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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

There was one meeting of County Council in September. We had the good fortune of appointing Deanna Heather as the new Agricultural Fieldman for Vulcan County under the Agricultural Services Board Act of Alberta. In this role, Deanna replaces Kelly Malmberg after his long and dedicated service of 28 years. I have really appreciated Kelly's contribution to Administration and wish him well in his retirement. Deanna has worked for the County for many years and is now responsible for enforcing the Weed Control Act, the Soil Conservation Act, and the Agricultural Pests Act.

Also at the September meeting, Council approved hiring KPMG as the auditor for Vulcan County for fiscal years 2023 through to 2027. While the County's prior audit firm was doing excellent work, it was time to test the market and consider the benefits that might come from hiring audit services with a different firm. We were able to get competitive rates and hire accordingly.

Administration has completed an internal review to contextualize council remuneration in comparison to similar municipalities. This follows an external review that was authorised by the previous council and reported to this council last year. The same methodologies were applied in the internal review that were used in the external review. While the external review recommended a ten percent increase to council remuneration (which was approved in November 2022), the more recent internal review data has shown that Vulcan County remains at least fifteen percent behind the market rates (when compared to other municipalities). As such, Council has approved a one-time increase of fifteen percent, in addition to the ten percent that was approved last year, for inclusion in the 2024 budget. I have posted the

internal review analysis on my website and welcome County ratepayers to let me know what they think about council remuneration. Please do so before the finalization of the County's interim-operating budget in November when we will have opportunity to revisit this matter. County Council is the board of directors for the organization and, as such, must decide what directors are compensated for undertaking their responsibilities. While many individuals who serve on County Council are community-minded people doing it for non-monetary reasons, keeping remuneration closer to a market comparison helps ensure that individuals are appropriately compensated and not discouraged from serving in this capacity. Again, I welcome your thoughts on this matter.

A Land Use Bylaw amendment has been given First Reading and a Public Hearing will be advertised before further consideration. This amendment adds a minimum floor area requirement to Hamlet Residential, Urban Fringe, and Reservoir Vicinity land use districts. It is hoped that by establishing a minimum dwelling size of 800 square feet the County can establish higher standards of development and more compatible land uses on adjacent parcels.

I attended the Foothills Little Bow Association meeting in Lethbridge on September 15th and was impressed by lively and in-depth discussion of large-scale renewable energy developments. The province has put a moratorium on new approvals to ensure long-term viability.

As a reminder, don't forget to mark on your calendars the fall fundraiser for the District-20 (Champion) Fire Association on November 4th at the Champion Community Hall. It will be a very enjoyable evening with some great items available for auction.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott