

2017 Summer Newsletter

Summer Village of Sunset Beach

Message from the Mayor

1. IMPORTANT DATES:

July 15, 2017 - Annual General (Information) Meeting, and Nomination Day:

The AGM is scheduled for THE AFTERNOON of Saturday, July 15, 2017, commencing 1:00 p.m., West Baptiste firehall. This is a mandated election year. Nominations for a council position will close during the meeting. I encourage you to put your name in.

I will not be in the running so there will be at least 1 vacancy. **SHE MOST FAIR AND INFINITELY DESIRABLE** points out that my tenure as your mayor has extended beyond its best before date. Time for a change.

We all have to do our bit. The burden is not great, the reward is the acknowledgement and appreciation of your peers. Ten years ago I was reminded that it was MY TURN. I stepped forward. Will you?

August 12, 2017 - Election Day (if necessary)

2. SHORELINE RESTORATION

Got a problem from last December's frost heave? Or whatever it was that caused that nasty land upheaval? You're not alone. All are cautioned that if you intend to undertake any sort of restoration work there are all sorts of provincial government laws and regulations that must be complied with. Council and administration have spent many hours in an endeavour to get clarification and approval from the appropriate parties. To those of you who had to wait, thank you for your patience. Informational letters from Environmental Protection Officer Tricia Coates and Forest Officer Jennifer Bowlby have been mailed out and posted on the summer village website. Heed those guidelines. Failure to comply could lead to costly enforcement action by the province.

We have also posted and mailed instructional letters from Tony Sonnleitner, Summer Village Development Officer. Residents are reminded that where there is an Environmental Reserve or Park area between the front edge of your property and the bed/shore of the lake, these reserve or park areas are owned by the summer village. We are charged with keeping them in a natural condition and IT IS A TRESPASS for anyone to develop or construct on these areas.

But I was not born yesterday. Somehow (?) some "natural" areas have ended up a little less natural. Despite my declining eyesight I remain capable of visual observation. Be aware that should you seek to "restore" or "remedy" damage to environmental reserve or park lands owned by the summer village you will be required to enter into an Indemnity and Release in favor of the summer village. All three councillors are in possession of the appropriate forms. Some of you have already signed and have commenced work. Caution, you still must comply with all provincial government restrictions to avoid fines and other sanctions. The Release and Indemnity, like our indulgence, will not take effect until signed and put back into summer village hands. Govern yourself accordingly.

3. GOOD NEWS for Telus wireless users. We were informed at the recent joint villages councillors meeting that Telus has heard our concerns about cellular coverage and data problems difficulties. A new Telus cell tower has been approved for construction immediately to the north and west of 9 mile corner, just south of the competitor's existing site. Cellular service will be improving shortly.

4. AND GOOD NEWS for those of you who have been waiting for second reading on the wastewater bylaw project. I informed at last year's AGM that I had been trying to reach and was awaiting a meeting with Alf Durnie, Province of Alberta senior sewage guru, who had taken a real interest in our community consultation process and who had met once already with council and administration. It was Alf Durnie and members of his staff that had provided a critique and recommendations for improvements in the preliminary draft to which we had given first reading. Regrettably, Mr. Durnie passed away in the autumn before we got the chance to meet again, but I have incorporated the majority of his suggestions into a replacement draft to which council has given first reading last council meeting. It is presently on the website for review by all, and you may have the opportunity to discuss at the forthcoming AGM. This MAY be your only opportunity for input, so use it.

5. AND NOW THE BAD (but not unpredictable) NEWS - Property tax notices are included with this mailout. No surprises here - Taxes did not go down. While we try to run a pretty tight ship we actually have little control over what we are required to spend. Administration costs are up, but not by appreciably more than we were going to have to pay anyway. The Development Officer is a new position we previously did not have to pay for - but now the job actually gets done! If you have questions at the AGM I'll try to answer.

THIS WILL BE my last mayor's message. I wish to thank all of you. It has been a privilege to have been your mayor for the last 10 years. I have met and chatted with many of you from time to time and I look forward to continuing to do so (but on a more informal basis). Stop in for a beer!

Mark Lindskoog
Retiring Mayor
S.V. of Sunset Beach

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2017 Election year
- Municipal Development Plan
- Property Taxes
- Assessment
- Development & Permits
- Budget & Finance Info
- Summer Village Contacts

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER!

June 30 - Tax Notice Mail Out

July 15 - Annual Info Meeting and Nomination Day at West Baptiste Fire Hall

August 12 - Election Day (if required) at West Baptiste Fire Hall

August 29 - Assessment Complaint Deadline

August 31 - Tax Payment Deadline

January 1 - 18% Tax Penalty (Total Tax Arrears)

2017 Summer Newsletter

Election year in the Sumer Village of Sunset Beach!



For more information and forms please go to Summer Village of Sunset Beach Website

Nomination Day – Saturday July 15, 2017

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Election Day (if required) – Saturday August 12, 2017

10:00 am – 7:00 pm

Location for both will be at: West Baptiste Fire Hall
945 Baptiste Drive, West Baptiste, AB T9S-1R8

Public Input Requested

The Summer Village of Sunset Beach is currently part of a 3-component project along with 7 other municipalities. One component is to adopt a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) which will be a mandatory requirement for all municipalities under the Modernized Municipal Government Act. The Municipal Development Plan is a primary document that guides the future development and growth of the whole community. The MDP sets the vision on how to accommodate this growth responsibly and serves as an important decision-making tool for Council, administration and all stakeholders. As a statutory plan required by the Alberta Municipal Government Act, the MDP provides direction for Council, administration, developers and builders, property-owners, residents and adjacent municipalities.

An MDP will address several items, including:

- future land use
- future development
- coordination
- transportation
- municipal services

Part of the process of creating and eventually adopting an MDP includes Public Consultation and Input. Please see links below to engage in this Public Consultation Process:

Project website: <http://www.transitionalsolutions.ca/viewfromthehub>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/viewfromthehub/>

Coming Soon:
Public Survey for MDP Input

2017 Summer Newsletter

PROPERTY TAXES ARE DUE AUGUST 31, 2017

The Summer Village collects taxes annually to meet the projected costs of providing services to the community. These revenues are received through grants, a municipal services tax, and the municipal portion of property taxes. Other amounts collected on your annual tax bill are collected on behalf of the Greater North Foundation and the Alberta School Foundation.

Paying Your Property Taxes:

Please make cheques payable to the Summer Village of Sunset Beach and mail to:
PO Box 8 Alberta Beach, AB T0E 0A0

Assessment

Property assessment services are contracted to Municipal Assessment Services Group. The firm can be contacted at 780-939-3310 with any questions you may have regarding the assessed value of your property.

What is a Property Assessment?

Each year, the Assessors will inspect certain properties within the Municipality. The property assessment is the estimated market value of your property which is used to calculate property taxes. Assessors do not create your property value, nor do Council. The market determines the value of your property, and the value is the basis for the assessment and is then used to calculate your property taxes.

What If I Disagree with My Assessment?

Remember, you can only make a complaint against your assessment value, not your tax dollars or tax rates and you must have grounds for your complaint. **The assessment complaint deadline for the Summer Village of Sunset Beach is August 29, 2017.** There is a fee of \$50.00 that must accompany a completed assessment complaint for which is available on the website

www.summervillageofsunsetbeach.com. Prior to completing the assessment complaint form, please contact the assessor to first discuss the matter of your assessment – Ian Ferguson 780-939-3310.

Development and Permits

Prior to any construction, property owners **MUST** obtain a development permit from the Development Officer. The Summer Village contracts to Tony Sonnleitner who can be contacted at 780-718-5479 or email at pcm1@telusplanet.net.

Building/Electrical/Gas/Plumbing Permits

Permits are a legal requirement. The Summer Village is a non-accredited Municipality, therefore, building, electrical, gas and plumbing permits can be obtained from the agency below which are authorized to issue permits and provide compliance monitoring in non-accredited Municipalities.

* The Inspections Group Inc. (Building/Electrical/Gas/Plumbing) 1-866-554-5048

2017 Summer Newsletter

Budget & Finances

In order to be and remain viable, a municipality must be able to fund its annual operating expenses through the annual collection of taxes without having to offset those operating expenses through reserves (which will eventually run out) or grant dollars (which are not intended to help offset annual operating costs). In the past, the Summer Village has utilized both of these methods to help offset some of these annual costs, most likely done to lessen the tax burden on the ratepayers, however, in order to remain viable and sustainable and to remain compliant with the Municipal Government Act and Municipal Government financial best practices, we are working hard to reduce the use of reserves and cease the use of grant funding for operating purposes.

While the 2017 Operating Expense Budget did not change much from 2016 (major differences added costs for the 2017 Municipal Election and additional costs in Planning & Development-related services), the bulk of the increase to the municipal tax base came from lowering the use of municipal reserves which were used to offset the past annual operating expenses.

In 2016, \$13,300 was brought in from reserves, and in 2017, that amount was cut in half down to \$6,650. It is our plan to cut that in half again in 2018 and ultimately cease the use of reserves altogether in 2019 and beyond.

Municipal Tax Dollars Collected

The municipal tax dollars collected are used to pay for all services that are provided and that are required to run and sustain the Municipality. The Summer Village collects municipal tax dollars in two ways, one is through the mill rate and assessed value and the other way is through a minimum municipal tax.

Mill Rates

The Residential Municipal Mill Rate has been set at 2.488282 for 2017 (which is up from the 2016 mill rate of 1.91599). The Non-Residential Mill Rate has been set at 12.3818 for 2017 (which is down from the 2016 mill rate of 17.252 – the drastic decrease is due to new legislation which only allows a 5:1 ratio in mill rates between residential and non-residential property types).

Minimum Municipal Tax

Same as last year, Council adopted a minimum tax levy as approved in the 2017 Tax Rate Bylaw and in accordance with section 357(1) of the Municipal Government Act. The Minimum Municipal Tax levy on all improved residential, vacant residential and linear properties for 2017 is

2017 Summer Newsletter

\$500.00. All residential property with an assessed value of less than \$200,942 is subject to the minimum tax upcharge.

The combination of these two tax methods have been budgeted to collect \$81,596 (which is up from 2016 by \$8,557 – a combination of lowering the use of reserves by \$6,650 and an overall increase to operating expenses by \$1,907).

Senior's Foundation

The Senior Foundation Requisition is levied based on the assessed value of your property and on the amount the Summer Village is requisitioned by the Greater North Foundation. Sunset Beach will collect \$6,983 for 2017 (which is down from the 2016 amount of \$7,703). Please note that Council is committed to supporting the senior foundation in order to ensure the seniors in our region are able to remain in their communities, close to family and receive the services they need.

School Tax Dollars Collected

The Municipality acts only as a 'collection agency' for the Alberta School Foundation Fund. This year, Sunset Beach will collect at total of \$73,101 in school taxes (which is up from the 2016 amount of \$72,390). All school tax dollars collected go directly to the Province. Did you know that as a senior age 65 years or older, you may qualify for the Education Property Tax Assistance for Seniors or may want to consider the new Senior Property Tax Deferral Program. Contact the Alberta Seniors Information Line at 1-877-644-9992 for more detailed information.

Although we will always experience increases in areas and assessed value changes beyond our control, Council will continue to work hard to contain operational costs without compromising the present and future financial strength of the Municipality.

2017 Summer Newsletter

Summer Village Contact Information

GENERAL

Mailing Address	PO Box 8 Alberta Beach, AB T0E-0A0
Office Location	4808-51 Street Onoway, AB
General Office Phone	780-937-4366
Fax	780-967-0431
Email	svsunsetbeach@wildwillowenterprises.com
Website	www.summservillageofsunsetbeach.com

ADMINISTRATION

Chief Administrative Officer	Wendy Wildman
General Administration Office	780-937-4366
Assessor – Ian Ferguson	780-939-3310
Development Officer – Tony Sonnleitner	780-718-5479
Permits – The Inspections Group Inc.	780-454-5048
Call Before You Dig	1-800-242-3447

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor	Mark Lindskoog	lindsk@telus.net	
Deputy Mayor	Morris Nesdole	moeknife@gmail.com	780-675-7179
Councilor	Gordon Shopland	gord.shopland@gmail.com	780-459-2949