

Council Highlights



An initiative Designed to Keep **YOU** Better Informed of Council Decisions and Initiatives

June 10, 2013

Operating Assistance Grants -- Council will distribute \$183,468 in operating assistance grants to 65 non-profit organizations and volunteer groups and \$547,400 in grants to 26 sports, recreation and cultural facilities to cover utility expenses. See news release, **County Distributes Grants to 91 Groups**.

FireSmart Update –Consultant Jerry Bauer provided Council with a brief overview on the FireSmart work in the Dunes area and in Evergreen Park. Since its inception in 2010, this local FireSmart initiative has targeted the beetle infested Dunes area. To date, a total of 36,244 m3 pulpwood was logged and hauled from 408 hectares. An additional grant of \$95,000 was received to reduce fire risk in Evergreen Park. Contractors are in the process of clearing another 850 trees and an additional 5.7 hectares scheduled for removal. Next year's goal is complete the initial fire break by logging another 15,000-20,000 m3 over 150-200 hectares of land.

FireSmart is a partnership between the County of Grande Prairie and Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development which aims to efforts to reduce fuel levels and help protect homes, property and communities from the threat of wildfires. FireSmart uses preventable measures to reduce wildfire threat to Albertans and their communities while balancing the benefits of wildfire on the landscape.

Grade Three Reading University –Council made a motion to contribute \$5,000 to the Grade Three Reading University. The Reading University will take place at Grande Prairie Regional College from July 2nd to 19th, 2013. This is a program offered to children from across the region at a grade 3 level who would like to improve their reading skills. Council has supported the program since its inception.

Staff Introduction – Council and staff welcomed and congratulated Ken Atamanchuk on his new position as Fire Marshal. Ken previously worked as a County Fire Captain. An official ceremony will be held at the June 24th Council meeting.

Wapiti Corridor Multi-Use Plan – Council approved the Wapiti Corridor Multi-Use Plan. The plan will be forwarded to the provincial government for approval. The Wapiti Corridor Planning Society, with representation from a wide cross section of people and organizations with a vested interest in the Wapiti Corridor, worked with stakeholders to cooperatively develop a set of recommendations to guide the use and development of the Corridor. This resulted in the creation of a multi-use plan, for the Wapiti River Valley from Pipestone Creek to the Smoky River that accommodates, protects and balances both the current and future needs of the area and its people.

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Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP) – Bylaw 2987 did not receive third reading so will be brought back to Council at a later date. Council approved the GPREP Emergency Management Agreement which replaces the Regional Disasters Services Framework.

GPREP was created to provide a coordinated response to large emergencies or disasters affecting the Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP) and/or any of the individual municipalities in the partnership which include the County, City of Grande Prairie; Towns of Beaverlodge, Wembley, Sexsmith; and the Village of Hythe. The new agreement established the Regional Emergency Management Committee; GPREP Planning and Coordinating Group; Regional Emergency Management Agency; and the GPREP Coordinator Position. It also outlines the duties and powers of the Committee, Group, and Agency.

Council passed a motion to appoint Bill Rogan as Director of the Emergency Management; Arlen Miller as Deputy Director of the Emergency Management; and Councillor Richard Harpe as the alternate Council member of the Emergency Management Committee. Councillor Harold Bulford remains the County's representative to the Committee.

Fire Mutual Aid Agreements – Council made a motion to sign the Fire Mutual Aid Agreement with four neighboring municipalities including the Towns of Beaverlodge, Wembley, Sexsmith; and Village of Hythe.

This agreement replaces the current agreement which has been in place since 1982 allowing municipalities to call on each other's resources for responses to fires within our respective municipalities.

Health Care Services in West County – Council made a motion to write a letter to Alberta Health Services (AHS), the Minister of Infrastructure and local MLAs in regards to the lack of consultation with and level of health care services available to the rural communities in West County.

Valhalla Community Centre Parking Lot – Council made a motion to fund \$7,500 that will go towards the supply and application of gravel on the Valhalla Community Centre parking lot.

2015 Alberta Special Olympics – Council made a motion to appoint a member of Council to be part of the organizing committee for the 2015 Alberta Winter Special Olympics that Grande Prairie region will be hosting in winter 2015.

Municipal Transportation Grants – Council made a motion to write a letter to the Minister of Transportation in regards to the funding provided to the County of Grande Prairie through Municipal Transportation Grants. It was noted no inflationary increases had occurred to this grant in several years.

Next Council meeting is June 17, 2013.

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