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# The Beaver County Chronicle

A Free Weekly Publication Serving All of Beaver County

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**Ryalta Industries Ltd.**

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## Budget deliberations started with financial overview

Patricia Harcourt

Beaver County started its official 2024 budget deliberations with an overview provided by Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Kayleena Spiess at the regular council meeting Nov. 15.

The overview gave an estimate of 3.9 per cent growth for the county this year, attributed in large part to inflationary influences in the economy, and a recommendation for a 2.5 per cent tax increase for 2024.

Taxes are based on the previous year's assessment, so 2024 taxes will be based on this year's assessment base.

Binders based on the overview were delivered to councillors to study until Nov. 28 and 29, when Spiess and administration will make a presentation on the budget.

Once council hears all the information there will be three more meetings where they will be able to finalize decisions Dec. 6-8. Then on December 13 council is expected to pass the interim budget for 2024. This will be the only meeting of regular council that month.

Spiess went through the first 33 pages of the overview with council Nov. 15.

"This past year has been an action packed year," she said, referring to a new business plan with 44 of 57 core functions already enacted, and a total revamping of 75 policies this year with another 57 expected to be done next year.

Changes in 2023 included "a major restructuring" in the way the budget is formulated, and the establishment of a new economic development team.

A big budget is now being "peeled down into smaller segments...for more transparency and understanding," she said. The result is that the budget will be displayed differently from former years.

There have also been "additions to boots on the ground" in the public works and agriculture departments. More technology will be needed "to refine our processes," she said, citing a

"big one in 2024 (will be) a bigger understanding of urban servicing." This will include how the county handles unsightly properties and snow removal in hamlets.

"It's been a wild ride in the past year and a half," she said, thanking council, staff and the public for their input into the changes that have been done to this point.

In the weeks to come, items of concern to councillors can be flagged and debated at the scheduled budget meetings, said Spiess. Salaries and remuneration would be FOIP related.

And the two meetings in November would be strictly presentational with the ability to debate flagged items during the December budget meetings. The Municipal Government Act states that interim capital and operating budgets must be completed by the end of the year.

She noted that "the biggest areas of concern" by ratepayers have to do with roads while speaking about community engagement related issues.

"We keep these things in mind for our planning activities," she said, listing "various ways to ramp up engagement with the public." She said that administration has "aggressively moved forward with social media...As soon as something's happening we're trying to get it out there."

The county is also trying to be "more collaborative in our services," A new corporate business plan has 44 of 57 recommendations currently underway, and more can be added in the future.

"We got a lot done in 2023," she said. "You can take this document to the public and say 'we've done some things'...I think council has done an amazing job outlining its accomplishments."

This year, the county enacted 36 human resource policies, but Spiess said: "It's a long haul...moving forward on this." Union and non-union remuneration would be discussed in closed session in the budget.

The county has had some success

with recruitment, she said, "but we still need to work on getting new talent," as well as succession planning "to incorporate people into the (county's) workforce."

She added: "I couldn't be more proud of our communication team. I think we took our communication efforts and ramped it up 10,000 degrees."

The communication plan has been completed "to serve the public so everyone is consulted," she said. "We are a professional organization and want to be perceived that way."

But she said more training was needed for senior leadership in the organization, and there were some "challenges" when dealing with other rural municipalities that require work.

The county has also done "a lot of advocacy work," especially with Equity Industrial Park where developers will be sought to come into the park.

Council has also done some advocacy around health care issues like the closure of emergency departments in hospitals and the need for nurse practitioners to be recruited for rural areas to compensate for a lack of doctors.

Spiess said that "running a municipality is very similar to running a household."

After outlining the county's fixed costs, she turned to the assessment side of the equation, stating: "We have seen a significant increase in assessment because of inflation."

This 3.9 per cent in growth, however, is not based on actual building of new buildings or industry and is not expected to sustain itself. The value in homes and assessment has gone up and is a global trend, she said, predicting that "in two years it will be down again."

"We are anticipating another 3.9 per cent growth but it is short-term," she said, and despite that probably temporary increase, "we still have a very slow growing municipality."

Grants are the county's second high-

est revenue source but funds from the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) will be down this year.

"We're still in limbo about what this will look like," she said. "We don't know the formula."

Funds for bridge replacements is also going down, but the grants from Clean Harbors have helped to compensate as they are "significantly higher."

More industry in the county is needed to increase the tax base, and the economic development advisory committee is working on it. "But we won't see results overnight."

Insurance and utility costs have risen, but the county's debt load is low, she said.

A budgetary projection leaves a \$764,000 gap between expenditures and revenues, but Spiess said the county is "fairly confident" the added 3.9 per cent in inflationary assessment growth will result in an extra \$400,000 in revenue for this year.

This leaves the county with a revenue gap of about \$300,000 instead. Spiess said that this scenario would require a raise in taxes of 2.5 per cent. She noted that the county has a five-year plan for incremental tax increases which would cushion the impact of increases.

But she said it was necessary "to keep up with the times and inflation," and noted some municipalities have had to increase their taxes eight per cent at one time.

And the current inflationary growth of 3.9 per cent will not be relied on over time to sustain itself over the next few years, recommending that the county move with the global trends.

"We need to build more residents, businesses and industries," she said, to increase actual long term assessment in the county.

A motion by Councillor Barry Bruce (Division 4) for council to accept the financial synopsis and budget binders was passed.





**COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS** November 15, 2023

**Economic Development Advisory Committee**

Council appointed a new member to the Economic Development Advisory Committee. Trevor Kloeck joins the team consisting of two members of Council and an alternate, and up to six public-at-large members who bring diverse industry expertise to the table. More information on the committee can be found on the County website.

**County Transportation Shop Heating System**

As colder temperatures set in, an issue with the heating system in the shop has emerged. Council has approved the necessary funds for this unplanned expense to ensure the timely repair of the heating system.

**2024 Proposed Budget Overview and Binder Delivery**

CAO Kay Spiess delivered the proposed 2024 budget binders to Council, and presented a brief overview of the budgeting process, key accomplishments from the past year related to the Corporate Business Plan, and the proposed overall budget amount.

Next steps: Administration will present the proposed budget to Council during a CAO Workshop at the end of November. Following this, any questions or specific items flagged by Council will be addressed in the Council Meetings set for budget deliberations on December 6th to 8th. The proposed budget binder can be found on the County website.

*For more information on items discussed at the Council Meeting, please review the full Agenda Package for this meeting at [www.beaver.ab.ca](http://www.beaver.ab.ca). New and/or amended Policies and Bylaws are uploaded to the County website after they have been signed.*



**CENTENNIAL SETTLER AWARD**

Council had the honour of presenting Don Gibson with the Centennial Settler Award. His family's roots run deep in Beaver County, living and working here since 1915. A huge congratulations to Don and his family – here's to the next century of community and perseverance!



**Landfill and Ryley Transfer Station Hours:**

50117 Range Road 173 (Secondary Highway 854) Box 322, Ryley, AB T0B 4A0

Weekdays 9:00 am – 4:30 pm; Saturdays / STATS 9:00 am – 3:00 pm; Closed Sundays

**NOTE: customers must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to closing;**

Administration—Monday to Friday 8:00 am – 4:00pm, closed from 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Toll Free: 1.855.221.2038 Ph: 780.663.2038

**Lindbrook Transfer Station Hours:**

51008 Range Road 201 780.662.2704

Tues 10:30 am – 5:30 pm; Thurs 11:30 am – 6:30 pm; Sat 10:30 am – 5:30 pm

**Tofield Transfer Station Hours:**

51032 Range Road 191 780.662.2731

Wed, Fri and Sat 10:30 am – 5:30 pm

**Viking Transfer Station Hours:**

12503 Township 480 780.718.7956

Tues 10:30 am – 5:30 pm; Sat 10:30 am – 5:30 pm

**Kinsella Transfer Station Hours:**

46418 Range Road 113 780.226.6802

Wed 11:00 am – 5:00 pm; Fri 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Please note that all transfer stations except for the Ryley Transfer Station are closed on Statutory holidays.

WELCOME TO

# HOLDEN'S Christmas MARKET

SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 25

11 AM - 3 PM  
@ HOLDEN  
COMMUNITY HALL  
4919-49 AVE

Holden Senior Club will be  
doing beef on a bun with  
drinks & pie/desserts

Sponsored by Holden Economic  
Development Committee

*Greenbucks  
& door  
prizes!*

*Visit  
from  
Santa*



## IMPORTANT DATES

### December 6-8th:

- 9:30 AM: Regular Council Meeting - Budget

### December 13th:

- 9:30 AM: Regular Council Meeting
- Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting

## NOTICE OF CHANGE

Regular (Budget) Council meetings on November 28-29 have been cancelled to enable the scheduling of CAO workshops. The 2024 budget will be discussed in Open Session on December 6-8.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Book Club - December 5th

Location: Ross Creek Community Hall, 531041 Rge Rd 191  
Rural book club that meets the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings run from 7PM - 8PM, all ages welcome!



### Darts Night - Wednesday evenings at the Ryley Legion

7:30 PM- 10:00 PM  
Legion membership not required, and all skills levels welcome! Darts available to lend if needed.

### Food for Thought - Give a Can Today - Food Drive

Tofield-Ryley Food Bank desperately needs cans of fruit. Call 780-662-3511 and leave a message if you wish to donate - a volunteer will return your call.

### Spilstead Hall Christmas Market - Postponed to December 9th

Doors open at 6 PM, auction begins at 7 PM. Kids welcome, and free admission! For table rentals contact Lindsay at 780-608-6223.

Submit your event/s, meetings and/or gatherings to our events calendar on the website! Just head to the website, scroll down to the calendar, click to view all events, then hit the **Submit an event button!**



## Holiday Decorating Contest



Beaver County is excited to be hosting our third annual Holiday Decorating Contest! We invite all residents and businesses to participate in this special rural community event! Find all the contest details and entry form by scanning the QR code, or visit the Beaver County website under Community.

If you are located in the towns of Tofield or Viking, information for the Tofield Winterfest and Viking Christmas Light Up Competition can also be found on our website!



## 2024 PROPOSED BUDGET

The 2024 Proposed Budget is now available on the County website under Government > Financials.

Council Meetings set for budget deliberations are scheduled on December 6th to 8th.



## DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

### APPEAL DEADLINE: November 22, 2023

**Application No:** 020020-23-D0069  
**Applicant:** Hoelsing, Denise, Ronald, and Tyren  
**Location:** Plan 972 0257; Block; Lot B located in NE-5-46-10-W4  
Plan 972 0257; Block; Lot A located in SE-8-46-10-W4  
0.478 ha (1.18 ac) located in NE-5-46-10-W4  
**Development:** Permitted Use – One Family Dwelling (1,344 sq.ft. mobile home with addition) and Buildings and Uses Accessory to Permitted Uses (2,100 sq.ft. tarp shed)

### APPEAL DEADLINE: November 22, 2023

**Application No:** 020020-23-D0072  
**Applicant:** MAGA Energy LTD.  
**Location:** Plan 212 2928; Block 1; Lot 3 located in NE-15-51-19-W4  
**Landowner:** BCR Farms LTD.  
**Development:** Discretionary Use - Natural Resource Extraction Uses and General Industrial Uses – Type II – Natural Gas Generator 800kW (12m x 2.4m) and Data Processing Facility (sea can 6m x 2.4m) – added to existing wellsite with well and compressor

### APPEAL DEADLINE: December 6, 2023

**Application No:** 020020-23-D0073  
**Applicant:** Walters, Shawn  
**Location:** 3.51 ha (8.68 ac) located in NW-16-49-12-W4  
**Development:** Discretionary Use -Solar Collectors, Ground Mount, (solar ground array - 24.4m2 in floor area and 3.3m in height.)

Any person wishing to appeal application nos.: 020020-23-D0069, 020020-23-D0072, and 020020-23-D0073 may do so by serving written notice on the prescribed form (stating reasons for the appeal) to the Land and Property Rights Tribunal at the following address. Any person wishing to appeal application no.: 020020-23-D0073 may do so by serving written notice on the prescribed form (stating reasons for the appeal) along with the applicable fee to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

The notice of appeal must be submitted before 4:30 pm on the appeal deadline date shown above. The prescribed form is available at [www.beaver.ab.ca](http://www.beaver.ab.ca) or at the County office.

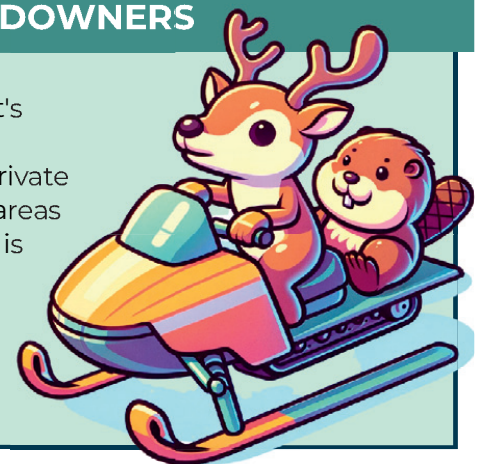
Further information regarding the above decisions may be obtained from the County Office, Ryley, Alberta.

Land and Property Rights  
Tribunal  
1229 – 91 Street SW  
Edmonton, AB T6X 1E9  
[LPRT.appeals@gov.ab.ca](mailto:LPRT.appeals@gov.ab.ca)  
780-427-2444

Subdivision and  
Development Appeal Board  
Beaver County  
Box 140  
Ryley, AB T0B 4A0  
780-663-3730

## BE CONSIDERATE OF LANDOWNERS

With hunting season upon us, and snowmobiling season approaching, it's crucial to follow the law and respect private property. Remember, using private land like fields or farmland to access areas for hunting, fishing, or snowmobiling is trespassing unless you have the landowner's permission. This applies whether the land is marked with "No Trespassing" signs or not. Always get consent before entering private land.



## TOFIELD/RYLEY/BEAVER COUNTY WEST CHRISTMAS HAMPER PROGRAM

The Community Christmas Hamper Program aids to help those who need some extra assistance around the holiday season. Forms are now available at the Tofield/Beaver County West FCSS office. The deadline to register for a Christmas Hamper is Friday, December 8, 2023. You can apply in person or by telephone.

As part of the Christmas Hampers gifts are given to the children in the families by means of the Angel tree. Angel trees are located in the Tofield and Ryley Post Offices. If you would like to purchase a child a gift, visit one of the Post Offices and choose an Angel to purchase a gift for that child. Please return unwrapped gifts to the Post Office by December 13th.

For more information or to register for a hamper please call 780-662-7067 or visit the Tofield/Beaver County West FCSS office located at 5407 50th Street in Tofield.



# County deals with EDC appointment, asset disposal policy, new shop heating system

Patricia Harcourt

Beaver County Council appointed Trevor Kloeck to the county's Economic Development Advisory Committee for a term to expire March 1, 2025.

The committee consists of two members of council plus an alternate, as well as up to six public at large members. With five members, the county approved Kloeck to become the sixth member.

Council defeated a motion for second reading on a road closure item effectively ending the process. Bylaw 21-1114, road closure portion of Twp. Rd. 502 north of NE-12-50-18-W4 had to be passed by Nov. 18 or it would have automatically been rescinded. With a defeated motion, the process is ended in a clean manner, said Margaret Jones, acting CAO at the time.

A housekeeping item was dealt with by council in the form of rescinding Policy LU-006-Sale of Land in Equity Industrial Park. A new document on this had been approved by council Nov. 1 but the county had overlooked the need to rescind the old policy at the time.

In its ongoing work updating and revising policies, council then proceeded to rescind an old policy Motion 19-182 adopted July 19, 2019, and adopt a new

policy Corp-011-Disposal of Assets.

"The main purpose of the Disposal of Assets Policy is to allow administration to manage assets in the best interests of the county, which includes receiving the best value for the asset and limiting administrative time where possible," said Jones, in her capacity as manager of legislative services.

"Additional options for administration that have been added to the policy include more options at the discretion of the Approving Authority," she said. "The term 'Approving Authority' has been added throughout the policy document.

"Additional guidelines were added to simplify the process and encourage the use of a public auction held by a third party as opposed

to county staff," said Jones.

She explained: "Public auctions held by a third party ensure Beaver County is receiving the best return for the fixed asset while minimizing the administrative costs as much as possible."

Deputy Reeve Gene Hrabec (Division 3) felt that all assets should be sold through public auction. "It makes it a little more transparent," he said.

However, the new policy states that the CAO or 'approving authority' would set a minimum sale price for all items based on their fair market value. Items of "nominal value" can be offered to non-profit organizations, with remaining items to be offered for sale at fair market value to non-profit organizations.

Items remaining from that process will be sold at

a public auction conducted by a third party.

And if nominal items can't be dealt with otherwise, they can be sold at the highest bid received, donated to a non-profit or disposed of in a waste disposal or recycling system.

In his motion to adopt the new policy, Councillor Lionel Williams (Division 2) said he approved of the new policy, adding: "I think it should provide more flexibility and allow some non-profits to benefit from this and I'm happy with that."

Council also approved the unbudgeted expenditure of a shop heating system, with Dan Blackie, general manager of infrastruc-

ture, providing an explanation.

The boiler in the transportation shop had to be replaced, he said. On the advice of the county's plumber, a minor repair was recommended to tide the shop over until next year.

"However, when parts arrived and he commenced repairs, it became apparent that the boiler could not be fixed." Then it was discovered there were unreparable cracks in the three overhead heat exchangers, causing safety concerns.

Blackie said he acted immediately due to the safety factor, got quotes and did the repairs before ask-

ing council's go-ahead.


"With winter fast approaching and no heat source in the shop for either the in-floor heating or the forced air units the decision was made to obtain quotes immediately," said Nlackie.

And, as it turned out, their luck held. "We had a nice fall and no heat was needed," while the work was being done.

"I'm asking for forgiveness on this one," Blackie said, noting there was a threat of carbon monoxide taking place.

A motion by Barry Bruce (Division 4) was passed agreeing with the need to replace the shop heating system at a cost of \$30,000.


**SPILSTEAD HALL**  
**20502 TWP Rd 502**  
**CHRISTMAS MARKET & LIVE AUCTION**  
**POSTPONED UNTIL**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH**  
Doors Open @ 6:00 pm  
Auction starts @ 7:00 pm  
**CALL LINDSAY FOR A TABLE**  
**RENTAL 780-608-6223** **FREE ADMISSION**

  
**Holden Rural Academy**  
**Electronics Recycling Roundup**

**Drop off your used electronics for free disposal at the Holden School!**

**From Monday, Nov. 27th (9:00am - 4:00pm) until 12:00pm Thursday, Nov. 30th.**

**For large item pick up contact Mr. Anderson at 780-688-0232.**



## The Longest Night Christmas Service

*On Wednesday, December 6, 2023 @7:00 p.m., the Longest Night Service will be held at Tofield United Church with Rev. Kevin Langager officiating.*

**The Longest Night Christmas Service is a safe place for all those who are experiencing grief, uncertainty, or just need a quiet time in these busy days. Refreshments will follow the service.**

**All are welcome.**