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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

I hope any outstanding harvesting was concluded before the weather turned this week. For those looking to get out of the house, tickets are still available for the District-20 (Champion) Fire Association fundraiser on November 4th at the Champion Community Hall. While tickets are available at the front counter of the Vulcan County Office, they can be purchased around Champion and from most members of the fire association.

After my last Notes from Council was printed in the Champion Chronicle, I issued a correction in the online version (on my website) regarding the matter of council remuneration. The correction reads: "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." Information regarding these changes can be found on my website, along with my expense reports, and I welcome your feedback on this issue.

At the October 4th meeting of County Council, Sergeant Koehli of the Vulcan RCMP Detachment provided an update on local policing. Additional resources are now available to this detachment and are making a difference.

With the approaching New Year, at the October 18th meeting of County Council a closed session discussion was held with Hillcrest Financial on the wage and benefits review that they conducted for Vulcan County. Staff wage grids will be adjusted for the recommended market adjustments. Also, Council reviewed major capital

equipment purchase pricing for 2024. Earlier in the meeting, Council approved the purchase of two new graders, one new tandem axle tractor, one dump belly trailer, and three F350 1 Ton trucks.

In August of 2022, the County and the Town of Vulcan entered into a Joint Use Funding Agreement for the Vulcan Pool and the Vulcan Arena, an agreement that stipulates funding to be reviewed very two years. While County Council is seeking more financial information on these operations, it was decided at the October 18th meeting to increase the pool funding from \$82,000 per year to \$90,000 and lower the arena funding from \$80,000 per year to \$75,000 per year. While the operating costs for the new pool are higher, revenues are substantially higher as well. The revenues for the arena have also increased due to higher demand for ice time.

Also at the October 18th meeting, the Land Use Bylaw received two amendments. First, it is now required that all development permit applicants for commercial/industrial energy projects conduct a public input session and provide an in-depth summary along with their application. The second change now requires a minimum dwelling size of 800 square feet in the Hamlet Residential, Urban Fringe, and Reservoir Vicinity zones.

The "Coffee with Council" in Mossleigh on October 19th was a success given the excellent turnout, good questions, and engaging discussion on a range of topics. This offering is gradually making its way to other divisions around the County, however, you are welcome to any one of them regardless of where you live. Also, please stay tuned for an "open house" that will be advertised on the proposed tarping bylaw. Again, information is available on my website regarding this bylaw and I welcome your feedback.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott