

# Council Highlights

## Delegations

### Mr. Paul Short, President of the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association

- Mr. Paul Short, President of the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association (CSPMA), made a presentation to Council on the peat moss industry. The CSPMA is an association of peat moss producers and related industry that promote the peat moss industry's long term health.
- Council thanked Mr. Short for his presentation.

## New Business

### 2018 Tax Rate Bylaw (Bylaw 18-012)

- Council discussed 2018 taxation, and passed the following mill rates:
  - Farm and Residential: 3.0000 mills
  - Urban Non-Residential: 10.0000 mills
  - Rural Non-Residential: 18.3647 mills
- The tax rate, also known as the mill rate, determines what amount per \$1,000 of a property's assessed value is taxable.
- The municipal tax rate for residential properties has been raised from 2.5259 to 3.0000. The rate for non-residential properties in the Urban Service Areas (in and around the hamlets of Lac La Biche and Plamondon) has gone down from 10.1688 to 10.0000, and the rural non-residential rate has decreased from 18.5585 to 18.3647.
- According to Alberta's modernized *Municipal Government Act*, municipalities are required to achieve a 5:1 ratio between their highest and lowest tax rates, but there is currently no timeline for implementing this change. With the passing of the 2018 Tax Rate Bylaw, the ratio in Lac La Biche County has gone from 7.35:1 last year to 6.12:1 this year.

### Pre-Authorized Property Tax Payment Plan Bylaw (Bylaw 18-011)

- Council passed Bylaw 18-011, which allows residential, farm, and commercial ratepayers to pay their taxes in instalments. This does not include designated industrial properties.

### Review of the Procedures and Committee of the Whole (Bylaw 16-007)

- The Procedures and Committee of the Whole Bylaw governs how Council runs its meetings, among other items. Council last amended the bylaw in 2016. Given that the newly-elected Council has worked together for a few months, and that the modernized *Municipal Government Act* required some changes, Administration brought the bylaw forward with suggested amendments.
- Changes to Bylaw 16-007 will include the following, and will be brought back to a future meeting for Council's consideration (targeted for the end of June):
  - Acknowledgment and use of formal titles;
  - Revising the electronic meeting provision by removing the boundary limitation, minimum notice requirement, and ensuring that the electronic meeting method cannot be used in the event of an in-camera session;
  - Incorporating a role of the public provision (for example, appropriate conduct, use of personal and recording devices, and use of Peace Officers if required);
  - Personal electronic devices are not to be used during an in-camera session; and
  - Removal of Strategic Sessions.



### **Community Cemetery Improvement Program Policy**

- The County has received funding requests in the past for improvements to local cemeteries. To better manage these requests, Council passed a Community Cemetery Improvement Program Policy and Procedure.

### **Lac La Biche County Crime Reduction Committee (Bylaw 18-009)**

- Council passed Bylaw 18-009, which establishes the Lac La Biche County Crime Reduction Committee.
- The committee is an advisory body to Council, making recommendations related to the County's enhanced policing agreement with the RCMP. They will also receive community input on plans, priorities, and proposed directions for the RCMP and the County's Enforcement Services Department.
- The Crime Reduction Committee will include the Mayor and two members of County Council, appointed by Council's resolution. There will also be four other members, including one representative of the RCMP and three community members.
- Council appointed Councillor Tkachuk and Councillor L'Heureux to the Crime Reduction Committee, and appointed Councillor Cote as an alternate.

### **Lac La Biche County Quality Management Plan (QMP) Safety Codes: Fire Discipline**

- The County's Quality Management Plan (QMP) allows the municipality to administer the provincial Safety Codes Act, specifically electrical, plumbing, and gas.
- At the March 6, 2018 Council meeting, Council motioned that Administration move forward with accreditation in Safety Codes: Fire Discipline as well. This requires a new Quality Management Plan specifically related to the fire discipline. It will allow the County to administer Safety Codes: Fire Discipline, conducting fire safety inspections and issuing corrective actions to improve building safety.
- Council approved the Lac La Biche County Quality Management Plan (QMP) Safety Codes: Fire Discipline. The QMPs for Safety Codes: Fire Discipline and Safety Codes: Electrical, Plumbing, and Gas will be merged into a single QMP by 2020.