



Town of High Level

Monthly report to Council

May 2022

Administration and Finance

CAO

Worked with Boreal Housing to investigate options to increase affordable and social housing units. Also assisted in investigating and reviewing options available to BHF to purchase housing units. Reviewed BHF's landscaping and parking plans for Mackenzie House.

Continued to work on strategies for funding of the Multi Purpose Facility. Administration has submitted grant applications under the Infrastructure Canada's Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) and under the Alberta Environment and Parks' (AEP) Burner Variance Grant. Contact with GICB indicated the program is still reviewing applications and has no timeline for announcements. Alberta Environment and Parks has approved the allocation of the full burner variance grant to the Multipurpose Facility.

Assisted with the media campaign for the commemoration of the 3rd anniversary of the Chuckegg Creek Wildfire.

Continued work with the Dene Tha' First Nation on joint projects.

Assisted Dene Tha' First Nation, as requested, with evacuee issues and programs.

Reviewed drafts of the agreements with Mackenzie County and met with Town's legal counsel to work towards having these agreements finalized.

Reviewed the Town's draft strategic planning goals and objectives with Senior Administration and Council.

Assisted with the planning for the proposed road rehabilitation project, including policy reviews and examination of proposed financing options.

Supported efforts to address flooding issues in Town and in immediate area.

Met with energy consultant to discuss natural gas pricing issues and possible RFP for natural gas futures.

Planning and Development

Extended Subdivision Approvals for S21-001 and S21-002 until May 2023 (the proposed Multi Purpose Facility lands).

CPO Program audit was completed (in person) by investigators from the Law Enforcement and Oversight Branch of the Government of Alberta on May 4 – we passed the audit with a few items to complete, and are awaiting the official documentation of confirmation.

Conducted interviews for the Seasonal Municipal Bylaw Enforcement Officer position – hired our preferred candidate for the term June 13 – October 14, 2022.

Phase 3 of Public Engagement concluded on May 13 – included an online 3-question survey, also available at the Town Office, and a Town booth run by P&D Staff at the April 30 Community Ketchup Event.

Working strategic planning session with Council and Senior Administration Team was held in Council Chambers on May 17 – facilitated by P&D.

Working session with CMR Consulting in Calgary on May 20 – reviewed and provided all feedback on the draft Goals and Objectives from Council, Senior Management Team, and Key Stakeholder interviews for the Final DRAFT Strategic Plan.

Regular municipal enforcement patrols and business license applications, updates and payments processing were completed.

Cross training within the CPO Program with our former CPO1 Sergeant Officer and our current CPO2 Officer.

Installation and set-up of the iNET CAD System and GPS tracking device in HL02 CPO Vehicle for Taber Police Dispatch.

The following Permits and Orders were approved and/or issued in May 2022:

- 12 Development Permits;
- 2 Building Permits;
- 3 Electrical Permits;
- 0 Plumbing Permits;
- 0 Gas Permits;
- 1 Poultry Permit; and
- 1 Stop Work Order

IT

IT systems have been relatively stable for the month of May. The critical issues at the Museum and Water Treatment Plant have been worked around on a temporary basis. Significant upgrades to budgeted computer systems are scheduled to begin at the end of the month of June.

New software training is being introduced, and will be provided to all staff by the end of June.

As of June 8, 2022, the \$ 2.75 billion Universal Broadband Fund has announced no additional projects (total of 31) for Alberta, serving approximately 25,404 households with funding allocations of \$52,820,548. We remain in contact with the UBF applicants and new information will be shared as soon as received.

HR

There are currently three full time permanent vacancies, Aquatic Centre Supervisor, Senior Lifeguard/Instructor and PW Equipment Operator II. Staff for most of the casual/seasonal vacancies are

joining the Town of High Level with regular orientations being held on a weekly basis during the month of June. Recruitment is ongoing and proof of COVID-19 vaccination is required.

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

Communication

May communications involved several high profile incidents that resulted in higher than normal social media engagement. These events including flooding updates for the community, a water main break, the Chuckegg Creek Fire anniversary, and the announcement of the passing of a High Level firefighter.

As a result of these events, the Town Facebook page reached more than 74,000 people with more than 26,000 post engagements between April 28 and May 25. The page also gained an additional 170 followers during that time, bringing the total followers to 9,339.

Communications assisted with an awareness campaign involving the Mayor and around the Chuckegg Creek Wildfire anniversary, highlighting the need for a Multi Purpose Facility. Additionally, the Town has been working with a local writer to highlight stories of some residents during the fire as part of the anniversary observance. The plan is to share a new story every few weeks over the summer.

The Town has begun incorporating regular communication from the Golden Range Society on social media in order to assist them in highlighting their programs.

Health and Safety

There were nine reported incidents in May. Of these, four were damage (two of which are or expected to be over \$500 in repair), two were hazards, one was a close call, and two public injuries (requiring First Aid - no emergency response).

Organizational training is at 95 percent. An airbrakes course was scheduled for July 12-13 for the Operations and Protective Services Departments.

All facilities completed their respective monthly inspections, and all but two facilities conducted their monthly health and safety meetings. 5/19 Orientations for summer staff have been completed – the remaining positions are expected to be filled in June and will receive their orientations at that time.

Airport staff reviewed the Airport Asbestos Management Plan and received Asbestos Awareness training.

The Town received its Safety Fitness Certificate renewal for its fleet. 31/39 Job Hazard Assessments have been completed – the remaining eight will be completed/submitted by the end of the month.

A request for an external auditor was made to AMHSA. The expected date for the audit will be in November sometime. The current audit action plan from 2021 is 55 percent complete. Work is being done on a vaccine plan for hepatitis at the request of several facilities.

The Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee conducted its monthly meeting with no major concerns stemming from the meeting.

The winners for the May Monthly Health and Safety Quiz were Jana Dempster and Darcy Lauridsen.

Community Services

Administration

Administration completed the application (for \$200,000 with 80 percent covered by grant) for the Green Municipal Fund for GHG reduction Pathway Feasibility Studies under Federation of Canadian Municipalities for the aquatic centre, town hall, museum, airport, water treatment plant and a partial study for arena. We were able to meet with the grant coordinators and had the definition of “community buildings’ expanded.

We also completed a “new grant application” for the Tolko Burner Variance funds, with Alberta Environment and Parks, despite having been advised that the Town had already been awarded the funds for the multipurpose facility.

The application was rewritten for the Tourism Relief Funds under Prairie Can (\$500,000) collaborating with the High level Native Friendship Centre for the Cultural Park Project with Museum History Walk. We are waiting to hear if we are successful.

Arena /Parks

Arena staff helped with Chateh evacuation inside the arena by setting up lodging for evacuees, helping with clean up, dealing with donations and picking up food and drinks. Zachary Braun accepted the vacant full-time position as an Arena Operator and was sent to Clairmont to complete the Arena Level 1 Course. Staff also working on repairing playground deficiencies at all the parks.

Pool

The facility is operating from Tuesday to Saturday. We are offering Lane Swim, Aquafit, Family Swim and rental times are Tuesday to Friday 1:00 -3:00. Swim lessons registration opened on May 1st. There are thirteen classes running with sixty-seven students.

We are currently operating with seven casual staff and one permanent staff, with several more casual lifeguards (previous employees) coming on board for the summer months

The Stingrays Swim Club is back up and running.

We are having ongoing troubleshooting with the pool boiler (new one). There are issues with the burner not firing when pool is calling for heat.

FCSS

Family Community Support Services has been busy running our volunteer income tax program, and we have completed five tax returns this month. We also assisted ten people with AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped) and child tax forms.

We have delivered meals to ten families through our Bounce Back Meal Program funded by the Blue Jays Care Foundation.

Our community gardens are now open and full, we have 34 clients using the gardens. Gardens are located at The Village and Christian Church. We hosted a cleaning bee and BBQ for the garden and had 25 community members attend, with the food was donated by the Safe Home.

We currently have 25 youth registered for Groovy Kids Club. The youth have been enjoying the outside more with park visits every Friday and hot dog roasts in Jubilee Park. In partnership with the Village, we held Teen Night on May 27th, we had 43 kids attend. The teens got the opportunity to meet with EMS, Sheriffs, and Alberta Forestry as well as tour their vehicles, and make Tie Dye shirts.

Community Services also assisted the Chateh evacuees by hosting a drop in parent and tot time, and we had bouncy houses and craft activities. We had 24 people attended. We have also been working with other agencies to come up with a calendar of events for evacuees.

Tourism/Museum

The Museum and Tourism leader as well as Community Development Manager attended the Yellowknife tradeshow. It was a great turnout and was a great opportunity for us to display our new visitors guide. The Museum opened for the season on May 24th, since then we had 39 visitors and \$490 in sales. We are taking bookings for school tours and have eight booked in June. Museum staff have been busy getting activities ready for these tours.

Protective Services

Emergency Response

Partial activation for flooding in the Town and County.

Assisted the County with Emergency Management regarding Tiger Dams and pumping of properties.

Communicated with AEMA, AB Transportation and CN Rail regarding flooding.

Still waiting for word on ISC Grant for Phase 4 Emergency Plan Project.

Fire Department

54 calls – Calls of note:

Fires:

- 2 Structure fires 1 in Chateh, 1 at the Days Inn
- 2 Grass fires 1 in Paddle Prairie, 1 on Highway 35
- 2 Car fires 1 at the Days Inn, 1 at the Chin River
- 1 Outdoor fire at Footner Lake Transferred to Forestry
- 1 Fire at the Pellet Plant

Rescues:

- 1 Quad accident in Meander River
- 1 Flood Mitigation – HLFDD personnel installed tiger dams at five homes
- 1 Water Rescue car in the water south of town

- 2 MVC's in town. 1 was a Duty Officer response only, the other was a car in the ditch PT with trapped legs
- 3 Medical First Response calls with significant EMS Delay
- 38 medical calls total.

Training:

- Training consisted of Ice Rescue Training and Wildland Training Review
- Started NFPA 1051 Program (Wildland Certification) with the DTFN, Peace River FD and Ft Vermilion FD. DTFN had to drop the program due to evacuations. Will reschedule for them. Completed Hazard Reduction burning as part of the course.

WUI Team:

- Completed some hazard reduction burning.
- WUI Course final edits completed with the Clearwater Team
- 2 members attended the Hinton Training Centre for Wildfire Crew Members Course

General:

- 3 members attended the Northern HEAT Conference May 4 to 7 as instructors. Over 100 firefighters from across the province attended the training.
- Chief and Deputy attended the Alberta Fire Chiefs Conference May 29-June 1.
- Organized Assistant Chief RJ MacDonald's Celebration of Life at the Fire Station, May 28.