidentiality protocol, and that each Councillor swear and sign it upon becoming a Councillor.

At the October 27, 2021 Organizational meeting, each Councillor swore an oath to uphold the Code of Conduct Bylaw, but requested that administration review the Bylaw for potential amendments.

Administration noted that the Corporate Governance Review recommended that bylaws receive all three readings at one meeting only if the matter is time-sensitive. Delaying the third reading to a subsequent Council meeting provides time for additional thought and gives the public an opportunity for input.

Council passed first and second readings of Bylaw 21-1115, Council Code of Conduct Bylaw.

Suspension of CN Crossing Maintenance Payments

At the November 17, 2021, Regular Council meeting, Council passed a motion directing administration to research the withholding of crossing fees to CN Railway until confirmation of the whistle cessation project is completed.

At its June 16, 2021 regular meeting, Council agreed to fund the necessary improvements (modifications to crossing warning systems) to enable whistle cessation at the following crossings:
Mile 196.7 (Bruce Main Street) – improvements to cost \$26,384 (County pays 50%)
Mile 197.16 (SH 857) – improvements to cost \$17,984 (County pays 50%)

Mile 232.39 (SH 630 Lindbrook) – improvements to cost \$20,295 (County pays 50%). The County is not currently paying any maintenance on these three crossings. The County is paying maintenance on three other crossings at a total cost of \$979.50 per month.

The agreements have a dispute resolution clause that requires negotiation between the parties with further escalation to the Agency. There is no provision for the withholding of maintenance payments.

The County has requested that a representative of CN attend a Council meeting, but they have declined.

Council passed a motion that administration forward a letter to CN from Council requesting their attendance at a future Council meeting to discuss the Whistle Cessation Issue.

Future Dates

Council scheduled a Special Council meeting for Thursday, December 9, 2021, commencing at 2:00 pm.

Council scheduled a Agricultural Services Board meeting for January 18, 2022, commencing at 2:00 pm.

The next Regular Council Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday,
December 1, 2021, commencing at 9:30 am.

For more information, contact Beaver County toll free at 1-866-663-1333 or 780-663-3730.
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