



**COUNCIL MEETING  
HIGHLIGHTS  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 19, 2022**

**STARS FOUNDATION**

Glenda Farnden, Sr. Municipal Relations Liaison, STARS Foundation, attended the Council meeting via Zoom and presented the STARS Foundation Annual Report.

Later in the meeting Council passed a motion to approve funding to the STARS foundation at \$12,000 per year as standing motion as line item in ongoing annual budgets

**Northern Lights Library System**

James MacDonald, Executive Director and Vicky Lefebvre, Zone 2 Chair, Northern Lights Library System attended the meeting via Zoom. J. MacDonald and V. Lefebvre provided an overview of the functions of the Northern Lights Library System (NLLS). The NLLS is one of the seven regional library systems across Alberta, helping deliver comprehensive, efficient library services to all Albertans, regardless of where they live.

**Council – CAO Covenant**

A key issue for the County is to have an effectively operated corporate municipality, that requires a solid working relationship between the Council and its Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). One of the ways by which the relationship can be strengthened is through establishing a Council-CAO covenant, which commits both parties to seeking clarity in the relationship and seriously undertaking to conduct their respective roles appropriately. This covenant should be accepted or endorsed "in principle" and be seen as an appendix to a CAO bylaw and/or contract.

Council passed a motion approving the draft Council – CAO Covenant and agreeing to sign the Covenant document with the current interim CAO.

**Governance and Priorities Committee Proposal**

Administration recommended that Beaver County Council consider establishing a committee by bylaw that is named the "Governance and Priorities Committee" which is a committee consisting of all Councillors.

The objective of the Committee is to seek to understand various issues and to discuss and identify matters to be submitted to a formal Council meeting.

Council passed a motion directing administration to prepare a Governance and Priorities Committee bylaw and bring for first reading to the next Council meeting.

**Policy – Water Management in Country Residential Subdivisions**

The County has been working with affected landowners in Lindbrook Estates since Spring 2020 with respect to flooding on the County's municipal reserve (MR) lot which appears to have resulted in flooding of an adjacent privately-owned residential lot.

To obtain an understanding of the issues, the County retained Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions (Wood) to survey the lands affected. The following factors appear to have contributed to the flooding event:

- a) Extraordinarily wet conditions (prolonged rainfall as well as sudden rainfall events),
- b) Release of water previously held back by natural causes (i.e. beaver dams),
- c) Private land development downstream of the MR lot that blocked the flow of water from the MR.

Administration engaged with the downstream landowner for the purposes of re-establishing the flow of water along the natural drainage channel. An agreement could not be reached.

In an attempt to find options that may help to resolve the issue, administration consulted with Wood. Wood recommended that prior to exploring other options for redirecting water, the County prepare a water management plan for the entire subdivision and upstream catchment area. The cost of the plan is approximately \$80,000. Council did not approve the work.

Administration has developed a draft Policy to guide Council in its deliberations toward resolution of this issue as well as path forward for water management issues in country residential subdivisions.

Council passed a motion to defer the matter to a future Council meeting.

### **2022 Capital Purchases**

The 2022 interim budget was approved on December 15, 2021. Final budget approval is not expected until April 2022. Administration would like to purchase the following capital equipment before final budget approval:

#### **1. Three Patrol Graders**

Due to supply and demand issues and the pricing increase, administration would like to move forward with the tendering process, hoping to have the three graders by yearend.

#### **2. Tilt Deck Lowboy Trailer**

In the interim budget, Council approved the budget for a highway tractor for the amount of \$175,000. With price increases due to supply and demand challenges, administration did not budget enough for a new highway tractor. The highway tractor that was going to be replaced had some on-going issues however the shop mechanics have since been able to repair and solve them and the truck has now been running very well.

Administration is recommending that the County keep the highway tractor for another year and instead use the budgeted funds to replace and upgrade the lowboy trailer. The current trailer has served us well, however at twenty years old, it is showing its age. It is quite difficult to use when loading equipment, having to split and unhook the trailer, then load the equipment, then reconnect. As well, to be used safely it requires two people to operate. Newer versions of this type of trailer can be managed by one person while remaining connected and are simply more efficient and safer.

With COVID-19, there has been many long delays in product deliveries; for example, we are still waiting for one of our 2021 graders to be delivered. Administration would like to order everything as soon as possible as we expect these delays to continue this year.

Council passed a motion that Council authorize administration to tender for three patrol graders, and that the interim 2022 budget be adjusted to reflect the purchase of a new tilt deck lowboy trailer instead of a highway tractor for the equivalent budget of \$175,000.

### **Beaver County Authority in Dealing with Water Management**

In 2021, Alberta Environment initiated a pilot program which enabled them to contact trained individuals in some municipalities to complete an investigation on a water management complaint.

The Senior Community Peace Officer (CPO) completed a one-day training session. He was given the written authority to investigate a water complaint when requested by Alberta Environment. That authority expired on December 31, 2021. In discussion with Alberta Environment there may be an extension of that authority, with Council approval.

The authority granted was only to investigate a complaint that was initiated through Alberta Environment, not a public complaint to Beaver County. All water management complaints from the public still need to be reported to Alberta Environment. Alberta Environment tracks all the complaints and if requested by them, the CPO will complete an initial investigation and forward the findings to them. This authority is only to investigate a complaint and has no enforcement authority.

To date, the CPO has been asked to investigate one water complaint. In October 2021, Alberta Environment contacted the CPO to initiate an investigation into a water complaint north of Holden. The investigation was completed and findings forwarded to Alberta Environment which has decided to conduct a further in-depth investigation.

On September 1, 2021, Beaver County passed Bylaw 21-1110, Surface Drainage Bylaw.

Council passed a motion directing administration to bring back an RFD to a future Council meeting regarding Beaver County Authority in Dealing with Water Management.

### **2021 PERC AND DIRC Applications**

For the past six (6) years, the economic downturn in the oil and gas industry has caused hardship for many companies. Many companies are finding it difficult to pay the property taxes and the tax recovery procedure provided for in the Municipal Government Act has not been successful.

In 2018, the Alberta Government introduced a Provincial Education Refund Credit for Uncollected Education Property Taxes in Oil and Gas Properties program (PERC) to assist municipalities with payment of the school taxes that could not be collected from the oil and gas companies. A year later, the Designated Industrial Requisition Credit for Uncollected DIP Requisition taxes was created.

This program provides municipalities with a credit equal to the unpaid Provincial education requisition taxes and the Provincial DIP requisition taxes. No credit is given for uncollectible municipal or seniors' foundation taxes.

More recently, the MGA was amended to allow municipalities to place a special lien on properties owned by oil and gas companies in arrears. The lien can be registered without affecting a municipality's ability to apply for PERC and DIRC.

The term of the PERC and DIRC program has been extended to the 2021 tax year, with a total Provincial funding cap of \$30 million. An additional \$15 million is available for each of the 2022 and 2023 tax years.

In the past, to be eligible for the credit, municipalities were required to cancel the tax levy for the delinquent company. The Alberta Government introduced changes with the 2021 application whereby there is no longer a mandatory requirement to cancel the tax levy. Instead a Council motion is required confirming that Council acknowledges submission of a PERC and DIRC application.

Sequoia Resources Corp. acquired many assets from other gas companies in Beaver County in late 2016. In early 2018, the County received notification that Sequoia filed for bankruptcy and we have now been notified that the company is in receivership and is insolvent.

In previous years, Council approved the cancellation of taxes for 2016 – 2020 as per the PERC and DIRC program. Currently, their 2021 property taxes remain unpaid and it is deemed unlikely that the taxes will ever be paid. These outstanding taxes meet the criteria for a PERC and DIRC application.

Administration recommended that Council acknowledge its application for PERC and DIRC on all of Sequoia's properties. The amount of the education credit would be \$7,945.47 and the amount of the DIP requisition credit would be \$376.90.

Council passed a motion acknowledging the application.

### **2021 Tax Sale Dispositions**

Four parcels were listed in the 2021 tax sale. Two of the properties sold.

Both of the remaining properties are located in the Hamlet of Kinsella. They are in a serious state of disrepair with suspected asbestos and mould.

The Tax Recovery Proceedings Policy gives Council discretion regarding the disposition of tax recovery properties that do not sell at a public auction.

Administration recommended the following to Council:

1. That the County NOT take title to Plan 1562W, Block 7, Lots 30 & 31A. The house is not habitable and it would be very expensive to demolish. In 2016, a property in similar condition in the Hamlet of Bruce cost the County \$14,042.44 to demolish.
2. That the Assessor re-assess the property at Plan 992 5829, Lot 1. A resident of Kinsella expressed an interest in the property prior to the tax sale, but felt the reserve bid was too high. Administration intends to inspect the property in 2022, recommend a new reserve bid to Council, and list the property for sale in the 2022 tax recovery sale.

Council passed a motion to accept administration's recommendation.

### **Bylaw 22-1117 – Road Closure Bylaw – Range Road 202**

Administration has received a request to close and consolidate the road allowance west of NW 35-51-20-W4 (Range Road 202), which is approximately 0.6 acres.

The road allowance borders the west half of the applicant's property which is located just north of Sherwood Forest Estates. Currently, the developed portion of Range Road 202 dead ends at a roundabout which is adjacent to the applicant's driveway. The applicant is requesting that the undeveloped portion of Range Road 202 just past the roundabout be closed because of safety concerns. There is a deep valley located within the road allowance and the applicant is concerned that this may cause dangerous road conditions. The applicant also has additional concerns with regards to dumping, hunting, and theft.

Council passed 1st reading of Bylaw 22-1117 and directed administration to schedule a public hearing.

### **Safety Codes Fee Schedule**

Beaver County and the municipalities in the Joint Quality Management Plan (the Towns of Tofield and Viking and the Villages of Ryley and Holden) have a contract with The Inspections Group to administer the safety codes permit process.

As per the Joint Service Agreement, the agency works closely with the municipalities to review the fees and recommends any adjustments as required periodically (mutually agreeable and beneficial to both parties). Changes to the safety codes fee schedule have been suggested by The Inspections Group with regards to the introduction of an extension fee and new fee for variances.

Currently, the extension timeline runs in frequencies of 3 and 6 months with no fee. This timeline would change to a frequency of 1 year and a new extension fee of \$125 would be implemented.

Currently, the only discipline that allows for a variance is plumbing and gas. The Inspections Group would like to implement a variance service fee/rate for all safety code disciplines which would use the same approach for plumbing and gas. This would include introducing a service fee at the rate of \$125/hour with a 2-hour minimum for inspections.

Council passed a motion approving changes to the joint safety codes fee schedule between The Inspections Group and the member municipalities of Beaver County, Towns of Tofield and Viking, and Villages of Ryley and Holden, to include a permit extension fee of \$125 and variance service fee of \$125/hour with a 2-hour minimum for inspections.

### **Website Update Demonstration**

Administration provided Council an update and a demonstration of the upgrades to County Website. The upgrades will be developed by Loop. Loop is the name of the company that built the County's website and is now in the process of upgrading it.

Loop websites are powered by a Content Management System, custom built for municipalities to be easy and straightforward. Loop will update website features, functionality, and maintain the site throughout the rebuild and beyond. The look of the County's website will be vastly improved and will perform well. The updated website will include the following features:

1. Notices and emergency pop-up notices to communicate critical information to residents and visitors.
2. Business Directory Module - every business in the County will be listed and directly linked to the map.
3. Polls Module – simple multiple-choice surveys can be conducted. This will enhance community involvement and public participation.
4. Tax Calculator – displays tax rate information for prospective businesses and residents so they can see how their taxes are calculated and the services they are paying for.
5. Form Builder Module – adds the ability to create fillable forms and assign them to pages on the website. Forms can have unlimited fields and can include on-line payments. On-line payments come with added costs to the residents (4.5% + \$0.35 cents per transaction) for processing fees.
6. Public Event Submissions – allows the public to submit events through the website for approval and posting by administration.
7. Report a Problem Module – this is a tool for both Beaver County and the public. The module receives, assigns, and monitors issues with ease and to access a directory, residents simply fill out a form on-line and e-mail it to the preferred staff member.
8. Tenders Listing – simplifies posting open and closed bid opportunities with all information accessible to the public.

9. Snow Removal – this module uploads addresses throughout the County and designates the snow removal priority levels. Residents can search their address to discover their priority level.
10. Municipal App – Loop has experience building apps for clients that allow them to organize and manage information. Features include – push emergency notifications, business directory, news, and events. Problems can also be reported from the app.

### **ACP Grant – Village of Holden – Infrastructure Master Plan**

The Village of Holden has requested that Beaver County partner with the Village in its application for an Alberta Community Partnership grant to prepare an infrastructure master plan. The plan will identify required improvements to water, wastewater, and stormwater systems which may have an impact on rural residents. The County has experienced challenges with the Village's wastewater system (as it relates to annual sewage lagoon releases) and the plan may assist with finding a solution or recommend improved practices.

No financial commitment is required from the County to participate in this program. The Village of Holden will be the managing partner.

Council passed a motion that Council support the Village of Holden's submission of a 2021/22 Alberta Community Partnership grant application in support of a regional infrastructure master plan, with no matching contribution required.

### **Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Membership & Convention Attendance**

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901. The FCM includes more than 2,000 municipalities of all sizes, from Canada's cities and rural communities, to northern communities and 20 provincial and territorial municipal associations. Together, the FCM represents more than 90 percent of all Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Municipal leaders from across Canada assemble each year to set FCM policy on key issues.

Council passed a motion to approve the FCM 2022/23 membership fee of \$1832.47.

Council approved the attendance of Cr. Hrabec and Cr. Williams at the 2022 FCM annual conference in Regina, Saskatchewan from June 2-5.

### **Health Foundation Support Policy**

The Health Foundation Support Policy provides support to each of the two health foundations in the Beaver Region (Tofield and Viking). Funding is provided for equipment and other items not eligible for funding by Alberta Health Services.

The current Policy distributes the funding based on the rural population within the Foundation's service area. Tofield Health Foundation's service area includes ranges 17-21 (64.3% of the total population). Viking Health Foundation's service area includes ranges 10-16 (35.7% of the total population).

At the October 6, 2021 Council meeting, a motion was passed that the Policy be reviewed to allow for an equal distribution of the grant between the two Foundations.

At the November 3, 2021 Council meeting, Council considered an amended Policy but deferred approval pending input from each of the Health Foundations regarding the amendment.

Input was received from the Tofield and the Viking Health Foundation.

The Tofield and Area Health Services Foundation is strongly opposed to a change in the funding formula. The Viking Health Foundation defers the decision to County Council.

Council passed a motion confirming the existing Health Foundation Support Policy that will retain the population-based formula.

**Health Foundation Support Grant Request**

The Health Foundation Support Policy provides funds to the Tofield and Viking Health Foundations. The amount of funding available is established by Council through its annual budget (2021 budget = \$20,000).

Each Foundation’s share of the grant is based on the population within each Foundation area (as defined by Policy). A \$20,000 allocation would be shared as follows:

Tofield Health Foundation	\$12,867 (already paid)
Viking Health Foundation	\$ 7,133

The Viking Health Foundation has requested funding from the 2021 grant allocation. The Foundation has submitted its financial statement, and outlined purchases made in the past year as well as a future commitment.

Council passed a motion approving a 2021 Health Foundation Support grant in the amount of \$7,133 to the Viking Health Foundation.

**Joint SDAB & ARB Re-Appointments**

Beaver County is a member of the region’s Joint Subdivision and Development Appeal Board (SDAB) and Joint Assessment Review Board (ARB). Each Board consists of the same members. The terms of appointment are staggered to maintain experience on the Board from year to year.

A maximum of ten public-at-large members may be appointed to the Boards. There are currently seven members, which is sufficient at this time given the minimal number of hearings required throughout the region. The terms of two of the members (Juanita Enorme and Rosemary Harris) have expired.

Council passed a motion approving the following appointments to the Intermunicipal Subdivision and Development Appeal Board and the Intermunicipal Assessment Review Board:

Juanita Enorme	Term expires March 31, 2025
Rosemary Harris	Term expires March 31, 2025.

**Rural Community Hall Property Insurance**

Council requested information regarding the eligibility of the Spilstead Community Hall to obtain property insurance through the County’s policy.

Beaver County Council has recognized the financial burden that insurance premiums can place on these groups and provides assistance in the form of a grant to a maximum of \$1000 per year.

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA Insurance) provides insurance coverage for Beaver County and approved non-profit organizations. At present, the Kinsella Recreation & Agricultural Society, Bruce Sports & Stampede Association, Beaver Heritage & Agricultural Society, and Beaverhill Players are Additional Named Insureds (ANIs) on the County’s policies.

Council passed a motion directing administration to develop a draft policy to include community facilities, (facilities include Community Halls, Cemeteries, Seed Plants etc.) that qualify under the RMA insurance coverage.

**STARS Foundation Funding**

Council passed a motion to approve funding to the STARS foundation at \$12,000 per year as standing motion as line item in ongoing annual budgets.

**Campground Vision**

Cr. Hrabec discussed the Action Item list and the removal of the campground vision item. Administration will research the history of Campground Vision and report back to Council at a subsequent meeting.

---

The next Regular Council Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday,  
February 2, 2022, commencing at 9:30 am.

For more information, contact Beaver County toll free at 1-866-663-1333 or 780-663-3730.  
Did you know...our website is a useful way to get the information you need.  
[www.beaver.ab.ca](http://www.beaver.ab.ca)

---