

Spring and Summer 2022 Newsletter



Welcome to a new season and another riveting and informative newsletter.



This newsletter is posted on our website, which may make it easier for you to access the links provided.

Annual Information Meetings

Your council does not intend to have Annual Information Meetings. We haven't had one the last two years because of Covid-19 and believe that the open council meetings, email blasts, website postings, semi-annual newsletters and our mailouts form an effective communications strategy. We don't feel we can justify maintaining an effective social media platform. Please engage with Council and Administration if you have questions.

Boat Launch

The Sunbreaker Cove Boat Launch is run and paid for by Lacombe County rather than SBC; your tax payments therefore do not fund the boat launch. We have been informed the County will implement a paid parking and boat launch program this boating season where they would charge \$10 to use the launch regardless of where they reside or pay taxes. Additional details are provided at <https://www.lacombecounty.com/index.php/news/2209-lacombe-county-to-launch-paid-parking-program-at-beach-and-boat-launches>.

Lacombe County will be giving consideration to expanding the Commissionaire's hours and providing them the legal authority to enforce parking. They are not requesting SBC to share in any extra costs involved.

SBC will be giving the Commissionaires authority to enforce no parking violations within SBC. If you and your neighbours wish to expand the areas currently zoned no parking, please email our administrator at information@sylvansummervillages.ca so it can be passed onto Council for

approval. Be aware, however, that areas zoned no parking will no longer be available to use by your family or your guests.

SBC Council would like to thank the Summer Villages of Birchcliff and Norglenwold for the approximate \$1,000 contribution each made towards last year's Commissionaire costs.

Wastewater

Our municipal wastewater system was commissioned on April 6, 2022. Thanks everyone for your cooperation in making this project a success for our community. Council, on behalf of all our residents, would like to acknowledge and thank Michael Wuetherick for his immense voluntary contributions over many years.

Wastewater delivered into our system is transferred to the Sylvan Lake Regional Wastewater Commission at our eastern boundary for treatment in Red Deer. Our volumes are metered at the lift station located in Blissful Beach and SBC will be charged based on actual usage. We are the fourth Summer Village around Sylvan Lake to be connected.

In accordance with the Wastewater Collection Bylaw, residents must be connected to the system within two years from April 6, 2022, when it was commissioned. Further, your curb stop that isolates you from the system can only be opened with administrations' approval, which won't be provided before they receive both the Summer Village application form and a safety inspection by Superior Safety Codes. The application form (found at http://www.sylvansummervillages.ca/uploads/8/8/0/5/88056186/application_for_sewer_connection_-_sbc_2.pdf) needs to be completed by you and/or your installer.

If your home has the capacity to be occupied in the winter, the wastewater utility fee is \$450/year. This fee is consistent with what most other Summer Villages around Sylvan Lake charge. While the other SV's have one fee for residents, SBC decided to charge a lower fee for homes that do not have the capacity to be occupied in the winter and are winterized to prevent freezing issues; a \$180/year fee is charged to such homes only if you declare in the connection application form, and annually thereafter before March 31, that your home qualifies. The wastewater utility fee will be prorated the first year of connection.

There remain some grinder pumps that residents have purchased and are still in storage at our office. Please make every effort to pick up your purchase of these pumps this season as this will allow our facility to carry out other business in this space.

Docks and Mooring

The occupation of public land (including the beds and shores of a waterbody) for more than 14 days has required authorization from the Province of Alberta since 2011.

SBC Council recently passed a Docks and Mooring Bylaw (http://www.sylvansummervillages.ca/uploads/8/8/0/5/88056186/170-22_dock_and_mooring_.pdf) which sets SBC standards for administration to issue the approval required by Alberta Parks and Environment (AEP) for mooring where we are the municipal waterfront holder (i.e. in front of the environmental open space). The bylaw removes the general permissions set out in the Disturbance Standard for about 40 semi-waterfront properties where the EOS in front of their properties can be walked on without trespass. Council has engaged with staff from AEP to discuss the directions taken. The application package (http://www.sylvansummervillages.ca/uploads/8/8/0/5/88056186/draft_sbc_dock_application_package.docx.pdf) provides a link to the online application, as well as suggestions regarding both collaborative efforts associated with sharing docks and how to we intend to minimize the potential of administration approving applications simply on a first come-first-serve basis.

We intend to obtain a department license of occupation that will avoid the need for residents to get authorization on an individual dock basis.

A phased roll-out of dock approvals has been adopted in recognition of administrative constraints and to allow changes to be made early in the approval process if appropriate. **Shared dock applications need to be submitted before May 20, 2022, only for the Mooring Administration Section located between Glenn's Cove and Larch Road (MAS B4).** Dock application timing for the remaining MAS areas will be after this boating season.

We encourage dock owners located outside of MAS B4 to interact with those adjacent to them this summer, to understand the implications of the new bylaw and make plans for the changes that will be necessary next boating season.

SBC dock approvals will not extend a general permission to store materials on municipal land. There is limited capacity to store things on municipal land and not adversely affect the land, and the enjoyment of it by all. Changes to SBC's Temporary Storage of Boat Hoists and Piers Policy may be made soon.

Documents recently released by Alberta Environment and Parks are available on our website at

<http://www.sylvansummervillages.ca/mooring-for-recreational-docks.html>

Taxation, Budget and Property Assessment

Net municipal tax revenue will increase by three percent over last year (\$9,844). Your individual taxes will only increase by 3% if your share of the total taxable property assessment did not change, and there are no changes made to provincial educational taxes.

Major changes contributing to the taxation revenue increase are:

1. \$12,284 increase to reserves growth (i.e. budgeted savings for capital projects). Additional discussion below.
2. \$11,550 increase for maintenance of the new wastewater system. Additional discussion below.
3. \$ 6,000 reduction in interest revenue. We have less cash in the bank after wastewater project spending.
4. \$ 4,000 increase in road maintenance. Our roads are getting older.
5. \$ 3,022 increase for RCMP

Major changes contributing to less of a taxation revenue increase are:

6. \$ 5,000 reduction in bank fee expenses. We are discontinuing payments of taxes and utility fees by credit card and accepting e-transfers.
7. \$ 4,005 increase in planning & development revenue. Largely due to annual tourist home applications that we did not budget for last year.
8. \$ 3,500 reduction in Council elections & meeting expenses. We had an election last year.

Referring to Point 1 above, it is important to grow reserves on an annual basis for several reasons. First, it causes current users of infrastructure to contribute towards its repair and eventual replacement. Second, provincial grant funding is decreasing. Our 2022 allocation of provincial grants for capital programs dropped by 53% (\$62,422) relative 2021.

Referring to Point 2 above, the wastewater costs are covered by a combination of wastewater utility fees, taxation, reserves transfer and rate rider revenue:

- The wastewater utility fee amounts were discussed earlier in the wastewater section of this newsletter. They are expected to cover only slightly more than the usage fees we expect to pay the commission each year, for the next few years. The usage rate we are charged, however, is projected by the commission to drop in 2024. We anticipate that from 2024 onward, the utility fees will cover all our non-debenture wastewater costs and generate reserves for future repair and replacement costs.

- Taxation has always been used to cover our share of regional commission costs. It was decided to also use taxation to cover 55% of our estimated \$21,000/year system maintenance costs in 2022, and 30% in 2023.
- Transfers from our wastewater reserves are budgeted to cover the remaining non-debenture wastewater costs. Reserve transfers of \$7,246 and \$713 were budgeted in 2022 and 2023, respectively.
- The rate rider fee of \$251.73/year (\$6,293.25 in total) to be paid by 115 lots who decided to not pay the collection fee upfront will cover the municipal long-term debenture fees. The \$4,380 collection fee was paid upfront by 153 lots.

The operating budget has increased 24% over last year (\$92,148). The increase is largely due to:

- \$84,280 increase in wastewater costs and
- \$12,284 increase to reserves growth

Taxable assessments increase by 3.88% this past year ending June 30, 2021. The median developed property assessment increased 3.67% over the year and had a value of approximately \$463,000. There is a wide range in the percentage that properties value changed. Growth thru development was lower than the prior year.

Capital Projects

Capital spending last year was quite significant, consisting of:

- \$3.09 million for the wastewater project on a net basis after Lacombe County's contribution
- \$ 225k for the new Sylvan Summer Villages administration building
- \$ 66k for a drainage project for Larch Road
- \$ 20k for a stairway project between Elk Street and Fox Crescent

We have budgeted for this 2022 year:

1. \$380k for a fall road overlay program
2. \$ 50k for a March shoreline riprap project in front of Elk Street
3. \$ 40k for an open spaces/pathway project

Regards Point 1 above, we currently anticipate the need to overlay all our roads within the next five years at a cost of about \$1.1 million. Consideration is being given to having an independent, qualified firm assess the state of our roads and

develop an appropriate plan that reflects the significant variations in traffic before proceeding with the budgeted fall overlay program.

Regards Point 3 above, we are considering stairway replacements within two community reserves over the next 5 years; one reserve is located between Birch Road and Pine Road, and the other reserve is located between the two branches of Fox Crescent. We would prefer, however, that any new stairways service communal docks and replace, rather than supplement, existing stairways that are not to code.

Policing

We have discontinued our contract with the Town of Sylvan Lake where four summer villages previously shared the cost of a peace officer in view of a significant change to the cost to SBC and concerns as to the value and timing of service provided. Alternative policing that would supplement the Commissionaires and the RCMP we currently have are being developed.

To report a crime, or for immediate police assistance call the Sylvan Lake RCMP detachment at (403) 858-7200.

Concerns with bylaw infractions should be emailed to our administrator at information@sylvansummervillages.ca. Here are a few key issues that you should be aware of:

- Provincial laws preclude unregistered motor vehicles such as golf carts from being driven on any roads, which include those in SBC.
- The traffic bylaw states that:
 - no person shall park or drive any vehicle on any land owned by SBC that is not a road at any time without getting written permission prior to doing so, and
 - No person shall operate an off-highway vehicle from June 15th through to August 31, inclusive.
- The community standards bylaw states that noise or disturbance that annoys or disturbs the peace of any other person is not allowed between 11:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. any day.
- The burning and firepit bylaw states that no person shall purchase, possess, handle, discharge, fire or set off fireworks within SBC unless he holds a permit signed by the Fire Service.

The Land Use Bylaw

The warmer weather comes with it new ideas for improving our yard spaces. Here are a few key land use bylaw issues you should be aware of:

- If you are looking at changing your footprint on your property (i.e. adding a deck, hot tub and/or auxiliary building, or extending the size of an existing building) please be aware you will need a permit to go ahead with these projects.
- We would encourage you to know where your property lines are and not build or place structures (encroach) on other property you don't own.
- The removal of trees and/or shrubs, excavation, grading or drainage alteration on any municipal reserve, environmental reserve or other municipal owned land, without expressed written approval from the municipality, is prohibited
- The operation of a tourist home (rentals less than 30 days) needs approval. We now have seven that are approved in our village.

Please email development@sylvansummervillages.ca to discuss the permitting process.

If you see a damaged, diseased, dangerous tree located on the reserve, or if you want approval to remove trees on municipal land, please e-mail publicworks@sylvansummervillages.ca to either have the issue addressed or obtain written approval.

Waste Transfer Stations

The Eckville Transfer station is open on Tuesdays/Wednesdays from 9am to 4:45pm and Saturdays from 8am to 11:45am

The Bentley Transfer Station is open Thursday from 10am to 6pm, Friday 10am to 6pm, Saturday 2pm to 6pm

Using these stations is free upon the proof of residency. Be prepared to show a copy of your utility bill or tax bill or drivers' licence if you are a permanent resident in the village.

Other Interesting Facts

- Administration is shared between the five Sylvan Summer Villages. This helps reduce costs and may impact response times.
- Our Summer Village status gives residents the right to vote in SBC's municipal elections even though it may not be your principal residence.
- The 2021 Census indicates Sunbreaker Cove had:
 - 131 full-time residents, up from 81 in 2016
 - 236 private dwellings, down from 240 in 2016
 - 64 private dwelling occupied by full-time residents, up from 41 in 2016
- Our Mayor, Teresa, also serves as Chair of the Sylvan Lake Regional Wastewater Commission and as Vice President of the Association of Summer Villages of Alberta.
- Sylvan Lake is one of the best recreational lakes in central Alberta, perhaps because the drainage basin surrounding it is very small compared with its size. We must all do our part to preserve the lake water quality, particularly as it has a direct impact on your property value and your enjoyment of the lake.

Hope you enjoy the lake this summer!

All the best from your Council and Administration!!

