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The Beaver County

Chronicle

A Free Weekly Publication Serving All of Beaver County

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Deputy Reeve opposes support for virtual training academy - expresses concern about competition for Holden Rural Academy

Patricia Harcourt

Beaver County Council approved a request for the reeve to write a letter of support to the Alberta CTS Academy for development of virtual high school career training in the Beaver Region.

A successful motion by Reeve Kevin Smook (Division 1) authorized council to request he write a letter of support.

However, Deputy Reeve Gene Hrabec (Division 3) objected to the motion and asked for a recorded vote.

The letter is to support the CTS Academy's development of virtual high school career training in the Beaver Region.

Council had heard a presentation by Paul Bohnert last April about a virtual high school partnership that focuses on vocational and professional career training, said Deborah Zuch, general manager

of community and protective services, in her June 18 report to council.

She explained that CTS Academy uses existing school and other spaces in the community to deliver their courses.

This would take place "at a variety of times throughout the school day for students to access on their own schedule," Zuch explained.

"This greatly augments often limited or non-existent offerings in public schools.

"Students and their families can plan and build a pick-list of appropriate, interest-based training for the students to access from his or her home location."

The academy would provide over 200 introductory and 300 intermediate 1-credit courses, she said, "that combine career development and employment readiness for high school students studying from their home locations."

Zuch told council the courses span over 500 different occupations.

Beaver County is just one of 14 municipalities across Alberta visited by Bohnert to try and establish the academy with approval from the Minister of Education.

The county's Governance and Priorities Committee recommended the idea of a letter of support to council two weeks previously.

But Hrabec opposed the motion, stating he felt the Holden Rural Academy should be supported by the county, not this new outside initiative.

"I'm not prepared to support this because there's been no follow up done," he said. "We need to ensure there is no competition to the rural school in Holden."

In defending his motion, Reeve Smook said the HRA Academy was being pro-

active and was not in competition with the Holden Rural Academy, "as we wouldn't want that, either."

Hrabec said he asked the presenter at the GPC meeting if he had spoken to the Holden Rural Academy and other area schools about the proposed online academy.

But he appeared to be dissatisfied with the answer that there was no competition because the virtual academy doesn't offer the same courses.

Hrabec asked for a recorded vote before opposing the reeve's motion to write a letter in support.

Hrabec represents Division 3 in the county, the location for the Holden Rural Academy. He was a strong supporter of the local community's initiative to found the HRA after the Battle River School Division closed its school about five years ago.

County passes Operating and Capital Reserves policy after council decision

Patricia Harcourt

After some in-depth discussion by county council, Policy #Corp-018, Operating and Capital Reserves Schedules A-D, was passed.

The revised policy was brought before Beaver County's regular June 18 meeting of council by Ryan Arndt, General Manager of Corporate Services.

Arndt recommended that council approve the revised Schedules A-D of Policy #Corp-18, Operations and Capital Reserves.

"Following the publication of the annual financial statements, administration must prepare updated Schedules A-D for council approval," said Arndt, in his report.

"As budgeting is an estimate at a point in time, it is in the county's best interests to have reserves to draw on for unforeseeable circumstances," he explained,

"as well as to prevent large increases in tax levies.

"A healthy reserve also provides interest revenue for the county to help mitigate tax levy increases," he said.

As for financial implications, he said that, "transparency and healthy reserves are both key to financial sustainability and responsible planning for the county."

Also, "reserves alleviate large fluctuations in municipal levies from year to year," he said.

Council passed the revised bylaw but not before much discussion ensued.

Contingency reserve funding went down to \$3 million, said Williams, asking where another \$2.5 million of those funds went.

When Arndt answered that the \$2.5 million was "reallocated to public works," Deputy Reeve Gene Hrabec (Division 3) asked: "Is this common?"

Chief Administrative Officer Kayleena Spiess confirmed that "50 per cent goes to the public works account," and the other 50 per cent is assigned "at the CAO's discretion," as per county policy.

Spiess added that her allocations would be done through consulting with county council.

Hrabec then questioned the \$277,000 allocated for the Paragon Theatre. The theatre, a county-owned property, had been demolished last winter.

Arndt said the funds are "to be allocated for outstanding bills," and the funds that are left over would be re-allocated.

Hrabec replied that his understanding was that leftover funds "would go to the community." Paragon Theatre was located on the Village of Holden's main street.

Spiess said funds that are left over "haven't been divvied up yet," but the work regarding the Paragon Theatre "is almost done."

She added that talks are underway with the Village of Holden regarding possibly funding for a recreational facility. But, "we have to earmark... the funds that are left," she said.

Hrabec said funding for this initiative could come "from other sources, too." CAO Spiess said the county "should be wrapped up with the Paragon soon."

And she said that 50 per cent of the contingency funds could go to other projects, "but this is not outlined in the policy specifically."

"My question is not about the policy," said Williams, who referred to the 50 per cent that goes to public works for infrastructure, and the other 50 per cent that "goes to the CAO's discretion depending on what goals there are."

Spiess replied that "If you need extra funds come back to council," and was alright with the policy as presented.

Council approved the revised policy upon a motion by Williams.

Living Through LOSS

A six-week facilitated support group for those experiencing grief and loss.

Tofield Arena Meeting Room
(4748 53 Avenue, Tofield, AB)

July 8, 15, 22, 29
August 5, 12
6:00-7:30 p.m.

Free of charge.

Participants will be required to complete a brief questionnaire before registering.

For more information or to register, please contact Dawn at Viking/Beaver FCSS at **780.336.4024** or **DChrystian@vbfcss.ca** or Tofield/Beaver County West FCSS at **780.662.7067**.



Tofield/Beaver County West Family and Community Support Services



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IMPORTANT DATES

July 16

- 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM - Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting
- 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM - Regular Council Meeting

August 20

- 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM - Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting
- 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM - Regular Council Meeting

WHATS HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Book Club
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!

Tofield AA - Thursdays, 8 - 9 PM
Basement of Bardo Lutheran Church, 4737 57 Ave, Tofield.

Viking AA - Wednesdays, 8 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 the events calendar on the website! Just head to the website, under the Explore menu click on County Region Events Calendar. We have partnered with Go East to share local events on our website!

We are looking for MUNICIPAL ELECTION WORKERS

Come work with us on October 20, 2025. Positions available...

- Presiding Deputy Returning Officers
- Deputy Returning Officers
- Standby Workers

For more information, and details on how to apply, visit our website > Government > Careers, or scan the QR code.



CONTRACTOR WANTED: TOFIELD CURLING CLUB PROJECT:

The Tofield Curling Club is seeking a qualified contractor for the demolition and rebuild of a foyer enclosure (vestibule). Complete engineered drawings are available. Permit access and utility locates have already been completed. For more information or to express interest, please contact: Dave Schultz

📞 Home: 780-662-3956
📱 Cell: 780-278-0816
✉ Email: tschultz@una.ca

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- Administrative Assistant - Summer Student**

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





OPEN TENDER

Beaver County is currently accepting submissions for the following:

- **Bruce and Kinsella Road Rehabilitation - 2025-07-INFR**
 - Closes: July 18, 2025 @ 10 a.m. Local time

Please find complete information for all requests on our website > Business > RFPs, Tenders, Leases & Sales



2025 COUNTY CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

****ALL DATES ARE APPROXIMATE AND WEATHER DEPENDENT****

	START DATE	EST. END DATE	AS OF JUNE 18
Culvert Maintenance	April 1	Nov 1	
Patching oil roads	May 1	Sep 29	
Hard-Surface Locations Constructed in the following phases: Phase 1 (P1): Cement, Phase 2 (P2): Chip Seal 1st Lift, Phase 3 (P3): Chip Seal 2nd lift, Phase 4 (P4): Final sweep of Chips.			
Kingsway Estates - 501	May 12	May 16	P1, P2
Rge Rd 202 between Twp 502 & 504	May 19	May 30	P1, P2
Beaver Creek Estates North - 50514 Rge Rd 202	Jun 2	Jun 4	P1, P2
Rge Rd 200 from Hwy 630 to campground entrance & Hoopers Dr	Jun 5	Jun 9	P1, P2
Whispering Hills Estates - 51308 Rge Rd 195	Jun 10	Jun 14	P1, P2
Rge Rd 200 from Hwy 630 to Blackfoot Grazing Reserve Entrance	Jun 16	Jun 24	P1
Twp 492 approx. 1.72kms east of Rge Rd 170	Jun 26	Jun 27	P1
Twp 490 between Hwy 857 & Rge Rd 142	Jul 2	Jul 25	
Twp 490 between Hwy 870 & Rge Rd 120	Jul 28	Aug 22	
Twp Rd 512 from Rge Rd 191 to HWY 834	Aug 25	Sep 3	
Shoulder Pulls (Location TBD)			
Backsloping (location TBD)	Oct 2	Nov 1	
Bridge Replacement (RGE RD 171 from TWP 484 - 490)	Jun 26	Jul 26	
Gravelling	Mar 13	Dec 22	
Dust Control- 1st Application	May 13	May 30	
Dust Control- 2nd Application	Aug 8	Aug 15	
Completed In Progress Scheduled Delayed			

CONSTRUCTION NOTICE: TWP RD 490 BETWEEN HWY 857 & RGE RD 142

Over the coming weeks, TWP RD 490 Between Hwy 857 & RGE RD 142 will undergo a significant road repair to a durable, all-weather hard surface. This improvement includes stabilizing the existing road base with soil cement, followed by the application of two layers of chip seal. Although this process differs from traditional asphalt paving, residents and motorists will enjoy a similar finished surface—dust-free when dry and mud-free when wet.

During construction, sections of the road may be temporarily closed to allow crews to work safely. Detours will be clearly marked. Please plan alternate routes where possible or drive cautiously if you must travel through the construction zone (local traffic only).

Beaver County is committed to maintaining a safe, injury-free work environment for all staff, contractors, and the public. We kindly remind all drivers to respect posted speed limits in construction areas. Excessive speed poses a serious risk to workers and others in the area.

Construction sites can present potential hazards such as heavy equipment, dust, mud, gravel, chip seal materials, and other debris. We urge everyone to stay alert and travel with care.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to improve your roads. These upgrades are essential to maintaining safe and reliable infrastructure in high-traffic areas.

For more information, please contact the Beaver County Service Centre at 780-663-3730.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE FOR THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- **RGE RD 200 from HWY 630 to Hoopers Drive & Campground Entrance**
- **Whispering Hills Estates**
- **RGE RD 200 between HWY 630 & Blackfoot Grazing Reserve Entrance**
- **TWP RD 492 approximately 1.72kms east of RGE RD 170**

The soil stabilizing for the road base with soil cement is now complete. We will soon be starting the first layer of chip seal and there may be delays as work crews direct traffic in order to work safely. There will be many loose rocks after the chip seal layer is applied and speed limits will be reduced on these roads once opened until the project is complete.

During this construction phase, portions of the road may be closed to allow crews to work safely please use another route, detours will be posted or be cautious when you need to drive through construction zones (local traffic only). Beaver County's goal is to provide a healthy, injury free work environment for all employees, contractors, visitors and general public. Already this year we have had people exceeding the posted speed limit through our construction zones, endangering staff, contractors and the public.

There are potential hazards to the public and vehicles during the construction process. This can include heavy machinery, dust or mud, road material such as gravel, asphalt coatings and rock chips.

We apologize for the inconvenience that road maintenance and upgrading causes, but the same roads that receive the most traffic also need the most maintenance. Thank-you for your patience and understanding during construction. If you have any questions, please call the Beaver County Service Centre at 780-663-3730.

ROAD CLOSURE: BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

RGE RD 171 from TWP 484 to 490 will be closed starting on July 2 for a bridge replacement. Local traffic will be accommodated, however, no through traffic will be allowed. Weather dependent, work is expected to last approximately one month. Please use alternate routes as posted.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE FOR THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Over the summer, County construction crews have been working to upgrade the following roads:

- **Kingsway Estates**
- **RGE RD 202 between TWP RD 502 & 504**
- **Beaver Creek Estates North 50514 RGE RD 202**

These locations will soon begin to receive the second layer of chip seal and there may be delays as work crews' direct traffic to work safely. There will be many loose rocks after the second chip seal layer is applied and speed limits will continue to be reduced on these roads until the final sweep is complete. Beaver County's goal is to provide a healthy, injury free work environment for all employees, contractors, visitors, and general public.

There are potential hazards to the public and vehicles during the construction process. This can include heavy machinery, dust or mud, road material such as gravel, asphalt coatings and rock chips.

We apologize for the inconvenience that road maintenance and upgrading causes, but the same roads that receive the most traffic also need the most maintenance. Thank-you for your patience and understanding during construction. If you have any questions, please call the Beaver County Service Centre at 780-663-3730.



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.

Social media

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



Council decisions made concerning youth programs

Patricia Harcourt

Decisions were made on youth issues and programs at Beaver County council's June 18 regular meeting.

Deborah Juch, general manager of community and protective services for the county, brought forward an amended Policy #CS-017, Youth Education of Government and its accompanying administrative procedure.

Juch provided background information for council. The Youth Education of Government Policy was established in recognition that "understanding the democratic process fosters civic engagement, strengthens community leadership, and contributes to a vibrant, well-informed democracy," she said, adding, "The policy supports students participating in non-partisan programs that focus on educating youth about government, civic

responsibility, and leadership development."

During county budget talks this spring, council increased the total available funding for awards for the youth program to \$4,000

"As a result, updates are necessary to ensure the policy aligns with this budget," said Juch. The Governance and Priorities Committee recommended council approve the revised bill after a review was done in June.

"The revisions improve consistency and clarity and update the program to align with other funding programs offered by the county," she said.

Key changes in the revised policy include the following:

For the Social Studies 30 Award, the maximum funding per recipient goes from \$250 to \$500 for a total of four available awards.

Also, the application deadline would be moved from September 15

to June 30 of each year to allow sufficient notice for eligible applicants.

For extra-curricular programs, the total available funding is increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000 to help support eligible applicants. This application date would change from May 31 to September 15 to better align it with summer program schedules.

And, application forms have been reviewed and updated "to reflect the proposed policy amendments," she said, adding: "They are separate from the policy to allow for easier updates by administration in the future."

A motion by Councillor Barry Bruce (Division 4) to accept the newly revised policy was passed by council.

On a motion by Deputy Reeve Gene Hrabec (Division 3), the revised Edward and Marie Stelmach Scholarship policy was also passed by council.

Juch explained that this scholarship

"was developed to honour the leadership, dedication and public service of Edward and Marie Stelmach, particularly during Mr. Stelmach's time as Premier and Minister for the Province of Alberta.

"Beaver County established this scholarship to recognize their lasting contributions and to support local youth in their pursuit of post-secondary education."

This year, council increased the total funding available for this policy to \$4,000, which has been approved in the 2025 final budget. This requires updates to the policy to align with these changes.

The key change in policy was the increase in funding per recipient to rise from a maximum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$2,000, or \$4,000 in total for two successful applicants.

This means the emphasis will be on higher grants rather than more students receiving grants.

County wraps up agricultural matters with final readings on policy changes

Patricia Harcourt

Several agricultural matters were finalized at the June 18 meeting of county council with final readings on policy changes.

Agricultural Fieldman Jonathan Culbert brought back several issues after being introduced at the May meeting. First reading went to some policies up for change to give residents a chance to look them over and offer any comments before proceeding.

First reading was given at the May 21 meeting to the proposed Bylaw-#25-1172, the Agricultural Notice of Appeal Committees.

"The proposed bylaw has since been available to the public for feedback and no feedback has been received," Culbert reported.

"As such, administration recommends that council pass both the second and third reading of the proposed bylaw."

Culbert made a stipulation in his report that "members of these committees cannot be any individuals involved or associated with the issuing of agricultural notices," under the Weed Control Act or the Agricultural Pests Act.

Those not allowed on these committees were named as from county council, the Agricultural Service Board, the Agricultural Fieldman, among others.

However, under the Soil Conservation Act, rural municipalities must appoint either council or Ag Service Board members as the appeal committee to hear appeals received under the SCA.

And, since these are appointments that must be done through bylaw, Culbert as fieldman has presented an

Agricultural Notice of Appeal Committees bylaw.

Culbert said the proposed bylaw would "meet the requirements of the Acts listed above." He added that, "the purpose of the bylaw is to provide legitimacy to the different agricultural appeal committees, and to provide guidance on the committee's functions, structure and meeting procedures."

Councillor Barry Bruce (Division 4) made a FOIP-related motion as requested by administration to clean up the wording in Section 14 of the bylaw.

Then Deputy Reeve Gene Hrabec (Division 3) made a motion to pass second reading on the bylaw as amended. When this motion passed, a motion for third and final reading was made by Councillor Lionel Williams (Division 2) which passed to enact the revised bylaw.

Council then gave second and third (final) readings to Bylaw #25-1173, the Agricultural Service Board.

As with the previous bylaw, Culbert said there was no public feedback following first reading in May.

Previous to this, the county had a Terms of Reference but no bylaw or policy in place "to establish the ASB."

Alberta's Agriculture and Irrigation Department does not require a bylaw, he said.

"But there have been instances where neighbouring municipalities have faced challenges regarding the legitimacy of their ASBs," said Culbert. "Specifically, agricultural notices and enforcement actions have been questioned or rescinded due to concerns over the absence of a formal bylaw, leaving the municipalities vul-

nerable to legal or operational difficulties."

With these concerns, he advised county council to implement its own ASB bylaw. He said this would "ensure the county's compliance with legislative requirements and to safeguard the authority and legitimacy of the ASB."

And, he said, it would "solidify the ASB's role in advising council on agricultural policies," and "provide a clear and structured framework for fulfill-

ing its duties under the Act."

The bylaw passed by council also "provides clear guidelines for the ASB's operations, including the roles and responsibilities of its members, its powers to enforce relevant agricultural laws, its processes for issuing agricultural notices, and other related duties," he explained.

"It also outlines procedures for conducting ASB meetings, which is not addressed in the current Terms of Reference," he added.

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