



Town of High Level

Monthly report to Council

November 2021

Administration and Finance

CAO

General Administration

Boreal Housing efforts are currently focussed on Mackenzie House, specifically the renovations and nursing contract to allow SL4 and SL4D patients. Seniors and Housing is working with AHS to determine the scope of the renovations required to meet with standards of the nursing contract.

Continued to work on strategies for funding of the multipurpose facility. Administration has submitted grant applications under the Infrastructure Canada's Green and Inclusive Community Buildings and under the Alberta Environment and Parks' Burner Variance Grant, but has not received final approval of either of these grants. Messaging to the federal government has been reworked in light of recent federal infrastructure announcements.

Arranged for Council Orientation with Gwendolyn Stewart-Palmer.

Attended Remembrance Day ceremonies at Legion Cenotaph.

Attended the AUMA conference with representatives of Council.

Organized and attended Council's 2022 Budget review and planning session.

Continued work with the Dene Tha' First Nation on joint projects and the planning for signing of the Friendship Agreement. The signing has been postponed to May of 2022.

Reviewed and suggested revisions to the draft agreements with Mackenzie County. Three of the four agreements are substantially complete and will be ready for signing in December.

COVID-19

Kept abreast of developments with COVID and assisted with planning related to the Province's Public Health Order and amendments and communications to the public.

Reviewed updated COVID Protocols based on changes to the Public Health Order. Administration has implemented the Province's Restriction Exemption Program at all Town facilities. Administration has assisted community groups with the development of procedures to comply with the Public Health Orders.

Communicated the Town's Vaccine Policy to staff and the public. The Town's Vaccination Policy has been shared with several community organizations. A few have adopted revised versions of the policy.

Finance

2021 interim audit was completed mid November. Administration is reviewing year-end processes and deadlines in preparation for the final audit in March 2022. 2021 grant reconciliations are being completed for the fiscal year-end; along with 2022 grant application requirements.

Attended 2021 AUMA Convention

2022 budget preparation is underway. Administration met with our new Council on November 26 and 27th to present department levels of service and prepared an overview of the 2022 operating and capital budget.

Planning and Development

Development Permits were processed and approved for Telus Communications Inc. 45m / 147 ft. Telecommunications Tower and a new Access Approach at 142TR; 27; C.

The current CPO2 authorities were retained for 2021-22, and the interim 2022 budget includes the required GOA transition from CPO2 to CPO1 by December 31st 2022.

Vitalization Grant Program Application V21-002 – Boston Pizza restaurant, was approved.

Permanent Development Permit was issued for Fort Vermilion School Bus Stops within Town of High Level Right-Of-Ways (signage only).

Land Purchase Application L21-002 to amalgamate a portion of 9823408; 43; 10PUL into 10401 Chinchaga Drive was approved, subject to a mandatory 21-day appeal period.

Land Purchase Application L21-001 expired on November 30th – a subdivision application was not submitted as required under Council Resolution #331-21.

Regular patrols completed, Business License updates, and electronic device renewals for Councillors.

P&D staff participated in the emergency preparedness drill at the airport, and became Co-Chair of the Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee.

The following Permits and Orders were approved and / or issued in November 2021:

- 12 Development Permits;
- 2 Building Permits;
- 6 Electrical Permits;
- 1 Plumbing Permit; and
- 0 Gas Permits.

IT

IT systems have been relatively stable for the month of November.

As of November 30, the \$ 2.75 billion Universal Broadband Fund has not announced any additional projects nationally since the August 2021 narrative report, with no changes for Alberta located projects since the May 2021 narrative report. Similarly, there has been no additional information received on the

\$150 million funding announced by the Government of Alberta in July 2021. We remain in contact with the UBF applicants but have no new information currently. Additional engagement with the UBF applicants will be done in December/January.

HR

There is currently two full time permanent vacancies, that of Aquatic Centre Supervisor and Senior Lifeguard/Instructor, and recruitment is ongoing.

There are currently no protected positions being covered by acting staff.

As at Nov. 30, 93 per cent of all employees, volunteers, and Council members are fully compliant with the COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate. Four permanent staff and one volunteer have been placed on a leave of absence. One relatively new volunteer has not yet provided full disclosure of their vaccination status. Engagement with the on leave staff and volunteer will be ongoing and HR is working with Health and Safety and the individual supervisors and directors on the next steps.

Communication

November communication highlights included the completion of Remembrance Day's virtual ceremony as a key part of the day's events, including Banners of Remembrance being posted daily to social media and then the wreath-laying ceremony at the Town cenotaph. There was a glitch with Facebook that was showing the event as taking place at the wrong time (an hour later) even though the event itself did start at the planned time.

Winter driving, snow removal, and walking at night campaigns kicked off and will run into the new year. Christmas messaging also got underway toward the end of the month. Her Worship created a "shout out" video for the new Grande Prairie hospital that was very well received. We have created another one for local health care and emergency responders that will be running closer to the holiday.

Working with Community Services, we ran our first paid ad campaign on Facebook in our search for lifeguards at the pool. The six ads ran for two weeks, reached nearly 14,000 people in northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories, resulting in more than 170,000 impressions (times viewed) and 561 people clicking through to see the job description on our website. In terms of reach/connection, it was very successful.

The CC took part in the annual emergency preparedness exercise at the airport.

Health and Safety

In November, there were 11 reported incidents. Of these, seven were damage, two were injuries sustained by the public, one close call, and one hazard.

All facilities completed and submitted their health and safety meetings, and inspections and organizational training stands at 95 per cent, with several outstanding training components to be completed.

The 2021 Internal Maintenance Audit was conducted in November, which the Town passed, and an Audit Action Plan was developed. The audit findings will be presented to council once the Audit Action Plan is reviewed by the Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee and the CAO.

Two tenants were given approval to operate within Town facilities without requiring the CoVID-19 vaccination based on their documented CoVID-19 mitigation efforts.

A generalized CoVID-19 decision-making tree was developed to help determine options for employees with respect to the Mandatory CoVID-19 Vaccination Policy 267-21.

Work was done on initial budget planning and presented to Council on Nov. 27.

Community Services

Administration

The Curling Club is not operating this year, as they did not feel they would have enough teams with having to implement the Restriction Exemptions Program (REP).

Submitted a grant for Western Diversification – Tourism Relief.

Submitted a grant for Electric Vehicles for Municipalities (EVM) Program for \$50,000 or 30% of cost for an electric ice resurfacer.

Working with WSP to have the detailed design, costs and phases for Community Park completed.

Completed a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the High Level Native Friendship Centre for the schematic design of their cultural park, and the museum history walk and possibly outdoor golf. This closed Dec 1.

All annual performance appraisals are completed for all community services staff.

Arena /Parks

Arena staff assisted with Museum checks and snow shoveling. Arena staff continue to provide service in the facility for its ice user groups as well as building the outdoor rink. There was two public sponsored skates in November, with the REP program, and they went very well, and were well attended.

Pool

The facility is open Tuesday to Saturday, with Lane Swim 12:00 – 1:00 on Tuesday and on Saturday from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. We have 23 private rental spots per week. We are running Aquafit on Thursday from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. under the REP Program.

Lifeguard Skill Development is from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday and ran for the month of November, continuing into December with plans to complete Bronze Medallion and Cross. We had six participants come out with three potential candidates, of which one is a dedicated candidate and two – three are only looking for casual hours.

The pool boiler and heat exchanger for heating pool water was installed.

We are now having issues with the heat exchanger from the main boiler that supplies heat to the dressing rooms and front office. We are in the process of getting estimates and looking at alternatives for heating.

FCSS

Family Community Support Services delivered our first set of bounce back meals this month, and 10 families benefited from this program funded by the Blue Jays Care Foundation. We also provided lunch to the students at Spirit of the North Community School, and 275 youth received pizza from Boston Pizza.

We currently have twenty youth registered for Groovy Kids Club, and our new leader is Amber Rendle. The youth are all really enjoying the program and the activities she is offering. We held PD day on Nov. 12, there were 11 in attendance. Their day was filled with crafts, swimming, and ended with a movie. We held a Teen Night of swimming on Nov. 26 and there were 28 teens that participated.

Museum

The Museum and Tourism leader has been busy planning for Christmas events and Midnight Madness. Midnight Madness was held on Nov. 26, they had 68 people stop in at the museum. Sales for that night were \$759.

Operations

Administration

My focus has been closing existing projects and preparing the 2022 operating and capital projects budgets.

Airport

Reviewed and updated all the airport training PowerPoints (Human Factors, SMS, and Winter Operations)

The annual airport tabletop emergency exercise was completed with Loomex on-site and remote operation support.

Loomex completed the annual audits for TP312 Obligations of the Operator and Winter Maintenance Plan

Freezing rain issues were experienced and required a larger than average consumption of ice removal materials to keep the runway and taxiways cleared. As a result, the apron still has some compacted ice and snow.

Snow removal operations were performed daily to keep the reported 50cm of snowfall removed from the airside and terminal side surfaces.

Utilities

Twelve fire hydrants required new plugs to prevent groundwater from entering back into the hydrant.

Final hydrant pumping and winterization have been completed.

All source water level sensors were calibrated, and flow velocities were taken on the Footer Creek Stream. These measurements will be used to complete the hydrological study of Footner Lake and provide data for our diversion license.

BGIS inquired if the Town could provide staff to operate the Footner Water system for three months.

Operations have agreed to provide the required staff, and all work will be billed by the hour based on the rate in the fee schedule.

Roads, Greenspace, and General Operations

Operations continued to spray potholes until the weather got too cold or wet. Then, the unit was cleaned and put away until next spring.

All the debris piles from the gateway project and summer tree removal program were burnt.

The Christmas tree and decorations were put up between snow hauling and sanding operations. The current tree is starting to show signs of wear, and it should be replaced in 2023.

Heavy snow removal started on the 23rd and continued well into December. The staff has been working multiple 12-hour days, and we have also contracted additional trucks to speed up removal.

Protective Services

Community Policing

Still working in transfer of program.

Waiting on radio reprogramming for activation of Taber dispatch.

Met with Humane Society regarding lease and COVID-19 Plan.

Emergency Management

No activations.

Met with Sandhurst regarding Phase 4 of Emergency Plan Grant Application.

Nov 25 - ABTF1 (NWAHIMT) put on standby with other regional AHIMT's and CAN-TF2 for BC Flooding – Stood down Dec. 3.

Fire Department

34 calls in November. Calls of Note – Structure Fire Steen River

Multiple MVCs.

No smoke issues in November.

Training shifted to Motor Vehicle Collision Response and Extrication.

Last Live fire session in Training Facility on Nov. 3.

Completed SOP for Emergency Transport of Patients when EMS not available - approved by Medical Director.

WUI Team completed burning operations in Community Park, Started trail clearing in West area trees for recreation and fire break purposes.

WUI Team conducted inventories on Provincial SPU Trailers in High Level, Grande Prairie and Peace River