

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



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

November 4, 2019

Council Declares Agricultural Disaster – Council declared an agricultural disaster in the County of Grande Prairie. This marks the fourth straight year of difficult conditions for local agricultural producers. Several factors, including wet conditions delaying seeding, excessive rainfall, and cool weather, have slowed agricultural production and led to poor quality crops.

Council will send a letter to the Provincial and Federal governments about the declaration to bring attention to the poor conditions impacting crop and livestock producers and requesting additional supports. Council directed that resources like the Suicide Prevention Resource Centre's Tough Enough to Talk About It Program focused on the agriculture industry, be shared with County residents.

Naming of "Boyer Hill" – County Council will send a letter to the Honourable Leela Aheer, Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women, in support of the proposed name "Boyer Hill" for a hill located 20 km east of the Hamlet of Clairmont in Kleskun Hill Natural Area. The name honours Raymond Boyer, a veteran of the Second World War who lived and worked in the County until his retirement. Boyer, who passed away in 2012, was instrumental in establishing Kleskun Hills Heritage Park.

Rural Fire Engine Replacement – Council approved the purchase of two custom fire engines from Commercial Emergency Equipment Co. for a total of \$1,285,172. These engines will be outfitted with features that make firefighting safer, more efficient and easier than in regular commercial fire engines, especially for volunteers.

Intermunicipal Development Plan with Birch Hills County – Council gave second and third reading to Bylaw 3125, the County of Grande Prairie and Birch Hills County Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP). More information on the IDP between the County of Grande Prairie and Birch Hills County can be found at www.countygp.ab.ca/BirchHillsIDP.

Landscape Recognition Program Award Winners – Representatives from this year's award-winning commercial and industrial businesses were honoured for their excellence in landscaping. Council and staff congratulated Valard Foundations for receiving the Award of Excellence and Horizon North Logistics Inc. for the People's Choice Award. The Landscape Recognition Program aims to encourage higher levels of landscaping cooperation among new and existing businesses and features a contest to recognize businesses that meet or exceed the landscaping standards set out by the County's Land Use Bylaw. For more information, visit www.countygp.ab.ca/LandscapeWinners.

Organizational Updates – Representatives from Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural and Exhibition Society and management from Evergreen Park presented to Council on their year-to-date, including events, capital projects, budget highlights, and their strategic plan. The Society requested an additional 3.5% of funding annually for additional equipment, as well as for future renovations to the Lewis Hawkes Pavillion. The funding request was forwarded to this year's interim budget deliberations.

Rick Friesen, President of the Bezanson Agricultural Society updated Council on their operations to date, including event and facility bookings, budget highlights, their strategic plan, as well as an update on the loan of \$435,000 provided by the County earlier in 2019. The County

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contributed \$2.2 million to the facility, which had its grand opening a year ago.

Snow Removal Requests – Council approved two requests for snow removal from resident driveways through the Snowplowing for Seniors or Special Needs Individuals Program. Residents who are unable to clear their driveway of snow due to health concerns or physical ability can apply to the program, which helps ensure the safety and accessibility of residents.

Business Retention and Expansion International Conference – The County will host the 2020 Business Retention and Expansion International Conference and certification program, inviting economic development professionals from all over the world to the County for education, professional development, training and networking. Council approved up to \$14,000 for the conference and directed Administration to apply for applicable grants and explore partnerships with neighbouring municipalities.

Public Hearings – Council held a public hearing for Bylaw 2680-19-052 to redesignate 15 acres of land, located 16 km northwest of the Hamlet of Teepee Creek, adjacent to Range Road 44 from an Agricultural (AG) District to a Country Residential (CR-5) District to allow for the subdivision of one lot for residential use. Council gave the bylaw three readings.

Council held a public hearing for Bylaw 2680-19-053 to redesignate 9 acres of land, located within the Hamlet of Clairmont, adjacent to Highway 2 from an Agricultural (AG) District to a Medium Density

Residential (MDR) District to allow for the development of sixty-two lots for residential use. Council gave the bylaw three readings.

Bylaws - Council gave third reading to Bylaw 3124 to cancel a registered plan located 10.5 km northwest of the Town of Wembley to consolidate a previously subdivided lot into the remainder of the quarter section.

Policies – Council approved policy B29, Letter of Support Policy, to establish a consistent approach for evaluating and responding to requests for Letters of Support from community organizations.

Council rescinded policy C18, Road Construction Budget Plan, as the updated Municipal Government Act (MGA) requires that the policy be updated. A new policy will be presented at a future Council Meeting.

Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Act Review – Council will provide MLA Jeremy Nixon with a letter outlining feedback on Alberta's Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Act (TSRA), including bringing restrictions on where tobacco products can be consumed in line with other Provinces. MLA Nixon is leading a review of the Act and has requested feedback from the public and stakeholders including municipalities.

FCSS Advisory Board Meeting – A special meeting of the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Advisory Board to review the Seniors and Special Needs Transportation Grant applications will be held in Council Chambers on November 22, 2019.

Next Regular Council Meeting will take place on November 18, 2019.

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