



# Council Highlights

## Public Input Session: Presentation from JAWS Principal Conal Donovan

J.A. Williams High School (JAWS), now attached to the Bold Center, has few outdoor spaces and no sports fields. JAWS Principal Mr. Conal Donovan came before Council during the public input session and explained the issue, asking Council to consider budgeting for sports fields around the Bold Center for the school and general community's use. He shared a video presentation created by students, which featured teachers, students, and community members in favour of building outdoor spaces and fieldhouses near the Bold Center.

After the video presentation, Mr. Donovan explained that fundraising for fields has already begun. Northern Lights School Division (NLS), for example, supports the initiative and has raised some funds for the project. Mr. Donovan clarified that the fields are not, however, an NLS project, and that the fields would be for the entire community's use.

More information on fundraising will come to Council at a later date.

## Delegation: Cenovus Energy

Cenovus Energy representatives came before Council as a delegation. Ms. Lise Warawa, charged with Cenovus' community relations, and Mr. Michael McClay, Cenovus' new regional manager in our area, stopped by to introduce Mr. McClay to Council. Council discussed the company's future with Ms. Warawa and Mr. McClay.

## Increased Budget for Engineering Design of a Temporary Stormwater Pond

As part of the Points West project, which will provide housing for seniors in the hamlet of Lac La Biche, the County must build a temporary stormwater pond. The pond will

also serve other lands and future development in the area. Council approved \$31,224 for the stormwater pond and the associated road and utilities to service the Points West living property.

## Overtime for Public Works' Project Coordination Team

2016 has been a busy construction season across the County. The County's Project Coordination Team, set up to manage capital projects, will put in more overtime than the budget anticipated.

After an in-camera discussion, Council approved a \$50,000 increase in the Project Coordination Team's salaries and wages budget.

## Incorporation of Deer Meadows into the Curbside Pickup Program

The Environmental Services department was approached by the Deer Meadows community manager. Deer Meadows residents asked to be included in the County's curbside pickup program. Administration anticipated that their participation would increase recycling rates. Council approved Deer Meadows' inclusion starting July 1, 2016.

## Increased Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) Funding

The Government of Alberta increased funding for Family & Community Support Services (FCSS), a program that gives Albertan communities funds for social service programs and events.

Our increased population and the new provincial budget resulted in a 60% increase in the County's FCSS grant. The Government of Alberta has made nearly \$100,000 extra available to Lac La Biche County.



## Regular Council Meeting June 28, 2016

Council motioned that the money be used to hire another community outreach worker, and to increase the FCSS grant budget by \$30,000.

### **Modernized Municipal Government Act (Bill 21)**

On May 31, 2016, the Minister of Municipal Affairs presented Bill 21 to the Provincial Legislature. Bill 21 proposed major changes to the Municipal Government Act (MGA), which governs how Albertan municipalities provide services, tax residents, and make decisions.

The Government of Alberta has been consulting with Albertans and municipalities to get input, including Lac La Biche County.

At previous Council meetings, administration briefed Council on how some of the major amendments may affect the County, and noted administration will be seeking Council's input at the June 28, 2016 Council meeting. Administration will follow up with the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties on Council's position.

Council decided against supporting centralized industrial assessment, which would see the province completing industrial property assessments. Currently, Lac La Biche County contracts assessors for industrial property, except linear. Council also did not support the 5:1 ratio cap for non-residential and residential mill rates, which would prevent elected officials from setting tax rates as Council deems necessary. However, should the 5:1 ratio cap be included in the legislation, Council supported grandfathering the current mill rates.

### **Letters of Support: Telus Tower in Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement and Dark Sky Preserve**

Lac La Biche County received a letter from Chairman Horace Patenaude of Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement (BLMS). Chairman Patenaude and his Council are seeking Lac La Biche County's support in acquiring a Telus mobility tower

in their area. Many households in their area don't have landlines, and cell service in their region is spotty. Council directed administration to support BLMS's efforts.

Lac La Biche County received a request from an Alberta Parks representative. Alberta Parks wishes to submit an application to the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, which would designate the Lakeland Provincial Park and Provincial Recreation Area a dark sky preserve. By restricting light pollution in the area, park visitors will be able to enjoy the night sky and observe astronomical objects. The preserve will also protect the nighttime environment and nocturnal wildlife. Council directed administration to support Alberta Park's efforts.