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The Beaver County Chronicle

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Wednesday, February 14, 2024, Volume 17, Issue 07

Meeting at Holden Lodge held to find ways of 'keeping the doors open'

Patricia Harcourt

The information session and open house at the Holden Lodge addressed high vacancy rates in local seniors facilities and other related issues.

The lodge brought together officials and visitors on Tuesday, Feb. 6, to try and find ways of "keeping the doors open," to Holden Lodge especially which has the highest vacancy rate of facilities in the county. Speakers outlined the issues followed by discussion. People who wished were given tours of the facility.

Beaver Foundation oversees the operation of the government owned seniors facilities in the county. At the gathering, foundation Chair Owen Ligard introduced the foundation's board chair Gene Hrabec and other members of the board, as well as the managers of the manors and lodges in the county in attendance.

Also attending was Dan Grewal who came to listen to the concerns as manager of Housing Operations for the Ministry of Seniors, Communities and Social Services for the Government of Alberta.

Camrose MLA Jackie Lovely offered her help in trying to come to terms with the vacancy issues in the lodge in Holden. With spaces for 33 people, there are currently only seven residents in the lodge. This means 26 rooms out of 33 are not being utilized. And Lovely said there must be ways to change that equation.

"I'm very supportive of this community," she said. "And I have a few ideas... Everybody here has a vested interest in helping. There's some opportunity that could come out of it."

One suggestion was to attract film crews into rural Alberta to make their pictures, and rent out rooms at the seniors lodges where they could stay during that time. Lovely asked if that were possible, and Grewal replied: "I see no reason why not."

Lovely also believed that seniors from larger facilities in the city might want to come to a quieter lodge to live, such as Holden.

"We need to have some seniors coming here," she said, noting they could be offered an incentive to move in.

"How can we keep Holden open? This is such a great place," said Lovely, promising she would "give it a shot." Grewal also said her ideas could be placed on the agenda for his own meetings on the provincial level.

"I'm very passionate about keeping the



Beaver Foundation Chair Gene Hrabec

lodge open," said Hrabec in his keynote address, citing several options already offered to entice seniors to come and live there. They include a smoking/marijuana room and reduced rates for moving into the lodge.

And he said the lodges offer a sense of financial security. "There's so many homeless people, including seniors," he said. "It's tough making ends meet." And, seniors are often alone and isolated living on their own, even though Home Care "does a wonderful job."

But "we need to bridge that gap," he said, and also have Home Care in the lodges for seniors living there so they can stay longer in their chosen homes. A meeting with the premier the previous week was an opportunity to mention this, said Hrabec.

"There's so many things we could do," he said. "We have the facilities out here, we just need to have them used."

But he also praised the province for helping out the foundation and its senior facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic with supplies and funding to tide them over during the crisis.

"The government did do things for us," he said, citing the help of the "previous government during Covid."

He added: "We tried to do what was best. The previous government was very good with extra funding for safety supplies to keep staff safe."

"I wanted this conversation today about working together to keep the doors open," he said, noting: "The seniors are the ones that built Alberta."

Hrabec added that foundation CAO Ligard has told him that, "We should do what we can to thank them for that."

"We need to engage more people to

come out here," he said. Hrabec represents this area of rural Beaver County as Deputy Reeve and Division 3 councillor on county council.

"I think we do have the solution on the health care side to make these facilities more accessible," he said, citing another strategy would be to entice young people to get their education elsewhere but return here for work.

But the message to the seniors is that they can come live in the lodge or other facilities in the area and enjoy themselves playing cards all day or enjoying shuffleboard.

"It's not all about money," he said, urging the councillors and mayors from the communities to take the issue back to their councils.

"We need to find solutions, and work together to keep the doors open," he reiterated.

The question and answer session raised several points. One was about family having to travel further distances if their relative lives in a facility in the county but resided elsewhere before that.

Another person said that one reason the county facilities may not be attracting residents is that there aren't enough levels of care in local facilities so people can 'age in place.' There is one facility for fairly healthy independent people living in lodges; but if they start to need more care they have to go to a nursing home, which can contribute to a rapid decline in an individual once they have been transferred.

Viking's Deputy Reeve Cindy Lefsrud recommended installing a level of care that lies between these two extremes so that people can remain out of the nursing homes as long as possible.

Another suggested creating manors with two or three rooms for each senior to live in instead of just one small room.

To that Grewal said the province had "a finite amount of resources," noting the costs are high to tear down and rebuild a facility.

"It could cost a lot," for self contained units, especially with some wanting kitchens to be included in these places.

"It's more appealing to renovate rather than start from scratch," he said.

Another man suggested someone on a waiting list could move into the lodge while they wait to get into another facility somewhere else.

He emphasized this wouldn't be a per-

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manent placement and the person would not lose their spot on the waiting list for their preferred facility.

Grewal said it has been suggested already on the government side, with the idea that a 30-40 minute radius from the facility the person wants to eventually get into would be appropriate for an interim facility.

He offered to take the suggestions made at the meeting to the lodge review committee, calling the last suggestion "an excellent idea."

Hrabec noted, however, that "they're pretty tight with those lists," of people waiting to enter a facility.

"These facilities outside the corridor and Hwy. 2 need a voice," he added.

Wainwright has different levels of care available, making it more attractive for people to move there. "We need that out here," said one woman. But Grewal said it is difficult to get people to move out in the rural areas "to give that level of service."

And Hrabec said Lefsrud was "right on about the level of service" issue. He added that Beaver Foundation doesn't have the money for this and provincial policy dictates what can be done, such as getting in Home Care to facilities which could help residents age in place and not have to go to a higher level of care so soon.

He said that "it comes down to money" with everything tied up in the provincial budgetary process in the next two months.

Another woman discussed the aging in place principle for keeping people in their own homes longer, blaming "decisions made in the past that are impacting us today."

And another woman pointed out that the longer people stay in their houses, the fewer there are to move into the lodge.

Hrabec said the lodge does have a doctor visiting for the residents, and the pharmacies in both Tofield and Viking deliver prescriptions.

"Our board is very passionate about ensuring these facilities are well run," he said.

To that, Beaver County Reeve Kevin Smook added: "This is a perfect opportunity here," he said. "We need to do something...The government ministries are working better together now, "and our communities need that."

"Let's keep doing it and fill those rooms," said Hrabec.

The official meeting broke up and the lodge conducted tours of the facility.



Claystone Waste Ltd

Do you call Beaver County home?...

- Are you a community champion with a keen interest in waste management?
- Do you have valuable insights or expertise in environmental and occupational health and safety?

If you answered yes, to all the above, Claystone Waste has TWO openings on our Public Advisory Committee (PAC) that might just be perfect for you!

The PAC serves as a crucial link between Claystone Waste's Board of Directors and the community. Its core mission is to provide valuable insights on community concerns or interests related to our regional waste facilities and services. The committee comprises of six (6) public members, each serving a 3-year term, appointed directly by the Board, and representatives selected by municipal shareholders via Council.

To Apply: Send your cover letter and resume to info@claystonewaste.com by March 31, 2024. The Board will be making committee appointments at their April meeting.

Landfill & Ryley Transfer Station:

50117 Rge Rd 173 (HWY 854) Box 322, Ryley, AB T0B 4A0
Weekdays 9:00am – 4:30pm;

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

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

Administration building

Mon to Fri 8:00am – 4:00pm, Closed from 12:00 – 1:00pm

Toll Free: 1.855.221.2038 Ph: 780.663.2038

Lindbrook Transfer Station:

51008 Rge Rd 201 Ph: 780.662.2704

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

Sat 10:30am – 5:30pm

Tofield Transfer Station:

51032 Rge Rd 191 Ph: 780.662.2731

Wed, Fri & Sat 10:30am – 5:30pm

Viking Transfer Station:

12503 Twp Rd 480 Ph: 780.718.7956

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

Kinsella Transfer Station:

46418 Rge Rd 113 Ph: 780.226.6802

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

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



CALLING ALL SKILLED TRADES!

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Find the form on our website under Business > Requests for Proposals & Quotes (or scan the QR code)

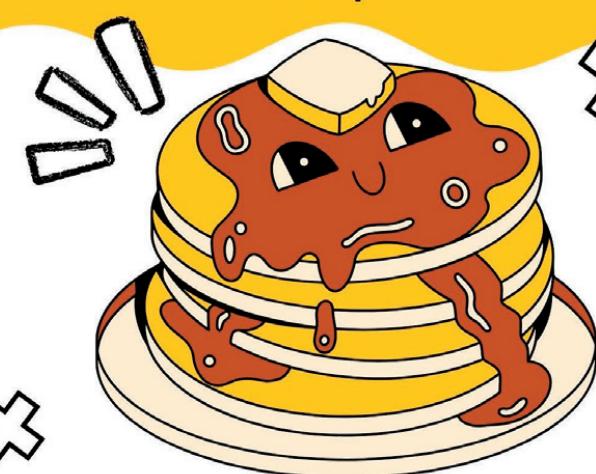


Holden 4H Beef Club Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 13, 2024

Holden Community Hall

5 - 7pm



THE PARAGON THEATRE

**Movies temporarily moved to Holden Hall:
4919 49 Ave, Holden AB.**

Saturday, February 17th:

- 3 PM: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles - PG 99m
- 7 PM: Meg2: The Trench - PG 116m

**Admissions:
Donations to
theatre repairs**

CASH ONLY

**Info:
paragontheatre.ca**

**Next Movie:
February 10 (TBA)**





IMPORTANT DATES

February 19th:

- Office closed for Family Day

February 21st:

- 9:30 AM: Regular Council Meeting

March 6th:

- 9:30 AM: Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting

March 27th:

- 9:30 AM: Regular Council Meeting

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Book Club - February 6th

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.

Caregivers Drop-In Group - Feb 20 & 27, 10 AM - Noon. Viking Seniors Centre. More info: Viking/Beaver FCSS - 780-336-4024

Music Jam/Open Mic - Feb 18, 2 PM.

Holden Community Hall. More info: beaverhillplayers17@gmail.com

Tofield AA - Thursdays, 8 - 9 PM

Basement of Bardo Lutheran Church, 4737 57 Ave, Tofield.

Viking AA - Wednesdays, 7:30 PM, Zoom option also available.

Golden Valley Lutheran Church, 5327 56 Ave, Viking.

<https://area78aa.org/meetings/147-3/>

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!**



JOIN OUR TEAM!

We're looking for some dynamic, motivated team members to join our team! What's your superpower?!



- Human Resources - Manager
- Seasonal Crew Member - Agricultural Services
- Seasonal Truck Driver

For more information, and details on how to apply, visit our website > Government > Careers



DID YOU KNOW!

Tofield/Beaver County West FCSS offers a Home Help Program for Seniors living in Tofield and Beaver County West (ranges 17-21).



Services provided are limited to light cleaning services such as:

- Sweeping, mopping floors, vacuuming carpets, dusting, & watering plants.
- Light Laundry including loading and folding laundry (one load per visit).
- Cleaning washrooms including sinks, countertops, tubs, showers, and toilets.
- Cleaning kitchens including light dishwashing or loading dishwashers, countertops, sinks and stovetops.
- General tidying – wiping tabletops, emptying garbage (does not include room re-organization etc. or moving heavy furniture).

Fees for service are charged by income on a sliding scale. Please call 780-662-7067 for more information.



Mailing list

Get news, meeting highlights, the road construction schedule, the Chronicle, and more - direct to your inbox!

Website

Information on County programs and services can be found on our website, along with the latest news.

DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

The following Development Applications have been APPROVED (except where otherwise noted) by the Development Authority under the provisions of Land Use Bylaw No. 98-801, subject to the right of appeal to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board/Land and Property Rights Tribunal.

APPEAL DEADLINE FEBRUARY 14, 2024

Appeal Body SDAB
Application No. 020020-24-D0003
Applicant Brent Picard (Ammomento)
Landowner Hubert and Julie Giese
Location Plan 752 0508; Block ; Lot 7 located in NW-32-50-20-W4
Development Discretionary Use – General Commercial Use – 12' x 36' pole shed within a 23m x 22m outdoor handgun/pistol shooting range with 10m in height berm and minimum 8' in height perimeter fence

APPEAL DEADLINE FEBRUARY 14, 2024

Appeal Body SDAB
Application No. 020020-24-D0006
Applicant Brian Hrabec
Landowner Hrabec Farms Ltd.
Location NW-18-50-15-W4
Development Discretionary Use – Second or Additional Dwellings (3,594 sq.ft. two-story house with attached garage)

APPEAL DEADLINE FEBRUARY 21, 2024

Appeal Body LPRT
Application No. 020020-24-D0007
Applicant Lahrmann Construction Inc.
Landowner Joseph Lazaruk
Location NE-24-52-19-W4
Development Discretionary Use – General Industrial Use – Type II - Temporary Asphalt Plant and Stockpile Site (90m x 100m in area) with Work Campsite (50m x 80m in area)

APPEAL DEADLINE FEBRUARY 28, 2024

Appeal Body SDAB
Application No. 020020-24-D0008
Applicant Mark Sevcik
Landowner Mark and Mary Sevcik
Location NE-22-46-14-W4
Development Permitted Use - Buildings and Uses Accessory to Permitted Uses (relocation of existing 22' X 16' detached garage) - and - Discretionary Use - Second or Additional Dwellings (1,344 sq.ft. home with 840 sq.ft. attached garage)

Any person wishing to appeal an application may do so by serving written notice on the prescribed form (stating reasons for the appeal) to the relevant appeal body. For information on how to appeal can be found on our website under **Services > Planning & Development > Appealing Planning Decisions**

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



VIKING/BEAVER FCSS BEAVER COUNTY EAST DROP-IN DATES

Do you have questions about:

- Financial benefits programs for seniors?
- Community resources, such as mental health supports?
- Home Help services?
- Community engagement opportunities?
- Caregiver supports? -Anything else support services related?

Kinsella:

Dates: February 2, 16, March 1, 15
9 a.m. - noon

Kinsella Library (located in the Kinsella Community Centre)

Bruce:

Dates: February 9, 23, March 8, 22,
9 a.m. - noon

Bruce Library (located in the Bruce Community Centre)

Come chat with us, no appointment necessary! Please contact VBFCSS at 780.336.4024 for more information.



Social media

Find us on Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.



Review panel lacks rural input

Patricia Harcourt

A new lodge review panel set up by the province was referenced as inadequate for rural Alberta's needs at a meeting in Holden Feb. 6.

The panel will examine seniors lodges in the province, but Beaver Foundation Chair Gene Hrabec stated it lacked input from rural Alberta.

Hrabec said the panel only has one representative from the rural area, and covers communities along the province's main corridor and along Highway 2.

Sitting on the panel is the president of the Rural Municipalities of Alberta Paul McLaughlin. There are nine other members including Brandon Lunt, MLA for Leduc-Beaumont.

Lunt co-chairs along with Arlene Adamson, president of the Alberta Seniors and Community Housing Association (ASCJA).

The province has stated the panel is being formed to "find ways to make the most of existing seniors lodge spaces and help seniors age in their communities."

But Hrabec, deputy reeve of Beaver County, told the meeting at the Holden Lodge last week that the lack of rural representation is a problem.

He advocated for more rural representation on the provincial review board studying these issues.

"We only have one rural member on the review board," he said. "We need people like us, like Owen (Ligard, CAO of the Beaver Foundation), and local politicians to tell them what is happening in rural areas."

Beaver County has four lodges that the foundation oversees on behalf of the province, but the vacancy problem exists in the centre and eastern parts of the county more than in the western side.

In the county's west end, Sunshine Villa in Tofield has only nine vacancies in a 46-unit facility; and the Tofield Lodge has four vacancies in a 60-unit facility.

But Holden Lodge in the heart of the county has 26 vacancies out of a 33-unit facility; and Vialta Lodge in Viking at the county's east end has 27 vacancies out of a 64-unit facility.

"We have facilities out here, we just need to have them used," said Hrabec at the

meeting in Holden. With the highest vacancy rate, the foundation and other friends of the Holden Lodge are looking for ways to keep it viable.

The review panel is part of the Seniors Lodge Program in Alberta, which is the oldest affordable housing program for seniors.

And the lodge review panel is being formed "to improve the lodge system's efficiency and sustainability into the future."

Jason Nixon, minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services repeated the importance of such lodges in local communities and for the residents who live there, "especially in rural Alberta."

There are 10,850 lodge units in 149 lodges in Alberta, including in Beaver County. The program provides meals, laundry, housekeeping and recreation program among its services to the residents.

The review is set up to "provide an opportunity to smooth transitions between lodges and continuing care homes to ensure the needs of seniors will be met when they need to access more care," said the announcement.

But the lack of rural representation wasn't the only issue at the recent meeting to try and save the Holden Lodge. A vote to close the lodge was held at the foundation only last fall but was defeated.

Another issue related to the review panel is this stated intent to create "smooth transitions" between lodges and continuing care facilities.

Viking Deputy Mayor Cindy Lefsrud attended the meeting at the Holden Lodge, and stated there needs to be more levels of care provided between these transition points.

Lefsrud said there are such services in Wainwright but not in Beaver County. These different levels of service would allow seniors to "age in place" longer and not have to move to the care home as soon as they otherwise might.

Hrabec cited financial issues as an impediment, plus the problem of getting more staff to move to rural areas to perform these extra levels of care.

Lefsrud said patients can decline in health faster once they are moved into a continuing care facility when they might be able to remain in a lodge with more personal care available.



Attending the information session at the Holden Lodge were (front table) from left: Viking Deputy Mayor Cindy Lefsrud; Claystone Waste Public Advisory Committee member Rod Krips; Viking CAO Doug Lefsrud, and Division 5 Beaver County Councillor Dale Pederson.

Employment Opportunity

Town of Viking Summer Employment Positions

Public Works - Summer Maintenance

Duties and Responsibilities

1. This position reports to the Town Foreman
2. Operation of various equipment (including Mowers, Water Pumps, Weed Eaters, Sprayers, Tramper) and vehicles (Including Town Pickup Truck with Trailer hauling water tank/mower)
3. Perform a variety of safe and efficient manual labour related duties
4. Maintaining the grounds & foliage of the Town & Town Cemetery
5. Small roadwork repair & maintenance (filling pot holes/painting lines)
6. Ability to work in all types of weather
7. Willingness to participate in basic safety training as required

Qualifications

1. Be self-motivated and have the ability to work independently
2. Ability to operate mowers and equipment
3. Strong customer service and verbal communication skills
4. Ability to multi-task and prioritize workload efficiently
5. Valid class 5 Alberta driver's license (drivers abstract required)
6. Must have the ability to use hand tools and lift heavy objects, if required
7. First aid certification would be an asset but not necessary
8. Ability to work flexible hours and weekends, if required

Eastview Campground Summer Employee

Duties and Responsibilities

1. This position reports to the Town Foreman
2. Manage bookings for the Campground through the online calendar system
3. Answer phones calls, return messages, and respond to emails
4. Take payments
5. Cash out daily
6. Computer skills and recordkeeping
7. Cleaning Bathrooms & Showers DAILY
8. Operation of various equipment and vehicles (Mower & Weed eater) (Town Pickup Truck)
9. Perform a variety of safe and efficient manual labour related duties
10. Ability to work in all types of weather
11. Willingness to participate in basic safety training as required

Qualifications

1. Be self-motivated and have the ability to work independently
2. Ability to operate mowers and equipment
3. Strong customer service and verbal communication skills
4. Ability to multi-task and prioritize workload efficiently
5. Attention to Detail for Cleanliness of Bathroom Facilities
6. Valid class 5 Alberta driver's license (drivers abstract required)
7. Must have the ability to use hand tools and lift heavy objects, if required
8. First aid certification would be an asset but not necessary
9. Ability to work flexible hours and weekends, when larger community events are scheduled

The Town of Viking thanks all applicants for your interest however only those selected for interviews will be contacted.

Please complete the Application for Employment form on the website. Applications can be submitted to:

**Doug Lefsrud, CAO Town of Viking Box 369 Viking, Alberta T0B 4N0
780-336-3466 Email: accounting@viking.ca**

Viking Museum & Anglican Church - Summer Employee

Duties and Responsibilities

1. This position reports to the Viking Historical Society.
2. Operation of various equipment (including Mowers, Weed Eaters)
3. Perform a variety of safe and efficient manual labour related duties
4. Maintaining the grounds & foliage of the Museum, Anglican Church & Hall
5. Guiding Tours through the Museum & Anglican Church and Hall
6. Cataloguing Artifacts
7. Cleaning & Organizing

Qualifications

1. Be self-motivated and have the ability to work independently
2. Ability to operate mowers
3. Strong customer service and verbal communication skills
4. Ability to multi-task and prioritize workload efficiently
5. Ability to work flexible hours and weekends, if required

The Viking Historical Society thanks all applicants for your interest however only those selected for interviews will be contacted.

Please complete the Application for Employment form on the Town website. Applications can be submitted to:

Mike Lawes, Viking Historical Society Box 106 Viking, Alberta T0B 4N0