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NOTES FROM COUNCIL

Dear Residents & Ratepayers,

Congratulations to Councillor Laurie Lyckman on her election to County Council from Division 4. This will be Laurie's third term on Council, and it has been a pleasure working with her these past four years. She is passionate about seniors care and victim services. Her leadership of the Foothills Little Bow Municipal Association, as well as her contribution to the board of the SouthGrow Regional Initiative, are significant examples of how Laurie is working to move our region forward.

Best wishes to the other contender who sought to represent Division 4, Mr. Jack Feenstra. Elections are important opportunities for ratepayers to think about the direction of local government and engage with the candidates. They are a healthy indication that people care enough to stick their neck out, express an opinion, and run for public office.

The Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC) has hired a new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Tracy Thomas is currently the Senior Administrative Officer for the Town of Fort Smith, Northwest Territories, and will begin her new role with the Commission on January 12, 2026. As a current board member of the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators, Tracy is a leader in her profession and has extensive experience building successful collaborative partnerships. In various capacities, Tracy has worked with councils to stabilize municipal operations while tackling a variety of organizational challenges. We believe her skill set will be ideally suited to moving the Commission forward for the benefit of all 40 member municipalities.

Outgoing CAO, Lenze Kuiper, is retiring after twenty years. Under Lenze's leadership,

some important changes occurred for the organization while operating on a very lean budget. In recent years, Lenze has worked to ensure that retiring staff were replaced with high-performing administrative and financial professionals, all while retaining senior municipal planners who are willing to mentor those newer to the profession. He encouraged the Geographic Information System (GIS) team to lead their profession in developing this resource. Together, Lenze Kuiper, Raeanne Keer, and Stephanie Sayers have helped the Executive Committee and the Board establish a stable financial plan.

For local ratepayers, ORRSC provides a variety of services. Member municipalities have access to a municipal planner (or a back-up, if necessary) to advise on their land use bylaw and statutory plan development (municipal and intermunicipal development plans, area structure plans, etc.), as well as development permit and subdivision applications. The GIS technical specialists provide members with state-of-the-art mapping and asset management tool; currently finalizing the update of 3 GIS profiles and 5 brand new profiles for 8 cemeteries in Vulcan County. ORRSC provides subdivision processing for all members, work that is extremely detail oriented and requires compliance—given the contingent circumstances of each application—with all conditions of subdivision set by the local authority. Additionally, ORRSC organizes and clerks the Chinook Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, as well as the Regional Assessment Review Board, both of which are required to strictly adhere to legislative standards set by the province. After 70 years, ORRSC has an institutional memory and regional perspective because member municipalities learn from each other's experiences while developing Southern Alberta.

Sincerely, Christopher Northcott