



Town of High Level

Monthly report to Council

February 2022

Administration and Finance

CAO

Assisted Boreal Housing in efforts to locate suitable housing or developable lots for rent-to-own and social housing units.

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 (GICB) and under the Alberta Environment and Parks' (AEP) Burner Variance Grant. Recent contact with GICB indicated the program is still reviewing applications and has no timeline for announcements.

Administration has completed a review with AEP and has come to an agreement on the information required to complete the application. That information has been submitted to AEP and the Town is waiting on a response on the level of funding AEP will provide to the Multipurpose Facility under this grant.

Continued work with the Dene Tha' First Nation on joint projects and the planning for signing of the Friendship Agreement.

Hosted the second West Northwest Administrative meeting. This group includes the CAOs (and equivalents) from the Town of High Level, the Dene Tha' First Nation, the Town of Rainbow Lake and the Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement. The Town's Director of Finance and Administration, Jeri Phillips, and I will attend these meetings on a regular basis. This second meeting provided updates on previously discussed projects and focussed on the availability of air transportation, both passenger and health related.

Received the signed Airport Service agreement with Loomex. The new agreement commenced March 1, 2022. There will be no disruption in the services at the airport.

Met with staff of the Minister of Northern Affairs Canada, the Hon. Dan Vandal, to discuss the Town's applications for funding the construction of the Multipurpose Facility.

Prepared briefing notes, and attended, Council's meetings with Minister Nate Glubish of Service Alberta regarding funding for improved internet services in High Level and with Minister of Transportation, Rajan Sawhney, regarding road rehabilitation grants and the inclusion of first nations as municipal partners on projects.

Worked with Hayley Gavin on the preparation planning for the Town's strategic planning.

Attended the Alberta Emergency Management Agency's 2022 Hazard Season Outlook meeting.

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.

Assisted with redrafting of the recommended policy change which removed testing and vaccination requirements for contractors, lease holders and tenants working in Town of High Level facilities.

Finance

Town of High Level's 2021 Assessment was successfully submitted to the province by assessor on February 28th.

Administration had kick-off meeting with Central Square for the accounting software upgrade.

All finance department desktops were successfully installed for a much needed upgrade.

Communication

Changes to the Public Health Order resulted in a number of issues for Town of High Level Comms. Misinformation continued to be an issue for activists in the region who mistakenly believe the Town of High Level is responsible for federal and provincial health measures.

Messaging was developed thanking Tolko for their work at the Arena, including a news release, photos, and a letter from Her Worship. The message was very well received by Tolko. Comms assisted with promotion of a community engagement session involving connectivity through development of infrastructure corridors in the north.

Comms assisted the Development Department with promotion of the High Level Strategic Plan. That work is ongoing. Comms took part in promotion of both Frostival and the Firefighter's Ball, both of which were well received in the community.

Health and Safety

In February there were three reported incidents – all of which were listed as damage. All facilities completed and submitted their inspections on time. All facilities, with the exception of one, completed and submitted their monthly health and safety meetings.

Organizational training is currently at 94 percent which is a slight decrease over the last month. This is primarily due to new training requirements being added to existing requirements, and some employees needing refresher training (which has been issued).

AEMA was contacted to provide certification for Councils participation/completion of the Municipal Elected Officials course, and I am waiting a final reply from AEMA. Six safety data sheets were revised and provided to the appropriate facilities. We are still waiting for AED replacement packs, which at this time is of no concern as we are months away from expiration dates.

Rapid Test Kits were purchased for quick assessments for employees. Tests are in packs of two and are available from the Health and Safety Coordinator &/or Human Resources.

The Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee will be conducting facility inspections in the first ten days of April. Winners of the monthly health and safety quiz were John Sapp and Corey Wilkening.

Community Services

Administration

We have been working on bussing with the Fort Vermillion School Division (FVSD), to expand our before and after school program, and the FVSD is not able to incorporate the bus stop at the Town. We have put the extended program on hold, until September, and we are looking at various options.

We are reviewing the electrical plan for Community Park, and we should have 100% detailed design complete for the park, with a phased in approach, by mid March. We have been working extensively with grant funders, and we anticipate getting an answer by the end of March, if we have been successful.

Arena /Parks

We had a contractor come in and look at the heaters above the arena stands, as they do not generate a lot of heat, and sometimes they cut out on their own. They have to be restarted to continue producing heat. There is no temperature control for these either. We had an estimate to replace the tubes, and will consider changes in the fall.

Arena staff was provided a modified ride on snow blower from operations, to remove the snow from the outdoor rink and skate paths. The operations foreman trained the arena staff on the operation and safety of the snow blower and we have been successfully keeping the outdoor rink, and skate paths cleared.

The Engo batteries were installed inside the machine and have been fully charged. Staff will be using the Engo some days of the week for flooding outdoor ice surfaces but will continue to use the Olympia rental for the league playoffs.

Arena staff also assisted with delivering tables and chairs for the Frostival event.

Pool

The High School Leadership program started February 1st and runs from 12:20pm to 2:45pm Monday to Friday and ends April 14. We started with five candidates, and now down to four. Candidates have achieved their Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross to date, and are working on their Water Safety Instructor, First Aid and National Lifeguard.

We are hiring a contracted supervisor, to assist with training and covering for time off.

The facility is open Tuesday to Saturday with Lane Swim 12:00–1:00 Tues.-Sat / 5:00–7:00 Tuesday and Thursday, and we have twenty-four private rental spots per week. We have Aquafit Wednesday 6:00 – 7:00. Swim lessons registration opened on February 22nd, spots are ¾ full.

FCSS

Family Community Support Services is getting ready to start our volunteer income tax program, this will start March 1st. We have delivered meals to 10 families through our Bounce Back Meal Program funded by the Blue Jays Care Foundation. We currently have 22 seniors and people with mobility issues registered for our Snow Angels program. We currently have 18 youth registered for Groovy Kids Club. We held two PD days in February, we had 15 children attend. Their day was filled with crafts, fort building and ended with a movie. We held a Teen Night on February 25th, we had 20 youth attend. We partnered with the Village and hosted Teen Night in their centre, the kids played musical bingo and had pizza.

Tourism/Museum

The Museum and Tourism leader has been busy working on a new display for the 2022 season. We hosted our 7th annual Frostival Feb 15th to Feb 27th. The carvers from Ice on Whyte worked in an ice slide at Canfor Park, a Snow Castle wall at Jubilee Park and a maze at Centennial Park. We finished the event with a Snow Ball at Flamingo complete with an Ice Bar. We had many great sponsors for this event, such as Tolko, West Fraser, CN Rail and the Partners in Tourism.

Operations

Administration

February, I focused on various capital projects 2022 work plans and studies.

The Machine Storage Shed was tendered and awarded,

The Airport Plow Truck was awarded delivery in 2022. We are now waiting on the official announcement from our funding source.

We applied for \$20,000 for bottle recycling/waste bins through the Alberta Beverage Container Recycling Cooperation. The program provides funding for specialized recycling bins (indoor and outdoor) to make recycling more convenient and accessible to the public. We were awarded the grant and ordered nine dual bin collection stations for parks and downtown.

Airport

Staff completed the Safety Plan updated, and reviewed the Apron Safety Management Plan.

The Inspection truck failed twice; first, the CV axles, ball joints, and tie rods were all replaced. Then it had a fuel system failure, and the unit is still at the dealer waiting for parts. Finally, the replacement truck was ordered, and its expected delivery was in the fall of 2022.

Transport Canada performed a remote audit, the audit appeared to go well, and the final report will arrive within 30 days.

For a few days, freezing rain was an issue with above-average snow this year. Ice removing chemical was above average at six totes of acetate and 10 ten bags of formate. Average annual consumption is about three of each product.

Roads, Greenspace, General Operations

Operations continued regular sanding routines and sidewalk cleaning. Residential walkways are starting to build up along the sides, and snow removal operations removed the snowbanks where feasible.

Snow hauling and laneway clearing was the majority of work completed this month. Alleyways and parking lot piles were removed when the main street clearing was completed.

Utility Operations

Utility operations focused on the annual maintenance of the facility and started the replacement of three chemical pumps.

There were four customer concerns regarding blocked/frozen sewers, and we removed the blocked and performed camera work to ensure the Town portion of the service was not failing.

Staff assisted with their water service issues of high usage, frozen service line, and one failed shutoff valve.

Protective Services

Emergency Management

No activations

Chief Schmidt attended NAIT AHIMT Academy for Operations Section Chief Program

Two Town staff (Deputy Chief Scott Smith and Community Development Manager Jena Clarke joined Regional AHIMT

Phase 4 Joint Emergency Plan submission still being worked on by DTFN

Fire Department

28 calls in February – 4 MVC's

Training consisted of Naloxone recertification and general Fire Classroom training

Completed Firefighter awards night on February 26th. Award winners:

- Rylan Lemoal – Firefighter of the Year
- Destiny Corcilles-Herring – Rookie of the Year
- Colin Moore – Officer of the Year
- Leslie Bateman, Josh Lambert, Terry Clark – 5 year service award

Tender 1 out for tank repairs – report to council once results are in. Leased Tender from Slave Lake Fire Service to cover.

WUI Team assisted in Castor Alberta with coverage for a firefighter Line of Duty Death funeral. Covered fire station for two days with Engine 2.

WUI Team working on final curriculum changes for WUI Program – final approvals expected in March.

Ordered and received lost equipment from BC Deployment after BCWS contacted us to order replacement and bill them for costs.

WUI Equipment inspection completed by AEMA with no concerns.