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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

I want to thank Kathy Perley for her dedicated efforts to publish the Champion Chronicle every month. I understand there are some changes occurring over the next little while and details will be worked out soon. With any luck, publication of the Chronicle will not be interrupted. However, for those who are interested, Notes from Council is also published directly on the blog of my website, www.christophernorthcott.com, and I will continue to provide this write-up every month. Councillors Nelson, Logan and Lyckman also do a write-up for the community newsletter in Milo, Lomond and Carmangay respectively. We have also been doing Councillor Reports at one of our regular meetings every month and these reports can be found in the online agenda package.

A community survey is out to kick-off the development of a new Municipal Development Plan (MDP) for Vulcan County. The last plan was completed over a decade ago and significant additional areas of consideration will be incorporated. We have been told by the quasi-judicial authorities set up by the province that they want to see municipal input into their decision-making process grounded in the statutory plans of the municipality. What this means in practice is that any comments the County might make to, say, the Natural Resource Conservation Board for a confined feeding operation application should "refer" specifically to how the application fits within the MDP of the municipality. The survey can be found on the County website and a link will be provided from my website. We are hoping to get a good number of responses with a variety of comments for consideration. Regardless, you will see ongoing public consultation as we work through the development of the new MDP.

A public hearing is scheduled for February 28th at 1:15 PM to consider the Tarping Bylaw that has been proposed for adoption. This draft bylaw has been on my website since the middle of last year and I have received some feedback from those it will affect. If this is a concern for you, I welcome any consideration and opinion that you might provide on the matter. The comments are enabled on my website, and my phone number and email are provided above. There are differing views on the matter. While some have argued that it is an unnecessary insinuation into what is normally covered by provincial traffic safety legislation, others believe there are enforcement gaps that could be addressed through the proposed bylaw.

With the recent warm weather, the frost is rapidly coming out on some County roads. When you see problem areas developing, especially when they adversely affect your regular routes of travel, please notify myself or County operations immediately. While I will merely pass the message along to County operations, Mike Kiemele can be reached at (403) 485-6090. For the most part, we have good roads but some problem areas too. I am working to relay concerns to administration while discussing options for resolution.

I attended the Foothills Little Bow Municipal Association meeting on February 19th in Lethbridge. This is a bi-annual meeting and I have always found it very worthwhile to attend. While we heard from a representative of the Natural Resource Conservation Board, I was greatly impressed by the presentation from the head of the Bow River Irrigation District, Richard Phillips. Given the drought situation that we are surviving, his presentation provided a longer-term context for this drought and what water management strategies should be acted upon by the province.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott