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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

Vulcan County Council has appointed two new members-at-large for the Vulcan District Recreation Board. I want to thank Josh Umscheid and Troy Dobson for their willingness to serve in this capacity. A third position on the board remains open and County Council would like to fill it. If you live in the Vulcan Recreation District, the new recreation board consists of three Public Members who are resident in the district and will assist three councillors with reviewing the ongoing development of programs and funding supports. Further details, can be found on my own and on the County website, including the application: <https://christophernorthcott.com/appointments-to-vulcan-district-recreation-board/> . The first meeting of the board is February 2nd, 2023.

I was contacted this past month by someone who works with oil and gas leases and was concerned that not all landowners of Vulcan County are aware of the provincial orphan well program. This program provides payment to landowners where leases have not been maintained or paid, being in receivership, and can amount to thousands of dollars in compensation. For landowners in this situation, finding out about this program for the first time, Vulcan County Administration is happy to provide some direction on how to make application and receive compensation. An inventory of orphan wells in Alberta is provided by the Orphan Wells Association and can be found on their website: <https://www.orphanwell.ca/about/orphan-inventory/> .

Councillor Laurie Lyckman and myself have been working to launch a project that will locate unmarked graves in Vulcan County. There are four cemeteries in Vulcan County, belonging to the communities of Carmangay, Lomond and Milo, where this is a significant issue and hinders the planning and effective use of these graveyards. Through the SouthGrow Regional Initiative we were made aware the MITACS program at Canadian universities; a program administrator is available at the University of Lethbridge. This program provides 50% of project funding, as well as access to professorial expertise, the labour of student interns, and technical equipment for use toward approved projects. A proposal has been put forward to County Council for the February 1st meeting and I will provide an update next month.

Following a presentation by the Bow River Irrigation District, County Council chose to provide a letter of support for the Eyremore Dam project. Should this project go ahead, the new dam will be on the Bow River, west of the City of Brooks, and flood back to the Bassano Dam. It will create a new reservoir with a significant footprint on the east side of Vulcan County, addressing water supply to the Bow River and Eastern Irrigation Districts, as well as offering irrigation expansion, environmental benefits for water flows, flood mitigation and recreational opportunity. While the irrigation districts support construction of this dam, a project of this magnitude is undertaken by the province and is years away from fruition.

County Council will be back to two meetings in February.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott