



Public Works has made good progress installing the pipelines for the new subdivision, in spite of the weather. . They are also getting into full swing with spring maintenance and repairs throughout the Town. When approaching or passing our work crews and equipment please slow down and give them lots of room so that everyone goes home safely at the end of the day. There are a number of projects planned for this summer including road patching, sidewalk replacement, a new playground and park development, just to name a few. One project will be the replacement of the backstops and other fencing at the ballpark thanks to support from Bow Island Minor Baseball and the North Forty Mile Recreation Society. Fundraising by these and other groups is making a big difference in efforts to improve our recreation facilities and enhance the community as a whole. You will see some additions at the Splash Park and if the weather cooperates the new pool liner will be installed before the end of the month.

Council has given final reading to the Urban Hen Bylaw and application forms are available on the Town website or at the office. This is a pilot program where 5 licenses for 4 hens each will be awarded (No Roosters) and if more than 5 applications are received by May 24th there will be a draw made. The bylaw rules regarding chicken coops, and the care of the hens are outlined on the application. The complete bylaw is under the "Government" tab on the Town website.

Council also recently passed the Tax Rate Bylaw and have been able to reduce the rates slightly. Property assessments, based on market prices, may be up in some cases and the Provincial Education tax should be similar to last year. Holding the line on the rates will help keep increases to a minimum. The amount of grant funding and donations we have received for the various projects this year will be a big help for us taxpayers.

While recent snow and rain has improved soil moisture for now, overall water supply in Southern Alberta is currently much lower than normal. The irrigation districts, other large water users and the the cities of Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Calgary have signed memorandums of understanding regarding the sharing of available water. These large users and the Minister of Environment are expecting the municipalities to do our part to reduce consumption by 5-10%, primarily through limiting lawn and yard watering. Over the coming weeks the Town will be providing tips on how to approach watering this season and may at some point institute actual restrictions.

I am very pleased to welcome Bill Ressler back to Council after being acclaimed in the recent byelection. It has been my pleasure to serve on Council in the past with Bill who is a very community minded individual whose insight and energy will be appreciated. We are all looking forward to working with him.

Western Financial is running a silent auction fundraiser this month at their office with the proceeds going to our Fire Department. Stop in and place your bids to support our dedicated firefighters. May 5th to 11th is Emergency Preparedness week in Alberta to highlight and remind everyone that we can keep ourselves and our families safer by being prepared in the event of an emergency. Watch for tips each day next week on the Town's social media pages and additional information is available through the office.

Lots of concern from municipalities after the introduction of Bill 20, that contains measures intended to clarify some grey areas, but some feel like an overreach into local government and even a challenge to democracy. Some of the changes and then comments from Minister McIver and the Premier about municipalities needing to stay in their lane seem mostly directed at Calgary and Edmonton. Unfortunately, there was no consultation before the bill was introduced and now there is a fight on. Time for a group hug and a reminder that Mother's Day is coming up and Moms would want everyone play nice and get along. *Mayor Gordon Reynolds*