

February 2024 Newsletter



Greetings from Council!

Time for an update.

2024 Budget

Council approved the 2024 budget in December with a 5% increase to net municipal tax revenue. Net municipal taxes don't include school taxes over which we have no control. Household garbage and wastewater utility rates remain unchanged.

The average net municipal tax increase corresponds to about \$12 per \$100,000 of last year's property assessment value. However, not all will see the same change to net municipal taxes as updated property assessments and development activity affect how taxes get allocated. Tax and utility notices will be mailed out in May.

The tax increase in 2024 corresponds to approximately \$18,000 (\$18k), which is less than the budget increase in shared administration costs of \$22k. While interest revenue in the budget increased by \$25k, most of this was directed towards capital reserves used to fund future project expenses. We anticipate higher project related costs and less capital grant funding being available, both of which increase our need for capital reserves. Furthermore, our capital reserves were reduced last year in recognition of cash flow timing, that required a transfer out of capital reserves into operating reserves.

Wastewater revenues are being used to fund the wastewater capital reserve to the extent they exceed expenses. We believe it prudent to grow the reserve to prepare gradually for future valve replacement costs rather than drop the wastewater utility levy.

Docks & Mooring

SBC first introduced a Dock & Mooring Bylaw in 2022. The bylaw and dock application forms are targeted to be updated by May to allow shared dock applications to be submitted along our entire shoreline.

Administration is still clarifying the merits, method, costs and alternatives of obtaining a Department Licence of Occupation from the province.

Wastewater

Our municipal wastewater system was commissioned on April 6, 2022 and 159 properties are currently connected. We would remind those not yet connected that:

- all dwellings are required to be connected by April 6, 2024 under the Wastewater Collection Bylaw,
- your curb stop will only be authorized to be opened after you or your installer has submitted the completed application form found on our website along with a safety inspection report.

Given recreational vehicle stalls are not allowed in the Summer Village, you should not be developing a system to facilitate dumping RV or other sewage into our wastewater system.

Please note that the following items should never be flushed down the sewer system: Baby or cleaning wipes, feminine hygiene products, paper towels or trash of any kind.

You are encouraged to leave your grinder pump and alarm power on even if you are planning to be away an extended time, to protect your home should your check valve fail with the curb stop open. Municipal staff and our contractors are the only ones authorized to open/close the curb stops located in the road allowance because of the large cost associated with repairing/replacing them.

Policing/Bylaw Enforcement

We are upgrading our Bylaw Enforcement Officer to a Community Police Officer by this summer so he will be able to enforce speeding infractions and give him access to additional resources for his safety. For bylaw infraction complaints, please use the complaint form on our website.

As always, we still have enforcement from the RCMP. Our community has been and will continue to be visited by the RCMP at least once a day (unless responding to another emergency), at random hours. The Sylvan Lake branch can be contacted at 403-858-7200.

Emergency Access Road and other agreement with Lacombe County

A gravel, gated emergency access road connecting Fox Crecent to Blissful Beach will be constructed this summer. The need for this was identified as part of a 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy and again following the Oct 2022 exercise conducted by the Lacombe Regional Emergency Management Partnership (LREMP). Costs will be shared equally by Lacombe County and Sunbreaker Cove.

Council also agreed that the pavement overlay costs for the road from Rainy Creek Road to the boat launch would be shared equally by Lacombe County and Sunbreaker Cove, as done previously. This isn't scheduled to be done before 2025.

Land Use Bylaw Update

We will be engaging Municipal Planning Services (MPS) to assist Administration with a review of the Summer Village's current Land Use Bylaw, obtain public input and to prepare an updated Land Use Bylaw for Council's consideration. This is an important planning document that controls the way land may be used and developed. Tourist homes, building height and parcel coverage are some of the elements addressed in this bylaw. The objectives for this review/update project are to make the Summer Village's Land Use Bylaw consistent with current provincial regulations, consolidate past amendments, improve the readability of the document, and to incorporate (where appropriate) watershed planning and FireSmart best practices. You will have multiple opportunities to contribute your feedback during the project.

Ice Huts and Fires on the Ice

All ice huts/shelters must be removed no later than March 31, 2024. It is important to keep the area around the ice shelters clear of garbage and other debris. Please participate in the "Take It Off Program" where there is no trace left on the ice when you leave, including burnt material that will pollute the lake upon spring thaw and can be a danger to persons engaged in water sports.

The municipalities around the lake are advocating for the use of portable fire pits rather than having fires directly on the ice. This measure would not only enhance safety but also contribute to preserving the pristine condition of our lake.

Weekly Email Notifications

Signing up for weekly email notifications will keep you up to date on pertinent information within our municipality.

Respectfully, your Council (Jim, Keith & Teresa) and administration.

Sunbreaker Cove Garbage Schedule 2024

Pickup times may vary, please place your container out by 7 am to ensure pick up.

January						
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