



As we move into December and approach Christmas, there have been a number of events and activities that have already happened and more to come. Lights and decorations have been going up on homes and businesses around town that compliment the efforts of our Tourism Committee. These dedicated folks have worked hard this year to liven up the appearance of the Town and are capping things off during this festive season with new lights and their handmade decorations. Their "Holiday of Lights" event on Sunday was very well attended with lots of people along the parade route and a good sized crowd gathered at the tree lighting in Funshine Park. Santa and Mrs. Claus met lots of kids with the able assistance of Elves Karen and Christina. More Elves were at the activity tables and in the kitchen serving up hot chocolate and hot dogs. Elf Deputy Dave was looking after the bonfire. A big thank you to everyone involved in putting on this great community event. December 5th is International Volunteers Day but we appreciate our volunteers all year because they are the best!

This of course is the season for giving and there are lots of ways to support others in our community. Alpha Tread is holding a Christmas Toy Drive until the 15th. The Food Bank is always looking for support, especially cash donations. The Health Foundation Trees of hope campaign is on until January 15. \$10 buys a light in memory of someone special or to wish someone a Merry Christmas. Businesses and individuals are challenged to decorate or construct a tree (large or small) for the Tourism Committee's Festival of Trees at the Library.

In the October newsletter I reported that the RCMP would be making changes to their staffing plan for our detachment which covers the Town and all of the County. We have since learned that they are in fact moving from having 3 people, mostly based out of Redcliff, to having 4 constables, 1 corporal and 1 sergeant assigned to the Bow Island detachment. We currently have 1 constable living in Bow Island and at least one member will be moving to Foremost to live in the house they have there. As more rental accommodation becomes available here, we may see more members living in town. There is a full-time admin person in the office and second one is returning in March. Council is grateful for the quick response to our concerns by the Southern Superintendent and the Commissioner for Alberta as they have brought Bow Island back to full detachment.

Next Sunday, the 10th, people interested in a career in policing can meet with an RCMP recruiter at Peter's restaurant at 2pm. That evening, at 7pm, they will be making a presentation on RCMP careers at the Town Office meeting room.

The Local Authorities Election Act governs municipal elections in Alberta and is reviewed from time to time. The UCP government is considering some changes, including allowing political parties to be involved in local elections. While municipal councillors may have their own political leanings, which may be diverse, they have a duty to work together in the best interests of the community. Local government decisions should be local and not directed by the agenda of a political party. The municipal government system may not be perfect, but I think it is far more effective than the federal or provincial systems where political polarization often gets in the way of getting good things done. The Government's survey closes on the 6th but if you feel strongly about this, write to our MLA, the Municipal Affairs minister or the Premier. Let's keep our local government LOCAL.

Council has accepted an offer to purchase approximately 3.5 acres of land in the Westview area by Leisure Way Living, the developers of the long anticipated supportive living facility. Negotiations with AHS and Alberta Health continue but construction this spring seems more likely.

2023 has been a tumultuous year in the world but I hope you are able to take some time during the Christmas season to be with family and friends and enjoy the peace and goodwill that we have here in our community. Merry Christmas to each of you.

Mayor Gordon Reynolds