

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

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



November 9, 2020

Intermunicipal Agreements with Sexsmith – County Council formally approved the Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) and updated versions of existing municipal agreements on assessment, fire, animal control and enforcement services. An agreement addressing the curling rink in Sexsmith will be presented at a future Council Meeting. The agreements outline the effective, efficient and economical delivery of shared programs and services to residents in both municipalities. Details are outlined in the media release, **County of Grande Prairie, Town of Sexsmith Finalize Intermunicipal Agreement** at www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/meta/whats-new/latest-news.html.

Town of Sexsmith Council approved the agreements at their November 2 Council Meeting. This motion marks the sixth out of seven ICFs that the County must complete with neighbouring municipalities, as per the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

Tax Payment Updates – As of October 31, the County has collected \$102.9 million or 91 per cent of total tax revenue, with \$10.3 million outstanding, including \$3.1 million from the oil and gas industry, \$3.2 million from non-residential properties, and \$3.9 million from residential and farmland properties.

Earlier this year, Council approved a 1.2 per cent decrease to municipal tax rates and waived penalties for late payments made by October 30 in given the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whispering Ridge Area Structure Plan – Council gave third reading to the Whispering Ridge Area Structure Plan (ASP). The Plan is a framework to subdivide and develop an area in the Hamlet of Clairmont,

east of Range Road 62 and adjacent to the City of Grande Prairie, outlining mostly rural residential development, along with some multi-family and commercial development. Details about the approved plan will be available on our website next week at www.countygp.ab.ca/WhisperingRidgeASP.

ASP's provide a framework for the development of lands in a specific area, ensuring that development is consistent with the County's policies and objectives.

Erosion Control on Range Road 44 – Council approved \$1.75 million from the Division 1 road improvement budget to lessen erosion and drainage issues along Range Road 44. The project includes engineering work, as well as ditch and road improvements on Township Road 714 from Range Road 42 to Range Road 44. Work is planned to take place in 2021.

Tender Award – Council awarded the tender for a high lift loader to Brandt Tractor at the cost of \$420,190, above the trade-in value of current equipment.

Recreation Fee Assistance Program Enhancement – Council approved an update program to offer the option of a 75 per cent subsidy of the cost of an annual membership to a recreation facility for County residents who meet the program low-income requirements. This option will be presented along with the choice of a 10-punch pass.

Wetland Replacement Project – Council approved moving forward to establish wetlands at two locations in the County. The full cost of the

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project will be funded by the Province, with these projects being the first of their kind in Alberta.

Five Mile Hall School Site – Council approved funding to extend power and natural gas utilities to the Five Mile Hall School Site at a total estimated cost of \$298,000, after rebates to be provided by utility suppliers.

Council directed Administration to set up a meeting with Alberta Infrastructure to discuss future requirements to service rural school sites.

Contributions – Council approved up to \$10,000 in funding for the County of Grande Prairie JDA Kings hockey team for the cost of ice rentals this season given the impacts of COVID-19.

Council approved the contribution of two fire engines, recently taken out-of-service to the Sunrise Rotary Club to be donated to the Fire Department in Roatan, Mexico, through the Rotary Highway to Mexico Project.

Council will donate \$500 to the Friends of the Grande Spirit Foundation to support their virtual Dine and Dance fundraiser event taking place on November 14.

South Peace Regional Archives Relocation – Representatives from the South Peace Regional Archives presented to Council on their search for a permanent facility, including a proposed plan to relocate their offices. Council supported the proposed relocation from the Grande Prairie Museum to Centre 2000, as early as 2023. Financial implications

of the relocation will be presented for discussion at a future Council Meeting.

Funding Request – Representatives from Evergreen Park presented Council with their draft 2021 budget. This year, Council provided the organization with an annual funding grant of \$414,000, as well as support for payroll expenses from February until the end of this year at the cost of \$973,179, required due to the impacts of COVID-19. Council deferred a request to continue funding payroll expenses for the organization until June 2021 to the 2021 Interim Budget Deliberations.

Equipment for Technical Large Animal Rescue – Council approved the purchase of an enclosed cargo trailer and large animal rescue equipment, with the anticipated cost of \$22,186 to be reimbursed by the La Glace Firefighter Association.

Building and Development Permit Updates – Council approved an update to the Fees, Rates and Charges Bylaw, simplifying calculations of fees for building and development permits in advance of the new online permit software, which is planned to be available by the end of the year.

Council also approved updated agreements for the administration of Safety Code Services in the Towns of Beaverlodge, Sexsmith, Wembley and the Village of Hythe. The updated agreements reflect the reduced administration required with the new online building and development permit software.

Policies – Council approved an amendment to the policy allowing 100 Years of Farming awards. The Pioneer Farming Family and the Heritage

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Homestead awards, can now be presented at the family's residence, to allow for more flexibility during COVID-19.

Council approved a policy from the Agricultural Services Board (ASB) to accept an annual Youth Ambassador. The ambassador will be a resident aged 15 to 17 who represents the County of Grande Prairie at community events throughout the year in a positive, inspiring, and engaging manner. Applications will be made available for 2021.

Council approved a policy for the Sale of Surplus Municipal Land, providing a framework for fair and consistent sale processes for County land that meets legislative requirements.

Council approved a policy addressing the cancellation of road plans, as well as the closing, leasing, licensing, or sale of County roads. This new comprehensive policy will replace a less comprehensive policy, N20, in place.

Council approved a policy for granting extensions to subdivision approvals as allowed by the MGA. This policy is a formal framework for County practices over the previous 15 years.

Council approved an updated Public Reserve Property Development Policy, with updates focused on the policy template.

Policies can be viewed at www.countygp.ab.ca/policies.

Update on Industrial Development in MD of Greenview – Council accepted a letter for information from the Municipal District of Greenview regarding the Tri-Municipal Industrial Partnership. The municipality will

be solely moving forward with industrial development in the area south of the County of Grande Prairie, referred to as the Greenview Industrial Gateway. MD of Greenview thanked the County for their support and contributions to date, providing a cheque for past contributions.

Council directed the funds be returned to the Planning and Economic Development reserve. Council will write a letter thanking the MD of Greenview for the opportunity to work together and confirming continued support for their efforts to establish the Greenview Industrial Gateway.

Wedgewood Homeowner's Association – Council accepted correspondence from the Wedgewood Homeowner's Association for information and directed representatives to attend the association's Annual General Meeting on November 18.

Correspondence – Council will write a letter to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry regarding preferred protocol regarding invitations to consult with the Ministry and participate in working groups.

Council directed Administration to set up a meeting with the Town of Wembley and Wembley Agricultural Society regarding the Wembley Arena.

Proclamation – Council proclaimed November 20 as National Child Day in the County of Grande Prairie.

Staff Introduction – Council welcomed Joanna Huber to the County as an Administrative Assistant with Public Works.

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December Committee of the Whole Meeting – Council rescheduled the December 31, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting to December 17, 2020, to accommodate the holiday season.

Holiday Office Hours – Council approved the closure of County of Grande Prairie offices on Thursday, December 24 to provide an additional holiday to staff. Essential services are maintained during office closures.

The next Regular Council Meeting will take place on November 30, 2020. A Committee of the Whole Meeting will take place on November 26, 2020.

2021 Interim Budget Deliberations will take place on December 2, 3 and 4 from 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Council and Committee meetings can be accessed electronically through the County website at www.countygp.ab.ca/events.

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