

## Summary of the April 22nds Council meeting

Disclaimers to these summary notes are;

1. They do not constitute Councils decisions. These summary notes are only mean to keep you informed and if there are any conflict between these notes and the adopted council minutes, the council adopted minutes will prevail.
2. Direction to administration means exactly that. Council provides direction to administration to bring forward additional information which will be included in the decision-making process. It is common for direction to be given, with the resulting decision being different based on more discussion at the Council table.

### Bylaw 07/20 – Establishing Procedure and Conduct of Public hearings

Council gave third and final reading to Bylaw 07/20 – Establishing Procedure and Conduct of Public hearings. The Province, through Municipal Government Act (MGA) amendments has granted additional procedures for public hearings to proceed through electronic means. In order for Council to utilize the electronic methods for public hearings, the Bylaw needed to be updated. The first public hearing to be held electronically before Council has been set for May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### 2020 Budget

Council has approved the Budget for 2020. The following are highlights (and some low lights) from the budget.

Revenue:

- Municipal revenue from property tax for 2020 is \$29.6M, and while this looks good in comparison the revenues from 2019 of \$29.8M, an allowance of \$5M for bad debt has been incorporated into budget as an expense, which could essentially drop the collected municipal revenue to \$24.6M. It is too early to tell what kind of impact a combination of the pandemic and oil crisis will have on our oil and gas industry and business community, but in order to be fiscally responsible we have to take our best estimation of the risk to municipal revenue so that we don't end up with a large financial deficit at the end of the year.
- Other revenue streams like the sale of goods and services return on investments and government transfers for operating account for an additional \$4.8M bringing the total revenue to \$34.4M.
- Additional capital grants from the Province in the form of the municipal sustainability grant and the federal gas tax fund have provided \$5.4M to put towards capital projects for 2020.
- Mountain View County will collect \$12.2M through property taxes on behalf of the province for the Alberta School Foundation Fund (ASFF). Please remember as previously discussed that 43% of your residential property taxes and 26% of your non-residential property taxes paid goes directly to the Province for ASFF.

- Mountain View County will collect \$1.8M through property taxes on behalf of Mountain View Senior Housing (MVSH). Please remember as previously discussed that 7% of your residential property taxes and 3% of your non-residential property taxes paid goes directly to MVSH.
- The Province has now imposed collection of police funding from all municipalities. Prior to 2020, the cost of the policing was only attributed to those urban centers with populations greater than 5000. While the County did still contribute some funds to some of our Urban detachments, this was not a mandated Provincial Government funding requirement. The new Provincial police funding model has imposed an additional \$284K expense to the County in 2020. It is anticipated that this cost of policing and transfer of funds to the Province will escalate to more than \$1M annually in 2023. Although the Province is treating this as a fee for service, it is essentially another municipal collection of a requisition on behalf of the Province.

### Expenses

- Overall the County will spend \$28.4M on operating expenses (including the assumption of bad debt and excluding amortization). If Council moves forward with the Bergen Road upgrade project once the tenders are received, the capital expenditure for 2020 will be \$26.9M. This will require a net use of reserve funding of some \$15M. The County, in line with our County long range infrastructure plan, has built up a road reserve to fund large capital road projects in the order of \$29M and the funding of the Bergen road (currently estimated at \$10M) is part of the planned expense.
- Council has tried wherever possible to ensure there is no reduction to municipal services for 2020. Therefore, the programs like re-graveling (\$2.25M) and long patching (\$0.4M) have been kept whole while other programs like re-chipping (\$1.275M) and base stabilization (\$0.48M) have seen small reductions.
- The County will continue to honor the inter-municipal collaboration agreements with our urban partners and the village of Cremona. This will include the total transfer of \$2.1M to our urban partners to support the operations and maintenance of culture, recreational and library facilities.
- Fire services will remain fully funded, again through strong partnerships with our urban partners in the order of \$1.2M for operating and small capital equipment as well as \$1.9M in fire capital equipment purchases that have been carried over from 2019.
- All County grant programs have remained whole including FCSS (grants including rural community hall, rural community, cemetery, playground, rural crime reduction, health and STARS funding).
- The County has made the decision to defer \$1.756M worth of equipment purchase and replacement, including deferring the purchase and replacement of 2 graders. This will not impact the level of service.

## Bylaw No 04/20 – Tax rate

Council passed the tax rate bylaw, which sets the mil rate for all assessment classes. The bylaw also contains the total assessment value per assessment class in line with Provincial legislation. The property tax is then calculated as the municipal set mil rate times the assessment value. Overall, municipal mil rates have remained unchanged for all assessment classes. As communicated by the Province the ASFF mil rate has not increased for 2020. The increases in mil rates have come from the requirement for the County to pay for Provincial policing now, accounting for a mil rate of 0.0629 to all assessment classes (total of \$284K) and a 58% increase in the MVSH mil rate to 0.395 (total \$1.8M).

## Bylaw No 08/20 – Property Tax administration

Council passed the property tax administration bylaw. This bylaw contains information on the tax incentives offered this year, the tax penalties and how to do pre authorized debit accounts. Council has agreed to the following principles for 2020;

1. Property Tax Incentives:
  - a. Keep the tax deadline of September 15
  - b. Offer a 0.5% reduction of total Tax bill if paid in full prior to August 15
  - c. Offer a 1.0% reduction of total Tax bill if paid in full prior to July 15
2. Property Tax Penalties:
  - a. Keep the tax deadline of September 15
  - b. Waive all penalties if taxes are paid before December 1
  - c. If taxes are not paid by December 1, 1.5% interest penalties will be added immediately and an additional 0.5% interest per month until balance is paid in full.
3. Pre Authorized Debit Accounts:
  - a. Extend the Tax Pre-Authorized Debit Plan (PAD) sign-up to September 15
  - b. A 3-month deferral of the monthly payment program. The 3 months would then be divided up and spread over the remaining portion of the year and be due and payable before December 31st without any penalties. Enrollment would not be automatic; it would be on an application basis only.

## 2019 Audited financial statements

Council met with our Auditors (virtually) from MNP to review the 2019 audit. There were no concerns raised by the auditor. Based on the 2019 audit, the County's net financial assets are \$44.2M (we have liabilities of \$26.4M and Assets of \$70.6M). Therefore, as of year-end 2019 we were in a strong financial position.

## National public works week

Council has proclaimed the week of May 17-23, 2020 as national public works week to raise the awareness of what public works does and the great services they provide. This will entail communication to the public via the newspaper and our County website.

## Alberta Parks and Environment Letter

Council approved a motion to send a letter to AEP to request additional information on how the Province will manage the use of Crown land in 2020, the enforcement of AHS protocols and OHV usage and fire bans. There is a Concern about increase usage of our west Country, especially with the closing of Provincial Parks and the pandemic and the desire for people to get out of the cities.

In addition to this there was a discussion around concerns for facebook posts looking for camping opportunity on private rural lands for the long weekend. Council wishes to communicate to our residents that this will not be acceptable under our bylaws and policies and that camping on private lands is not permissible and larger gatherings would also require an events permit. Also, please keep in mind that ALL the AHS protocols must be adhered to.

## Health funding approvals

Council approved, under the health funding grant policy, a number of applications. The grant for health funding is set at maximum of \$64,370 for 2020, and of this \$48,565 was approved. This includes the following:

- Graham Hall Community Association – defibrillator \$2,000
- Hope 4 MVC Kids Society – Help families with medical needs \$16,940
- Olds & District Hospice Society – suite lease expense \$15,000
- Peaks to Prairies Primary Care Network – mom tribe perinatal support workshops \$3,400
- Sundre Health Professional Attraction & Retention - \$10,000
- Village of Cremona/FCSS – red cross first aid course \$1,225